



Serving the Towns of Alford, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox,  
Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis,  
Sandisfield, Sheffield, Stockbridge and Tyringham

*"The mission of the Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative is to leverage partnerships in order to provide quality public health services that directly improve the health and well-being of the entire community."*

## **SBPHC Meeting Minutes**

**April 14, 2023 @ 9AM**

**Great Barrington Conference Room, 334 Main St., Great Barrington, MA  
w/ Remote Option**

**SBPHC Present in Person:** Pat Levine (SHF), Jim Wilusz (LEE), Dianne Romeo (LNX), Ellie Lovejoy (MTW), Jayne Smith (ALF), Jordan Chretien (NMB), Jill Sweet (SBPHC Public Health Nurse)

**SBPHC Present Remote:** Henry Schwerner, MD (STK), Brandi Page (OTS), Tom Mensi (MNT), Scott McFarland (NMB), Ileana Carrion (DPH), Ivy Goodwin (TTHD Co-responder)

**Meeting adjourned at 9:02 am:**

### **1. ADMINISTRATIVE**

- **Approval of March 17, 2023 Special SBPHC Minutes:** Ellie Lovejoy made a motion to approve the minutes. Dianne Romeo seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0 (Jordan Chretien not present).

Those in attendance introduced themselves to Ileana Carrion, who is the SBPHC PHE Grant Manager.

### **2. PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING PROGRAM**

- **Public Health Nursing Update:** Jill went over the GetBoosted campaign results, which covered a lot of towns given that SBPHC was the only vaccine program in Berkshire County participating in the GetBoosted campaign. Jill has received another grant for free car seats from the state. Pittsfield WIC has been referring a lot of people to the car seat program, that will change when the Pittsfield Health Department gets their program up and running. The car seat event held in collaboration with the Sheffield Police Department went well and she is looking at doing another car seat event in Lenox. Sheffield Kiwanis has also asked to collaborate with us to do a "Bike Rodeo" this summer, which will provide free helmets and safety education to youth. This likely will be done at Muddy Brook and Kiwanis/SBPHC will be looking at finding a grant to pay for the helmets. Jill is going to Babypalooza this weekend and will highlight the SBPHC car seat program.
- **FY23 Q3 SBPHC Quarterly Report:** Jill Sweet presented the FY23 Q3 Public Health Quarterly Report. Ellie asked about whether DPH is following up on the Giardia cases in MAVEN. Jill explained that the DPH Epidemiology Program reads all her notes and will put together trends. The foodborne illness investigations have gotten a lot more robust under SBPHC program. The cumulative number of each illness so far this quarter has been added to the report so that the Q4 numbers will summarize the entire year. The MAVEN system was a big upgrade from the olden days when communicable disease reports were faxed to health departments. The one issue with MAVEN is that it goes by zip code, which is not always best for towns that share zip codes with other towns.

### 3. OLD BUSINESS

- **DPH Capacity Assessment Summary:** DPH has asked for confirmation of BOH budgets and FTEs. DPH has asked that we report FY23 budget numbers for the BOH in the individual towns as well as update each town's FTE for BOH staff. Jayne expressed concern that for towns where the transfer station expenses are included in the BOH budget the numbers per capita would be inflated, which is already a concern with providing public health services in rural towns given the addition of septic system work, wells, ballooning summer populations, etc. We are hoping that we will be given the opportunity to quantify when a budget amount does not reflect the actual local funding available to Boards of Health. Jim added he has concerns about equity issues and that the better-funded programs in the Collaborative, such as Tri-Town and Great Barrington, are going to skew the per capita funding which hopefully won't be to the detriment of the lowest funded towns in the Collaborative that are struggling with core public health services. Pat had also mentioned that the entire clerk line item is in the BOH budget even though the clerk serves 4 different boards, so is not an accurate representation of BOH capacity.

Having additional funding to build administrative and capacity for special projects will allow us to create quality public health campaigns. Jayne mentioned that the sharps program is a good example of an important campaign that could benefit from additional capacity.

- **2023 Priorities and Goals:** We will start going to towns and see what they need and set our priorities accordingly.
- **Opioid Settlement Fund Updates:** There was an article in the Berkshire Eagle today about what towns will be receiving through the Opioid Settlement funds. We are still working with Stockbridge and Lee on how they will spend the opioid funds. Mt Washington has filed the required signoffs digitally after discovering that the information faxed earlier was not sufficient.

### 4. NEW BUSINESS

- **PHE Proposed Work Plan:** Jayne pulled together a draft work plan based on what we would like to propose to DPH, but what we can do is largely dependent on how much funding we will be receiving from the State. Jayne summarized that if we can get a full-time inspector/health agent, per-diem inspectors, a full-time community health worker and the shared-services coordinator full time and have funding to add PermitEyes 2020 to interested communities, we would have the ability to meet the five objectives included as part of the work plan.

We will be doing a push for each town to tell us what their priorities are. Once we find out how much funding we will get, we will fine tune our work plan for FY24. Pat encouraged the SBPHC to look toward collaborating with other community agencies to build capacity, especially with services to the immigrant populations in our region. Jim discussed that our current work plan incorporates a lot of collaboration, as shown on the quarterly report.

The members decided to revisit once we get information on the level of funding that we will be getting as part of the capacity assessment. Jayne suggested to Ileana that DPH may want to consider the work plans to inform funding to ensure that the funding meets the needs of what SSA would like to do to meet the needs of their communities.

Ileana thanked SBPHC for inviting her to the table. She understands that it is hard to build a work plan without the money about additional funding. We will at least be level funded for the PHE grant but no additional information is available at this time. The concerns we express to her do get passed along to the supervisor and others to consider and make changes. She thinks we are doing great work and likes

being part of our conversation and seeing the success of our shared services arrangement. She will pass along information as soon as she gets it. She anticipates that the deadline for the work plan will be extended to align with the information on funding.

- **SAPHE 2.0 Bill Letter of Support:** The Western MA Public Health group has drafted a letter of support for the SAPHE 2.0 act that is due to be being distributed Monday. Jayne asked that individuals consider signing the letter. If BOH wants to send their own letter, they are welcome to use the draft letter included in the agenda packet, but to please change the wording of “a Car Seat Fitting Program” just be changed to “Car Seat Program”.

## 5. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Sustainability Subcommittee:** Met once so far, however further meetings have been postponed until we get information on additional funding from the State.

## 6. MEMBER UPDATES

- **Mt Washington:** The Mt Washington BOH has 4 members of the 5-member board as part of the transition from a 3-person board to a 5-person board.
- **Stockbridge:** Jim thanked Dr. Schwerner for his service to the Stockbridge BOH and that he is not running again and so this will be his last meeting representing the Stockbridge BOH.
- **Sheffield:** Pat mentioned she has requested a meeting with the police department to discuss emergency response to ensure the BOH understands its role during an emergency.
- **SBPHC:** Jim thanked everyone for attending the CART meeting and actively participating in this process. We are doing great things for public health.

## 7. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME

## 8. UPCOMING TRAININGS

- **Free SBPHC Chokesaver Courses: 4/19/23 (GB), 4/20/23 (TTHD), 5/15/23 (SHF):** These chokesaver trainings are being offered for free in collaboration with David Katzenstein. The Sheffield location is TBD and will be either at the Senior Center or Library. Jayne said it would be helpful to put together a list of food establishments to get information on trainings out directly.
- **Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>: Let’s Talk About Food Waste**
- **June 3, 2023: MAHB Annual Certification Program:** This is especially important with the new ruling by the MA supreme court that limits remedies for disruption at public meetings. Jim mentioned that we may want to approach MMA about doing a training on how to set rules and react to disruptions.
- **Mass Local Institute On Your Time Trainings**
- **ICS 100: Introduction to the Incident Command System:** Jayne mentioned that we should be trying to have BOH members take the emergency management trainings soon. It is a self-paced online program.
- **SIMS 700: Introduction to National Incident Management System**

Jayne also mentioned that the Resource Recovery Training would be good for BOH plus health care providers, non-profits, EMS, Pharmacies, etc. to attend in order to develop a baseline understanding of substance abuse, stigma, and harm reduction.

## 9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **May 12, 2023 SBPHC Meeting:** In-person with remote option. The group indicated they like the new OWL setup in the Great Barrington Conference Room that allowed for more interaction with the remote participants.

**10. ADJORN MEETING:** Ellie Lovejoy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dianne Romeo seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:03am