

Statewide Safety Council – Meeting #1 Notes

January 23, 2026

Meeting Outcomes

Rational objective: To understand the Council's charge and begin to understand some of the data available to inform its work.

Experiential objective: To become familiar with what other members bring to this work and to feel you have provided some initial input on the approach to completing the Council's charge.

Attendees

Council members

- Bob Jacobson, Commissioner, Department of Public Safety
- Tiki Brown, Commissioner, Department of Children, Youth, and Families
- Dr. Brooke Cunningham, Commissioner, Department of Health
- Shireen Gandhi, Commissioner, Department of Human Services
- Drew Evans, Superintendent, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
- Colonel Christina Bogojevic, MN State Patrol
- Chief Jay Henthorne, Richfield PD, MN Chief of Police Association
- Sheriff Lon Thiele, Steele County, MN Sheriff Association
- Kim Babine, Executive Director of MN Office of Justice Programs
- Dr. Deb Henton, Executive Director, MN Association of School Administrators
- Kristen Neville, Annunciation Hope Alliance
- Brittany Haeg, Annunciation Hope Alliance
- Marcus Schmit, Executive Director, National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota

Also, in attendance

- Cassandra O'Hern, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Safety
- Jordan Haltaufderheid, Chief of Staff, Department of Public Safety
- Julie Forbord, Executive Aide, Department of Public Safety
- Leah Montgomery, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Children, Youth, and Families
- Kate Weeks, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Children, Youth, and Families
- Catherine Diamond, Department of Health
- Michelle Lakso, Chief of Staff, Department of Human Services
- Theresa Steinmetz, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Human Services
- Dana Gotz, Deputy Superintendent, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Presenters

- Dr. Jillian Peterson, Violence Prevention Project Research Center, Hamline University
- Dr. James Densley, Violence Prevention Project Research Center, Hamline University

Facilitators

- Stacy Sjogren, Sr. Management Consultant, Management Analysis and Development
- Kris Van Amber, Asst. Director, Management Analysis and Development

Meeting resources

- Statewide safety Council – Densley and Peterson. Pdf
- Safety Council 1 23 26 Slide Deck.pptx
- Participant Agenda 1 23 26 Stwd Pub Safety Council.docx
- Statewide Safety Council Members names only.docx

Agenda Topics

Welcome

Commissioner Bob Jacobson welcomed the Statewide Safety Council (Council) members and observers to the first meeting of the Council. His opening remarks included:

- This initiative responds to a series of tragic events in Minnesota in recent years and reflects a commitment to convene leaders from state government, academic institutions, and non-profit organizations to develop actionable recommendations that will inform policy and strengthen the existing legal framework to enhance public safety statewide.
- Council's charge includes the development of recommendations to be submitted to the legislature by January 6, 2027. A preliminary report, likely to focus on outlining our process, is due April 6, 2026
- The importance of building authentic relationships within the Council membership and throughout this project.
- We will approach this work with care and consideration for those that have experienced trauma and ask that everyone bring this lens to our conversations.

Member introductions

Members were asked to share their name, organization, perspective, and to answer the questions:

- What resources and personal experiences do you have access to that might be useful to this effort?
- What is your biggest hope and biggest concern about this initiative?

Data overview

Dr. Jillian Peterson and Dr. James Densley with the Violence Prevention Project Research Center, Hamline University, presented their research on gun violence, including a common pathway to violence for mass shootings and implications for prevention.

The Council engaged with the presenters on many topics such as additional data to understand a shooter's mindset, the role of families and friends, and to emphasize upstream interventions. The presenters concluded the gun violence problem will need many solutions rather than one grand solution.

Logistics

The group briefly discussed how information will be shared for future meetings along with considerations for meeting days, times, and locations. Stacy Sjogren reminded members of Open Meeting Law and the importance of avoiding group communications.

Closing

Before adjourning the meeting, members shared their answer to the question, *what one word summarizes what you are feeling about the work ahead?*

The Council member's answers are reflected below by indicating the number of times a word was repeated.



The Council adjourned at 11:30 a.m.