



Public Health
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Cooperative Public Health Service
Franklin Regional Council of Governments

CPHS Oversight Board Online Meeting Minutes Month August 25, 2022

Member Attendance:

Ashfield	Caroline White	Gill-	Jeff Blomstedt
Bernardston-	Barbara Killeen	Hawley-	absent
Buckland-	Carmela Lanza-Weil	Heath-	Susan Gruen
Charlemont-	Mae Tanner, Doug Telling	Leyden-	Beth Kuzdeba
Colrain-	absent	Monroe-	absent
Conway-	Jackie Choate, Kat Llamas, Devon Whitney-Deal,	Northfield-	Ali Wahlstom
Erving-	absent	Rowe-	absent
		Shelburne-	absent

Staff Attendance: Randy Crochier, Lisa Danek Burke, Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Meg Ryan, Kurt Schellenberg, Lisa White

Introductions & Icebreaker

Member introduced themselves and referenced their favorite local fairs, and those coming soon. They included the Cummington Fair, Scarecrow In The Park, the Franklin County Fair, Chili Fest, Festival of the Hills, the Heath Fair, the Big E, the Leyden Tractor Pull and Craft Fair, Heath Arts Festival, Heath Roots to Eat, Garlic Fest, Monster Dash, and Ashfield Fall Festival. Additionally, a couple of members mentioned that they are seeing post-paxlovid COVID-19 infections and contagion in their communities.

Approve Meeting Minutes

With a motion by Killeen, seconded by Lanza-Weil, the minutes of the June 30, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously, with one abstention (Kuzdeba).

Public Health Nursing Report

On behalf of Maureen O'Reilly, Crochier requested and received feedback on the content and distribution of her monthly article on a timely topic. September's focus will be recovery, he noted, and referenced a in-person event to be hosted by the Arms Library on Tuesday, Sept 20th at 7pm.

White indicated that the summer COVID-19 vaccination clinics have gone well, with large turnouts, and will be wrapping up soon. They have been coordinated by CPHS, and run by a DPH-assigned vendor (recently Behavioral Health Group) with support from the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). This same team will run a series of clinics in the fall to administer the anticipated single-dose bi-valent vaccine targeting the currently predominant variant(s).

The nurses continue to focus on members of vulnerable populations unable to utilize the clinics, and have administered 200 doses in 2022 thus far. They plan to administer both the COVID-19 and influenza

vaccines at Walk-In-Wellness clinics and during visits to the homebound this fall. The wellness clinics have expanded in scope to include public housing sites for the elderly and disabled, she said.

White reviewed the back-to-school guidelines and recommendations from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Among other recommendations are the support of those wanting to wear masks (as universal masking, except for in health offices, is no longer recommended), the limiting of school testing to symptomatic individuals only (as surveillance testing and test-to-stay programs, along with contact tracing, are no longer recommended), encouraging vaccination, and enhancing ventilation. The state is no longer funding COVID-19 related programs in the schools. Personal responsibility is to be encouraged.

Housing as a Driver of Health Discussion: Pre-Rental Housing Inspection

Referencing a video he had distributed earlier, Crochier initiated discussion regarding whether or not CPHS should develop a pre-rental housing inspection program. He noted that the Greenfield/Montague/Shutesbury/Sunderland group is also considering doing so. Currently, the towns in Western MA with programs include Williamstown, North Adams, and Adams. The program would ensure that properties meet the housing code, protect both landlords and tenants, and avoid more complicated situations and conflicts down the road. While sometimes hesitant initially, landlords usually come to champion the program, he said. Discussion topics included concerns regarding CPHS staff workload, and an incentivizing fee structure. Conversation shifted to the effect of short-term rentals (which are permitted separately, and would not be included in this program) on local housing stock.

Co-Chair Election & Oversight Board Operating Procedures Review

Llamas volunteered for the open position of Co-Chair. *Tanner moved to elect Llamas to the position of Co-Chair of the CPHS Oversight Board, with Telling continuing as the other Co-Chair; Killeen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by roll call.*

Blomsted moved to accept the revised CPHS Oversight Board Operating Procedures as presented; Gruen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by roll call.

September 22 Meeting & Annual Meeting Planning

Crochier described the pre-COVID practice of holding an annual meeting with a catered dinner, and a speaker (and inviting other town officials) during the first half of October. He will send a Doodle poll regarding preferences for dates and venues (in-person or virtual) for both the September meeting and the October annual meeting.

Health Agents Report

Danek Burke reported on the state of the drought, currently level 3, in Franklin County and throughout the state. Among other impacts, she noted increased wildfire activity, extremely low-flowing streams, elevated fresh water temperatures, unusual bacteria levels and algae blooms in ponds (all with long-term impacts on species), bathing beach closures, water use restrictions, costly agricultural impacts, and drops in reservoir levels. While groundwater levels respond to drought more slowly, they too are down. Flyers promoting water-saving tips are available on the FRCOG website.

Crochier reported that CPHS has received 110 permit applications in just 8 weeks, in part due to applications for temporary food permits for seasonal fairs in Heath and elsewhere. September is food safety month, he added; he is distributing a related flyer in English and Spanish. He anticipates offering a ServSafe class in early November.

New tobacco laws that trigger high fines and suspended licenses (up to \$5000 and 30 days) recently prompted Crochier to write to all retail businesses with tobacco sales licenses in the district. It included a link to appropriate training for staff members, which the business owners had requested, as well as a summary of the law and the various repercussions for violations. There was a brief discussion of the tobacco sales compliance checks conducted with the assistance of trained young people.

Crochier reported progress in the area of abandoned housing renewal, citing the perseverance of Buckland, and Gill officials in bringing about gradual change in their towns. He mentioned the possibility of a class on the fundamentals of board of health management.

Telling closed the meeting with thanks to CPHS staff; he has been on the Charlemont Board of Health since before it joined CPHS and finds the difference “amazing.”

Budget Reports – tabled.

Lanza-Weil motioned to adjourn, Kuzdeba seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Documents Viewed or Referenced:

- CPHSOvBrd Agenda_2022.08.25
- 2022.06.30 CPHS OB Minutes DRAFT
- Current COVID guidance and Comm Health Ed and Flu slides for OB meeting 25 aug 22
- video of the June Pre-Rental Housing Inspection workshop hosted by Phoebe Walker and WMAPHA: https://youtu.be/ZS_HOscySP4
- CPHS OV BRD-op_proc.draft revisions-2022