



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

CPHS Oversight Board Minutes August 27, 2020 Online Board Meeting

Present:

- Bernardston – Jean Page
- Buckland - Marti Taft-Ferguson
- Charlemont - Rob Lingle, Doug Telling
- Conway – Veronique Blanchard, Marie Iken (joined 6:06), Devon Whitney-Deal (joined 5:55)
- Deerfield – Trevor McDaniel
- Hawley - Cass Nawrocki
- Heath - Betsy Kovacs (joined 5:55)

- Leyden - Beth Kuzdeba
- Rowe - Maggie Rice
- Shelburne – Jody Stetson, Fritz Vohr

Absent: Gill, Erving, Monroe, Colrain,

Staff: Phoebe Walker, Lisa White, Melanie Zamojski, Randy Crochier, Lisa Danek Burke, Liz Jacobson-Carroll

Agenda Item	Discussion, Action
Approve Minutes: 6/25/20 7/9/20	Taft-Ferguson moved to accept the minutes of the June 25, 2020 and the July 9, 2020 minutes, Vohr seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously with abstentions by Vohr, Nawrocki, Page, and Lingle.
Most pressing COVID question this week;	<p>Several attendees are concerned about the variability of information from the DPH, Gov. Baker, the CDC and others regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the virus' contagiousness, particularly outside in close proximity, and in recreational bodies of water; • if/when tests and re-tests should be administered; • guidelines/orders for numbers of people allowed at gatherings; • when/how to open schools; air circulation requirements for classrooms; and the availability of consistent and comprehensible data for BOHs to use when making closure decisions; • differences between rules for restaurants with live music, and music venues with menus – and the serving of drinks without food at bars vs. doing the same at restaurants; • sporting events open to the public <p>Also of concern: members of the public (particularly those recreating on and near the Deerfield River) eschewing guidelines; the effect of Hurricane Laura on the spread of the disease; rural residents' inability to stay informed due to inadequate internet service; and the difficulty, for parents, of supporting the remote education of their elementary school-aged children. There was a brief discussion of the applicability of pooled testing through septic effluent and otherwise.</p> <p>In response to questions, Walker confirmed that a single towns' BOH has the authority to close an elementary school in that town even when it is part of a regional school district. Crochier confirmed that the BOH has the authority to shut down a wedding for non-compliance with guidelines, though he recommends earlier intervention.</p>

<p>FRCOG Update</p>	<p><u>Budget Reports</u>: Citing finances in fluctuation, Walker stated that it will be September before a formal budget report is possible. She plans to submit soon, to individual towns, MOUs regarding CARES Act funding for flu clinics and MAVEN, and is hopeful that other state funding may become available.</p> <p><u>Statewide Advocacy Report</u>: Walker and Sen. Comerford are advocating to secure long-term funding for public health in Massachusetts, and to ensure that rural and regional issues are considered in the collection and interpretation of data statewide. (At this time, Walker recommends members consult the website of the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, which includes a weekly summary of COVID-19 data for each county.) Further, they, along with other legislators, are providing feedback to the state regarding the currently inadequate travel quarantine data.</p> <p><u>Local COVID Meetings Update</u>: Walker reported that COG staff are facilitating meetings between public health nurses and school nurses to collaboratively assess data and develop school re-opening and closing plans. Further, she announced new bi-weekly (Mondays at 4 PM, starting 9/14/20) COVID Roundtable meetings for all available and interested CPHS LBOH members. These will be informal, drop-in meetings with current updates of COVID news and then roundtable discussions.</p> <p><u>Flu Clinic Prep for Fall 2020</u>: Walker and White proposed hiring, for September – December, experienced and skilled CPHS flu-clinic volunteer Barbara Wroblewski to track, verify, troubleshoot and enter data into the state MIIS system (required for insurance submittal). Doing so will facilitate the processing and reimbursement of insurance claims, reduce exposure between clinic attendees and volunteers, and enable White to focus on other work, including COVID-19 response. Wroblewski’s average work-week would be 10 hours long, paid with CARES Act funding or vaccine administration funding. White emphasized that Wroblewski’s knowledge and experience with the CPHS clinics, related insurance claims, and complex system software make her the right person for the position. Taft-Ferguson made a motion to hire Barbara Wroblewski as described above; Stetson seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously, by roll call, with abstentions from Kovacs and Whitney-Deal.</p> <p>Walker indicated that Oversight Board members will be hearing more from CPHS Nurse Melanie Zamojski, whose responsibilities have expanded, regarding COVID cases in MAVEN through the late summer and fall.</p>
<p>School Reopening Update</p>	<p>Crochier and Danek Burke reported on their ongoing work with several school systems in determining re-opening timelines and methods of instruction for the fall semester. Of note was MTRSD’s plan to assemble a 12-member task force to determine criterion and protocols regarding the resumption of in-person instruction, on which a school committee vote will be taken soon. Educators and parents of Heath children are working to create learning pods in specific locations to ensure that each has internet access during the school day. Crochier cited Frontier Nurse Leader Meg Burch and other school nurses and public health nurses for excellent work in drafting guidelines for their peers, school administrators and LBOH members throughout CPHS. White recognized Crochier and Danek Burke for helping each school develop its particular plan. In response to a question from McDaniel, Walker promised to seek information regarding the requirement that school HVAC systems recirculate air twice hourly from State official(s) she will meet with on Monday.</p>
<p>Public Health Nursing Report</p>	<p><u>Flu Season Update</u>: White reported that preparations are well underway for flu clinics throughout the region, noting that some are taking place as emergency dispensing site drills in order to prepare for a future COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Frontier will use a drive-through format, which had been successful when last tried in 2013. She emphasized the importance of vaccinations this year, and said that the Commonwealth is requiring all school-aged children receive them by December 31, 2020. Both CPHS has secured promise of more than the usual number of vaccinations in order to accommodate an increased number of attendees at the clinics; they</p>

	<p>anticipate delivery to refrigeration units in the 3rd or 4th weeks of September. The acquisition of some supplies, and recruitment of medical and non-medical volunteers continues. Posters, fillable insurance forms and an informational web page will be available by the end of the week, she concluded. Walker will send suggestions for Reverse 911 messages for each town, and encouraged members to vigorously market the clinics.</p> <p><u>MAVEN Coverage Update:</u> White and Zamojski reviewed numbers of COVID-19 cases (77), close contacts (125) in our district since March. Some cases are being detected via pre-surgery testing; their close associates of the past 48 hours are being contacted and asked to quarantine. Of the two current cases, one is a resident who vacationed in a high-risk area, and the other an asymptomatic carrier.</p> <p><u>Coronavirus Update – including CTC Status:</u> White reported on continuing and improving collaboration with the Contact Tracing Collaborative, especially in the flow of information to BOH members and emergency response workers, and noted that CTC may become more involved in the future.</p> <p><u>Arbovirus Activity:</u> Referencing the peak mosquito season, White indicated that three cases of EEE have been identified statewide – two in the east, and one in Hampden county. No mosquitos have tested positive in Western MA, however, so the infected individual may have contracted the disease elsewhere, Taft-Ferguson indicated.</p>
Short Term Rental Decision	<p>Crochier and Walker summarized the group’s previous discussion regarding whether or not to implement a CPHS STR permit requirement prior to the onset of the pandemic. Crochier noted the importance of appropriately functioning structures and systems – home, water, septic, spa/pool – in protecting the safety and well-being of both renters and renters. Telling motioned to approve the addition of annual Short Term Rental permitting to the list of fee-based activities of the CPHS, with STR permit fees not exceeding \$100; Vohr seconded the motion, and the motion passed with 7 affirmative votes (Shelburne, Heath, Charlemont, Rowe, Bernardston, Leyden, Buckland) and 1 negative (Hawley). Walker indicated that an individual CPHS BOH can over-ride the policy set by the CPHS, and she will send information on how to do so to Nawrocki.</p>
Health Agents Reports	<p><u>Abandoned Housing Initiative:</u> After meeting with the Attorney General’s Office, and then completing inspections of abandoned homes in two participating towns (Buckland and Gill) in July, Crochier and Danek Burke met with FRCOG’s Alyssa Larose to further plan CPHS’s involvement in the no-cost MA Abandoned Housing Initiative to move local homes into receivership. Two additional towns (Leyden and Charlemont) voted to join the effort subsequently, and surveys/inspections of those are being planned. The regional health district grant received by the state would allow the agents to do this work with two more towns – for a total of six – participating towns eventually; Crochier suggested that members in non-participating municipalities begin to pay greater attention to abandoned homes as they drive around town. Walker indicated that FRCOG has developed a toolkit for members evaluating vacant housing, and has new non-health district grant funding to enable Larose to gather municipal official stakeholders, such as those from fire departments and tax collectors’ offices, to prioritize properties.</p> <p><u>BOH Binders – Distribution Plan:</u> Large tabbed binders (with information on BOH roles and responsibilities, training opportunities, pertinent regulations and policies, contact information, etc.) are available for pick-up at FRCOG; some may be delivered to town offices as staff travels the region, Danek Burke said. Walker indicated that new face covering signs are available also.</p> <p><u>Business Update :</u> Danek Burke reported that in the 44 days since the last Oversight Board meeting, and in addition to COVID-related work and ongoing food inspections,</p>

	<p>staff have been active in the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title 5: conducted 23 initial inspections, issued 18 permits, and conducted 8 final inspections• Private wells: conducted 1 inspection, issued 1 permit, and reviewed 8 plans <p><u>Traveler Data:</u> Crochier referenced data collected from forms required of MA travelers from out of state, epidemiological graphs from CTC/PIH, and efforts to have MA address designated as a required field on the form. He has cancelled a couple of weddings for non-compliance with the governor's orders, and has been busy working with school athletic directors, town recreation directors, and river tubing and rafting companies. He expressed gratitude for the quick action of Walker and Linda Dunlavy in mid-July when Deerfield River activity escalated to dangerous levels; their phone calls resulted in assistance from the state within hours.</p> <p><u>Member Updates:</u> tabled to the upcoming COVID Roundtable meeting.</p>
	<p>The meeting adjourned at 7:11 PM</p>