



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

CPHS Oversight Board – 4/22/21 Online Meeting Minutes

Member Attendance:

Bernardston-	Jean Page	Gill-	Randy Crochier
Buckland-	Marti Taft-Ferguson, Peggy	Hawley-	Cass Nawrocki
Hart		Heath-	Betsy Kovacs
Charlemont-	Doug Telling	Leyden-	Beth Kuzdeba
Colrain-	absent	Monroe-	absent
Conway-	Devon Whitney-Deal	Northfield-	absent
Deerfield-	Trevor McDaniel	Rowe-	Maggie Rice
Erving-	absent	Shelburne-	Ron Kelter, Fritz Vohr

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

Meeting Minutes: Minutes for the March meeting were not available for review.

Public Health Nursing Report & COVID Disease Status, Homebound Vaccinations

Zamojski reported a decline in COVID cases – currently 11 in the CPHS district, some of whom have been very sick, others relatively young – and a possible cluster at FCTS. The state has stopped reporting on the variant, as its prevalence is widespread, she said. Also, there have been some “breakthrough” cases of fully vaccinated people becoming infected in the district. Close to 4 dozen homebound residents have been vaccinated.

Franklin County Vaccine Collaborative Vaccine Plan for May and Beyond

Jacobson-Carroll mentioned that the first FRCOG clinic at GCC was running smoothly, but that those preparing the syringes were less able to extract extra doses from vials than they had been at previous clinics. Walker reported that the City of Greenfield will be concluding its vaccination efforts at the Zon Center in mid-May, and sending its first-dose patients to the FRCOG/GCC clinics for their 2nd doses. She noted that the CHCFC is receiving more doses from the state than it can administer, and some may be re-allocated locally. While the FRCOG is planning clinics at GCC for at least another six weeks, Walker prompted a discussion on what metric CPHS members would recommend be used to determine when these should close down. Metrics might be based on the percentage of county residents vaccinated, a declining demand for appointments, ample availability of appointments through local pharmacies or local physicians’ offices, or evidence that the clinic is serving primarily out-of-county residents, for example. Taft-Ferguson suggested that a stable clinic location will favorably impact appointment registration. Vohr expressed his skepticism regarding herd-immunity. Kovacs would like data on vaccination rates in multiple age groups and she advocated for CPHS to focus on outreach to the vaccine-hesitant. There was

discussion of the Vaccine Roundtable hosting a speaker on the latter topic, and on the potential for hilltown residents, in particular, to experience direct phone calls as an invasion of their privacy.

Health Agents Report

Danek Burke reported that work continues on the Neighborhood Renewal Program (formerly known as the Abandoned Housing Initiative), noting that the Attorney General's Office is actively seeking investors for some of the properties identified. She encouraged towns that are not as far along in the process as Buckland and Gill to nonetheless continue working on their inventory of abandoned homes, and reported that the volume of Title 5 inspection requests is unusually high and keeping her busy.

Crochier asked for a vote on previously discussed change to strengthen the wording of the contract between CPHS and the septic haulers regarding the requirement that a health agent be present for the pumping. ***Telling made a motion to revise the wording of the template for the contract between CPHS and septic haulers as discussed; Rice seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.***

Crochier is planning, in response to demand, a ServSafe/Chokesave class for mid-June or early July, perhaps with a ServSafe instructor other than himself, and with both on-line and in-person components. BOH members will be invited to audit the class at no charge. Also, Crochier is working with area summer camps to enable them to open, and has issued temporary food permits for varied mobile vendors for every weekend through mid-December.

There was discussion of towns' ability -- given a tight time-frame and the requirement for both a public hearing and a detailed alternative -- for opting out of the state's plan to spray the area with a mosquito deterrent. The state is not likely to spray towns enrolled in the Mosquito Control District, it was noted.

FRCOG Fiscal and Grant Report

- Walker asked members to write or otherwise contact state legislators to encourage them to fund public health infrastructure, including local BOHs and health districts (or to thank them for already having done so).
- The CPHS is operating within budget, and may need to return a few small amounts of money not used due to the necessity of focusing on COVID-related work.
- CARES Act funding remains for each town to continue contact tracing; in early summer, Walker may seek recommendations for how to spend remaining funds
- A budget overview is available in last month's meeting materials; Walker welcomes "tire kicking" questions at any time

Further, Walker reported that new signs promoting continuation of COVID-safe practices are available upon request for use on ballfield fences. Tick-testing is once again available at reduced cost for residents of CPHS towns; the program has spun-off from its UMass home into an independent non-profit organization.

Member Updates

Bernardston BOH reported that the elementary school is operating in-person, several Title 5 inspections are taking place, the library is offering some curbside browsing, the COA is delivering food and flowers, and that residents are getting vaccinated and complying with COVID-related safety guidelines.

Buckland BOH was impressed with the strict safety protocols implemented by the recently departed television film crew, will consider mosquito spraying issue at a meeting tomorrow night, is working with the library staff and Bridge of Flowers committee regarding limited re-opening, and will be weighing in on an apartment re-zoning issue. Town Hall is open by appointment.

Charlemont BOH is grateful to all those involved in running the recent vaccine clinic at Berkshire East, and reported that even if it rescinds its BOH closure of town hall, the select board will dictate the re-opening.

Conway BOH is encouraging town staff to write up a re-opening plan for its review, is talking to organizers about how to re-start the baseball program, and reports a low volume of Title 5 inspections. Gill BOH reported a delay in the re-opening of town hall due to staff illness.

Heath BOH said that mask-wearing compliance is high, and expressed gratitude to all those involved in running the recent vaccine clinic at Berkshire East. Some town hall business is being conducted outdoors by appointment.

Leyden's Select Board voted to allow spraying without consulting the BOH. Some boards and committees are meeting in person, including the Select Board. After today's training with Atty. Sbarra, BOH members have concerns about open meeting law compliance in their town.

Rowe BOH is grateful to all those involved in running the recent vaccine clinic at Berkshire East, continues to work toward getting all residents vaccinated, does not intend to open town offices anytime soon, is aiming to spend grant funds on installing a paper compactor at the transfer station before a deadline, and is interviewing candidates for transfer station attendant positions.

Walker indicated that Open Meeting Law can be followed with hybrid meetings, and that FRCOG has begun to hold these.

The Buckland large animal inspector verified rumors of a recent spike in the sheep population with a glimpse through her "lamb cam".

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 PM.

Meeting materials:

- CPHSOvBrd Agenda_2021.04.22
- CHPS COVID cases by week and Homebound update – as of Apr 22
- Draft revised CPHS T-5 Inspection Policy 03042021
- [Click here to read the state mosquito spraying opt out process](#)
- Save the date for 5/13 Receivership Training 3-5 PM: AGO Receiver Training Flyer Final
- FY22-Budget-Fact-Sheet-Local-Regional-Public-Health
- BIPOC VACCINE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION FLYER final