

Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative (SBPHC) Meeting
July 9, 2021, Meeting Minutes (prepared by Jayne Smith, RS)
Great Barrington Town Hall, Great Barrington, MA
(with remote option via Zoom)

Present: Rebecca Jurczyk (Great Barrington), Pat Levine (Sheffield), Ellie Lovejoy (Mt. Washington), Scott McFarland (New Marlborough), Brandy Page (Otis), Dianne Romeo (Lenox), Jayne Smith (Alford), Jim Wilusz (Lee, Lenox Stockbridge), Amy Hardt (PHN), Jill Sweet (PHN)

Present on Zoom: Martin Mitsoff (Sheffield), Rep. Smitty Pignatelli (9:30 – 10:00)

- **Action Item updates**
 - Letters of commitment are all done.
 - MAVEN access is important for all towns, PHN are still waiting for a couple of letters

- **Grant updates**
 - Jim has been communicating with Ron O’Connor about the SAPHE Grant and the SBPHC goals are in line with what the MA DPH are looking for.as well met with BRPC to ensure we can collaborate, assist each other and fill gaps.
 - Core of SBPHC grant remains public health nursing, but all activities are guided by the goals outlined by the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health, including:
 - Establish Workforce Credentials
 - Ensure Continuity and Sustainability
 - Set Higher Standards
 - Collect and Share More Data
 - Allocate Appropriate Resources
 - Encourage Shared Services
 - Jim, Amy and Jill have met with BRPC to ensure we will continue to collaborate, assist and fill gaps.
 - Discussion about the importance of understanding “supplanting” of funding. Grant cannot be used to eliminate funding line items in budget, but funding can be repurposed to further public health in individual towns, including providing education, apply funds to special public health projects or place funds in a special revenue funds.

Special Guest Rep. Smitty Pignatelli

- Rep. Pignatelli has a strong history of supporting collaboration in Southern Berkshires, including his pivotal role in establishing a community compact between 17 towns. History has shown that Berkshire County is big and diverse, which is why smaller collaboratives work best in the Berkshires.
- There will be an influx of money coming into Commonwealth and he encourages the SBPHC to identify what we want/need to create plan on how we could use future funding to advance public health in Southern Berkshire County both now and in the future. It is much easier to fund plans vs. an ideas and now is the time for us to plan.

Grant Update Action Items

- Develop Work Plan and Budget for SAPHE Grant

- Develop plan based on region wants and needs through facilitated discussion and other information gathering
- **Public Health Nurse Updates:** The SBPHC welcomes Jill Sweet, RN to the PHN team. Amy and Jill have focused on top 5 priorities from last meeting, namely:
 - Get access to MAVEN (both nurses have access and are just waiting for a couple of permissions)
 - Collaborating with Leslie and Nancy from BRPC
 - Plan for flu clinics (which will definitely be happening in Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and Otis)
 - Working on getting medical director
 - Setting up administrative process/sign up
 - Met with FVH to see how they can support existing infrastructure
 - Looking at needed trainings
 - There is no longer regular Chokesaver trainings- reaching out to potential providers
 - Connect/Collaborate with BPHA
 - Determining how to best support school camps, health care providers, ongoing town support for COVID and other communicable disease, etc.

Public Health Nurse Action Items

- Towns should consider how their BOH will designate Amy and Jill as their PHN, including:
 - Officially designate PHN as such at BOH meeting;
 - List PHN and email contact information on website;
 - ID decision-making/communication process will be for BOH and PHN when there is an issue.
 - Share with PHN what are each individual town's needs (flu program, unmet needs, etc.)
- **Workplan/60-day Priorities**
- **Needs Assessment:** It was agreed that a facilitated discussion on what the needs of the collaborative members would be helpful to create a work plan. This would also inform our long-term strategic plan and mission statement.
- **Work Plan/Revised Budget:** needs to be submitted to DPH as part of SAPHE grant by the end of September.
- **Branding:** We need to determine our name and logo
- **BVNA:** The BPHA hired Nancy Slattery to fill their PHN opening through the SAPHE Grant, resulting in the BVNA deciding not to renew contracts with their towns, including Alford, New Marlborough and Sheffield from the SBPHC.
- The SBPHC has the capacity to cover public health nursing needs for all towns in the collaborative, so there remains an opportunity to use funding otherwise allocated to the BVNA can look at their individual town's need and build capacity based on those needs.
- **Mentorship/Training:** There is money built in the grant for sustainability. Discussion about attending MHOA conference and MHOA membership was discussed. There were several people at the meeting who were interested in attending.

- **Self-Sustainability**
- We must educate our town leaders on costs, gaps and needs with tangible data in order to position individual BOH/Health Departments to receive a portion of the significant funding anticipated to come into towns.
- We can help each other raise up our support while maintaining each towns' autonomy.
- Efforts to brand the collaborative as an entity will help this process.
- **Self-Sustainability Action Items**
- Jim will meet with a graphic designer and have them
- Group should agree upon a name (SBPHC or SCPHC)
- Jayne will reach out to facilitators and try to schedule a special meeting