**SBPHC Meeting Minutes**

**August 11, 2023 @ 9AM**

**Great Barrington Conference Room, 334 Main St., Great Barrington, MA**

**w/ Zoom Remote Option** <https://zoom.us/j/95602362119>

**Present in person:** Pat Levine, Chair (SHF), Rebecca Jurczyk, Vice Chair (GTB), Dianne Romeo (LNX), Scott McFarland & Jordan Chretien (NMB), Jim Wilusz (STK), Jayne Smith (ALF), Jill Sweet (PHN), Ellie Lovejoy (Resident)

**Present remotely:** Brandi Page, (OTS), Steve Rubenstein (SND), Mike Hugo (MAHB)

*Meeting started at 9:00am*

1. **ADMINISTRATIVE**

* **Approval of May 12, 2023 SBPHC Minutes:** Dianne Romeo made a motion to approve the minutes. Jim Wilusz seconded the motion. Motion passed 8-0.

1. **PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING UPDATE**

* **FY 23 Q4 SBPHC Quarterly Report:** Jill Sweet reviewed the Quarter 4 Report which also serves as an annual report for the Collaborative. She also reported that she will be participating in a car set program in Lee in September. She reported that is seeing several different diseases this summer including several Cyclospora (possibly from unwashed fruit) and a Vibrio case (possibly from raw oysters). Follow up on cases includes a process of getting receipts from grocery stores and submitting them to the epidemiologist. Recent cases are not listed the quarterly report because they occurred in FY24 Q1.
* **Fall 2023 Clinic Schedule:** The flu clinic schedule is set and COVID will be added on once it is available in late September/early October. Mike Hugo asked Jill whether there was an idea of how many kids are still in need of mandatory immunizations before school starts. Jill said that she could reach out to the school nurses and see if there are many students needing mandatory vaccinations to start school, especially kindergarteners, and get back to him.
* **Tick and Mosquito Public Education:** Jill passed out resources on tick and mosquito disease prevention to members. More are available on the MA Clearinghouse site.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**

* **FY24 PHE Work Plan Revisions and Update:** Jayne presented a clean version of a PHE work plan that was submitted and still being reviewed by DPH. The focus of this workplan is to work towards each Board of Health to meet state standards. Pat asked everyone to look over the work plan as soon as possible and get feedback back to Jayne.
* **Articles of Operation:** The Articles of Operation, once adopted, will lay the groundwork of how we operate. Mike Hugo commented that this is the first Article of Operation in the PHE program and he was going to suggest it to other groups.
  + **Article IV: Sections 1 &2:** Jayne noted that there was a list of primary and alternate SBPHC Board Members in the packet and asked that each town let the SBPHC know who are the designated primary and alternate in their upcoming meetings and get back to her so we can update the list. It was suggested that the wording be changed to that the designees and alternates will be appointed by their respective Board of Health. Scott McFarland made the suggestion that the wording under Article IV Sections 1 and 2 be changed to “Designees shall be Board of Health members, Board of Health Agent or any other individual that the Board of Health deems will represent the public health interest of their town.”
  + **Article IV Section 3: Officers** A definition of officers was added in this draft because it was referred to in a previous draft but not defined. The group changed the heading for Article IV Section 3 to Leadership Team. There was consensus that the leadership team, consisting of a president and vice president should be voted in annually at the start of the fiscal year or the next meeting after the start of the fiscal year.
  + **Article IV Sections 3-6:** Revised to define Executive Committee and it was suggested to reconfigure this to be sure that we aren’t defining the group and laying out mechanism at the same time.
  + **Article V:** Added Board Responsibilities to include distribute Quarterly reports and report activities back to the individual Boards of Health. There was discussion on the role of the BOH in evaluation of employees and program and it was decided the Board would provide feedback of the fiscal host about collaborative employees and services with the actual evaluation being done by the fiscal host.

We need to ensure that all BOH have access to the MAHB Legal Guide. Jim wondered if there are other guidebooks or resources we should ensure are available to member Boards of Health. Mike H. suggested that all the towns be members of MAHB to get access to their resources, including the legal guide. Jim wondered if MHAB could invoice the SBPHC for each town under one invoice to make it easier on TTHD admin staff. Mike said that he would send an invoice next week. Mike clarified that the membership is per each Board of Health and that individual members would gain access as part of each towns’ BOH membership. Mike asked that everyone send the updated BOH member information. Jayne indicated that she would resend the list of what she has.

* + **Article V (2nd) Membership**

**Section 3:** **Addition of Member Towns.** Mike Hugo suggested that the wording be changed to “workforce and geographic feasibility” as considerations before adding additional towns.

**Section 4- Withdrawal.** Pat Levine asked that we change the word “allocated” to “encumbered” in Section 4 and that be changed in Section 3.

* **Article VI Decision Making Process:** Remove soft words such as “typically” and “when at all possible”. With cleaned-up definition of “Executive Committee”, leave in examples of time-sensitive matters.
* **Article VII- Fiscal Host of SBPHC Roles and Responsibilities:** Pat suggested defining fiscal host in Article IV. Section 2 cleaned up to include the responsibility of conducting employee performance evaluations.
* **Article X Board Meetings:**

**Section 1: Change Leadership Committee to Governing Board Meetings:** confirmed that we will continue to be required to meet quarterly or otherwise specified. Mike Hugo updated the group that there may be a change that will allow for the the notification of collaborative meetings to only need to legally be posted by the host town. Each town will need to put on their website that there are SBPHC minutes posted on Town of Lee, in the case of our collaborative. Mike asked we put this on our next agenda. If the group agrees to vote to do this, then we would update the Attorney General and they would, in turn, update the AG spreadsheet. Mike is also figuring out what does and does not need to be posted. Section 3 should be removed.

Ellie Lovejoy suggested reviewing shall/may language and being sure it was correct. Mike Hugo asked if Rich Mucci could look over them prior to the next meeting.

Jim announced that Jayne Smith’s position has been changed to Shared Services Manager and will be taking on the responsibility of most of collaborative business and is now the point person for the Collaborative moving forward. Any questions or concerns should be directed to Jayne and Jill. Pat thanked Jim for all of his work and leadership as he is refocusing on the work he is doing for Tri-Town Health Department and suggested a vote of confidence for Jim and the SBPHC team.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**

* **Financial Balance Sheet:** Jayne presented income and expenses for PHE that were not part of the non-PHE programs, such as vaccine reimbursement income and overtime, office setup, vaccine purchase expenses for both FY23 and FY24. It is meant to help the collaborative understand what we income and expenses we have to work with outside of the PHE grant funding and responsibilities. The COVID vaccine is anticipated to be a huge new expense in FY24. There was a conversation regarding RSV and it was agreed that we should have information out there about how people should be getting their RSV vaccine, especially as media sites start focusing on writing about flu, COVID and RSV.

We will have to purchase COVID vaccine ($100 - $130/shot) for everyone 19 and older. The state will be purchasing COVID vaccines for 18 and under. Scott McFarland was interested in knowing if we are concerned about struggling to find funds to purchase COVID Vaccine, and if so, Alliance Towns could perhaps ask Alliance to purchase COVID vaccine. Great Barrington, Sheffield and New Marlborough are eligible to ask but there is no established mechanism for SBPHC to do so. Jayne mentioned that the Vaccine Equity Grant could also be a potential source of funds for vaccine, if needed. Jill and Jayne both are helping Pittsfield to get their vaccine reimbursement program up and running.

Jim mentioned that we have a special revenue account for incoming funds from vaccines and other sources and the funds collected from the different towns.

* **New Regional Health Agent Position Update:** We have some good applications for the Shared Regional Health Agent and we anticipate that, once approved, we will be able to make an offer. This is going to greatly increase the SBPHC inspection capacity to cover inspections while also making regional programs.
* **Training Hub:** The Board looked at slides provided at the hub program introduction that was sponsored by BRPC earlier in the month. BRPC is one of 10 regional training hubs that have been established across the state. Jim shared his concern that there are issues with the structure of the training hub state program statewide, including that the requirements for a master trainer are really high and there are not a lot people in the commonwealth, much less Berkshire County, that would qualify. It is unclear whether there is capacity to have experienced professionals available to teach the individual boards of health and staff at a level higher than internal capacity. We do have a store of experienced inspectors that could possibly be used to help train our own towns if we were given access to the training of the master trainers. The hub funding dries up in three years and there is concern that the new generation of public health professionals need to have proper mentoring and training.

Mike Hugo shared that a working group has been formed to discuss this statewide issue. There is no talent pool to draw on statewide. MAHB has suggested that they put the training program out to bid to allow professional organizations to train the workforce and DPH is considering next steps.

1. **MEMBER UPDATES**

* **Berkshire VNA Suspension of Services to rural towns in South County:** Jim Wilusz shared that he and Dr. Kenny have reached out to Smitty Pignatelli and BHS to see how we can advocate to ensure VNA services are being provided to rural communities.
* **Officer Elections:** Will be on the agenda for September meeting.
* **Vaccine Clinic Staffing:** Rebecca asked if there will be enough staffing for the vaccine program. Jill shared that we have a per diem nurse to help and we are also working with MRC for additional volunteers. We are requiring pre-registration this year which will streamline the process. Early clinics will only have flu until the updated COVID booster is available in mid/late September.

1. **CITIZEN SPEAK TIME**
2. **UPCOMING TRAININGS**

* [BOH 101 Orientation](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/board-of-health-101-orientation-class-tickets-660651706037?aff=oddtdtcreator): September 14, 2023
* [Mass Local Institute: On Your Time Trainings](https://sites.bu.edu/masslocalinstitute/training/on-your-time-trainings/)
* ICS 100: [Introduction to the Incident Command System](https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c&lang=en)
* NIMS 700: [Introduction to National Incident Management System](https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b&lang=en)

1. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

* **September 8th, 2023 SBPHC Meeting**: In-person with remote option

1. **ADJORN MEETING-** Meeting adjourned at 10:50am