



**2017 Annual Report**

## Introduction

Dear colleagues and supporters:

Sensible Minnesota is a 501(c)3 charitable non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public on the uses, benefits, and relative safety of cannabis; supporting persons harmed by prohibition, while advocating for sensible policy changes. Founded in February 2015, we just completed our third year of this important work.

It was an exciting year for the Sensible Minnesota team! By working to build our capacity early in the year, we wrapped up 2017 with our strongest team to date. We welcomed new volunteers and directors, entered a formal partnership with an international drug policy organization, and drove hard to make an impact in the community.

As I near the end of my first term as President, I reflect on the trials and tribulations that come with starting a non-profit and growing it into something that can make a real difference in patient access and drug policy reform. This team has a bright and exciting future!

We did not include organizational needs in our report, but you can help us continue our mission by doing a few things. First, we constantly grow our team and seek individuals dedicated to this vital work with the special skills to get it done; consider joining us. Second, an important part of our mission is public participation in Sensible Minnesota's events; please consider attending one of our many events in 2018 or request one of our expert speakers to bring the discussion of medical cannabis, cannabis legalization, or harm reduction to your community. Finally, we appreciate your financial contributions as they aid in fulfilling our goals; our sustaining donors help ensure our operating costs are paid each month.

If you're interested in any of the above, please visit our website, [www.sensible.mn](http://www.sensible.mn), for more information on volunteering, resources, and donating. As always, if you have any questions or ideas for Sensible Minnesota, please feel free to email me, [maren@sensible.mn](mailto:maren@sensible.mn).

Here's to a great 2018!

Warm Regards,



Maren Schroeder, MBA, RP®, MnCP  
President, Sensible Minnesota

## Administration

Sensible Minnesota was granted its 501(c)3 tax-exempt status in January 2017, retroactive to February 2015. Throughout the year, leaders and volunteers were trained on the organization's new Policy Manual, a compilation of previous resolutions on conduct and processes for the organization, as well as cyber security and privacy.

## Accomplishments

- **1 to 1 Patient Advocacy.** Sensible Minnesota's patient advocates served 112 patients in 2017.
- **Minnesota Cannabis Summit.** On June 2, 2017, Sensible Minnesota hosted the first annual Minnesota Cannabis Summit. The event boasted Dr. Raj Setheraju, Professor of Criminal Justice at Metro State University, as the keynote speaker, in addition to nine different breakout sessions and a cannabis consumers' panel. There were approximately 90 in attendance, with four exhibitors and one additional sponsor.
- **Consumer Stories.** Sensible Minnesota worked with patients and consumers with ties to Minnesota to put a face to the state's cannabis consumers. Four stories were posted from various consumers, including patients and families of pediatric patients.
- **Minnesota State Fair Cannabis Booth.** Sensible Minnesota tabled at the Minnesota State Fair with MN NORML, Minnesota Marijuana, and Legal Marijuana Now on Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. Although it was a rainy day, we made contact with approximately 100 individuals.
- **Advocating within the media.** Sensible Minnesota's representatives did a number of interviews with local and state-wide media, including WCCO, KIMT, and Twin Cities Business Journal. Maren Schroeder was quoted by the Twin Cities Business regarding Minnesota's medical cannabis program, "[The bill] wasn't written to benefit patients. Whether or not that was to keep patients out, I don't know. But its sure what the result has been."
- **Medical Cannabis Expansion.** Four petitions were filed by Sensible Minnesota for the addition of Liver Disease, Parkinson's Disease, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Dementia as qualifying conditions. We are happy to report that Autism Spectrum Disorder was approved for inclusion, and our petition research team is at work finding new research to support inclusion of new conditions in the 2018-2019 cycle. Additionally, Heather Tidd chaired the Medical Cannabis Review Panel which took testimony and evaluated the petitions submitted for expansion.

- **MN Dept. of Health Rulemaking.** Throughout 2017, the Minnesota Department of Health's Office of Medical Cannabis, held rulemaking meetings regarding the labeling of medical cannabis products in Minnesota. Heather Tidd has served on this committee on behalf of Sensible Minnesota, and successfully convinced one of the manufacturers to provide terpene profiles on their medical cannabis products.
- **Minnesota Medical Cannabis Taskforce.** In January 2017, Maren Schroeder testified to this legislative task force on behalf of the organization. She identified price, limited geographical access, and lack of competition as some of the biggest issues with the current program scheme.
- **Lobby Training.** Joining forces with MN NORML, Sensible Minnesota assisted in leading a lobbying training for citizen lobbyists. Kurtis Hanna talked about effective techniques for lobbying, and Maren Schroeder taught those in attendance best practices for telling their stories to law makers.
- **Presentations.** Sensible Minnesota's representatives spoke to a number of different groups on various topics:
  - Minnesota Paralegal Association. Brandan Borgos presented on medical cannabis in January 2017.
  - Buffalo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Maren Schroeder facilitated a discussion on drug policy and harm reduction in February 2017.
  - National Association of Legal Secretaries. Brandan Borgos presented on medical cannabis in March 2017.
  - Libertarian Party of Minnesota. Brandan Borgos presented generally on cannabis laws and advocacy in April 2017.
  - Post Bulletin Community Forums. Maren Schroeder participated in a panel on medical cannabis at the Rochester Public Library in June 2017.
  - Students for Sensible Drug Policy - Hamline. Jared Poe spoke to the Hamline Chapter in October 2017.
  - National Federation of Paralegal Associations. Maren Schroeder presented on federal cannabis laws in October 2017.
  - Students for Sensible Drug Policy – University of Minnesota. Gunnar Aas spoke to the U of M SSDP chapter in October 2017.

## Human Resources

Sensible Minnesota significantly increased its organizational capacity in 2017 through the expansion of human resources. In 2016, Sensible Minnesota utilized approximately seven volunteers in addition to its five to seven members of the Board of Directors.

In 2017, the organization put emphasis on volunteer recruitment, screening, engagement, and retention. We now have fifteen volunteers, in addition to the eight-member board of directors and SSDP liaison.

## Leadership

The organization added three new board members and a liaison to execute Sensible Minnesota's partnership with Students for Sensible Drug Policy.

- **Bonnie Padilla**, Director. Appointed: January 17, 2017.

*Bonnie Braun Padilla, CPA, MST has over 30 years of experience as a tax accountant. In that role she has helped clients with strategic planning, buying and selling businesses and real estate, and advocating for clients with the taxing authorities.*

*She began her career in Southern California and moved to Minnesota 20 years ago. Recently retired, she has turned her attention to giving back to the community.*

*In addition to Sensible Minnesota she works with the Anti-Defamation League, Summit Academy OIC and the Breast Cancer Education Association. As treasurer she oversees the finance and budgeting functions at Sensible and sits on the Executive Board.*

- **Erin Chase**, Director. Appointed: June 20, 2017.

*Erin Chase is a portfolio manager in corporate finance with experience and training in corporate, commercial, private client, and real estate investments. Prior to her current role Erin specialized in personal finance and consumer credit. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Robert Morris University with both a B.S. in Business Administration and a M.B.A. in Management.*

*When not in the office Erin is very active in her community — she has partnered with various non-profit organizations focusing on raising funds to support people that are battling cancer, afflicted hunger, and living with disabilities.*

- **Sean White**, Director. Appointed: September 19, 2017.

*Sean White is a U.S. Army Veteran of the war in Afghanistan, a longtime resident of Minnesota and an American patriot. Sean has spent his time as a civilian advocating for veterans, the environment and other issues he believes pertinent to the future of the state of Minnesota and the United States of America. In 2014, Sean was the campaign manager for a State House race in his home district, and in 2016 he ran as a candidate for the same seat receiving 6,600 votes on election day. Having prior experience in electoral politics and campaigning, Sean brings to the team a knowledge of fundraising strategy, utilization of technology, event planning and organization, as well as volunteer coordination and public policy. Passionate about improving the programs and services offered by the state of MN, Sean began as a volunteer with Sensible Minnesota, and joined it's Board of Directors in September of 2017 to affect a positive change in Minnesota's medicinal cannabis program. He currently oversees the organization's use of technology, supporting existing technologies and implementing new ones in order to create additional capacity for Sensible's team of volunteers.*

- **Gunnar Aas**, Students for Sensible Drug Policy Liaison. Appointed: October 17, 2017.

*Gunnar Aas is a drug policy activist from Duluth, MN. He has been working as a campus organizer for Students for Sensible Drug Policy, working to bring young people and students into the movement for a post-prohibition age, and to enlighten his communities on the immense benefits of sensible policies. He is currently studying at Hamline University in Saint Paul, MN, majoring in Political Science and Social Justice. On the rare occasion he isn't working or studying, you can likely find Gunnar outside working in the garden and enjoying the local music scene. Aas is currently working as the Students for Sensible Drug Policy Liaison for Sensible Minnesota and assists with the organization's technology needs.*

Sensible Minnesota also elected a new Executive Committee on March 11, 2017. The current officers are as follows:

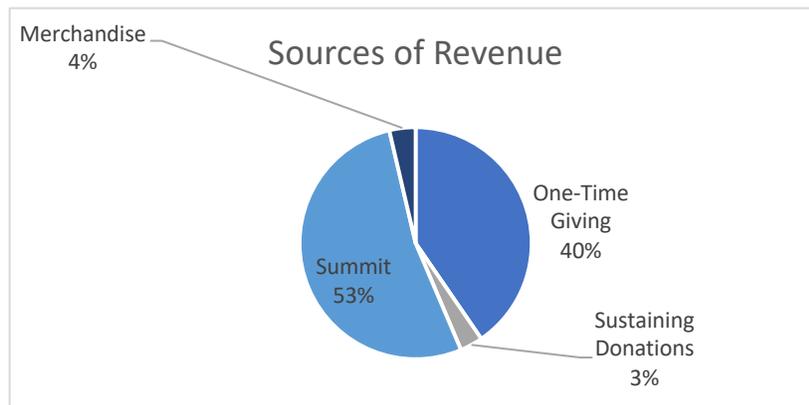
- President: Maren Schroeder, MBA, RP®, MnCP

- Vice President: Brandan Borgos, Esq.
- Treasurer: Bonnie Padilla, CPA, MST
- Secretary: Jared Poe

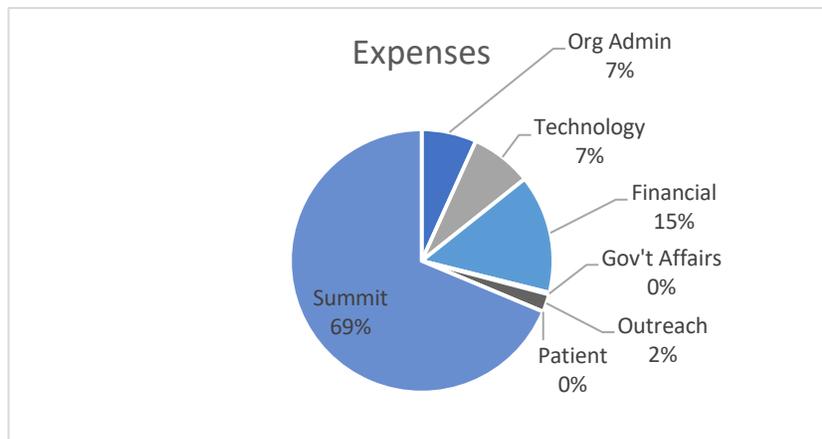
During the succession planning process, it was determined that it is best for the organization to elect its previous President as Vice President when a new President is elected. It is also expected that any future President would serve in the Vice President role in the year immediately preceding their election as President.

**Financial**

Sensible Minnesota's income for 2017 was \$9,200, with sources of revenue identified below.



Sensible Minnesota's expenses for 2017 were \$5,700, with expenditures categorized below.



## 2018 and Beyond

Sensible Minnesota is working from a strategic plan that prioritizes work according to resources. In 2018, we are looking forward to holding more events, as well as publishing our first two white papers in the first half of the year. Specifically, the following items are in-progress for completion in 2018:

- **Vigil for Victims of Prohibition.** Sensible Minnesota is organizing a vigil for victims of cannabis prohibition on April 20, 2018 at the Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda. We plan to partner with various community organizations and activist leaders to provide a powerful picture of the damage cannabis prohibition has caused.
- **Economic Impact Report.** An ad hoc committee is in the progress of collecting data from states where adult use is legal to project the impact of a legal, adult-use market in Minnesota. This white paper is expected to be published in mid-2018.
- **Medical Cannabis Pricing Report.** With the assistance of Students for Sensible Drug Policy, Sensible Minnesota is updating data collected on the price of medical cannabis in a variety of states, for a white paper discussing the connections between high prices and low patient numbers. Additionally, the paper will discuss the factors that cause Minnesota's prices to be higher than those in other states.
- **2018 Minnesota Cannabis Summit.** The Summit Planning Committee is hard at work planning the 2018 Minnesota Cannabis Summit to be held at Hamline University on June 14, 2018. The format will be similar, and the committee is committed to bringing high-caliber speakers to the cannabis community in Minnesota.
- **Qualifying Condition Petitions.** The standing committee for Condition Petitions is looking forward to 2018 and evaluating research as to which conditions are prime for addition to Minnesota's program. Specifically, the committee is vetting Opioid Use Disorder for a potential petition.
- **Voters' Guide.** In partnership with SSDP, Sensible Minnesota is in the process of preparing a Voters' Guide for the 2018 election. This began with polling the gubernatorial candidates in the primary and will be followed up by polling of endorsed state-wide office candidates and House of Representatives candidates. As a 501(c)3, there will not be any endorsements, rather the Guide will be published in full for voters to make their own decision.
- **Consumer Stories.** Sensible Minnesota will continue obtaining and publishing consumer stories with the intent of compiling them into a portfolio for use in policy making.

- **Speakers Bureau.** The organization website now contains a form for community and professional organizations to request speakers on a variety of topics, giving Sensible Minnesota the opportunity to speak to community members where they are most comfortable.
- **Leadership Training.** In conjunction with SSDP, Sensible Minnesota will provide leadership training to leaders in the drug policy reform movement.
- **Caucusing.** Draft resolutions regarding medical expansion and adult-use legalization will again be provided to community members for introduction at GOP and DFL caucuses.
- **Public Opinion Polling.** Public polling has not occurred since 2014, so Sensible Minnesota hopes to partner with a national drug policy organization to obtain funding for updated polling.

The Board of Directors, along with active volunteers, review the Strategic Plan bi-annually in the spring and fall. Depending on organizational capacity, Sensible Minnesota may take on additional projects and campaigns as funding and human resources allow.

Further, Sensible Minnesota is always looking for opportunities to partner with other organizations on projects and campaigns that are consistent with our mission. It is our hope that 2018 is a coalition building year, beginning with the event on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Lastly, the organization intends to add one to three new board directors in 2018 and will continue using high-standards in recruitment and vetting of new volunteers and leadership. We hope to add more volunteers, in addition to our partnership with SSDP.

## Conclusion

Your donations and support are what keep us achieving our goals. Thank you for taking the time to read our year-in-review. We hope you are as excited as we are about what the future holds! Feel free to reach out at any time with questions or concerns.

## Contact Information

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