



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
**Cooperative Public Health Service**  
Franklin Regional Council of Governments

## CPHS Oversight Board Online Meeting Minutes February 23, 2023

### Member Attendance:

Ashfield	Caroline White	Hawley-	Hussain Hamdan
Bernardston-	absent	Heath-	Susan Gruen
Buckland-	absent	Leyden-	Beth Kuzdeba
Charlemont-	Doug Telling	Monroe-	absent
Colrain-	Nina Martin-Anzuoni	Northfield-	absent
Conway-	Kat Llamas, Jackie Choate	Rowe-	Herb Butzke
Erving-	absent	Shelburne-	Fritz Vohr
Gill-	absent		

### Staff Attendance:

Randy Crochier, Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Maureen O'Reilly, Meg Ryan, Kurt Schellenberg, Lisa White

**Regrets:** Phoebe Walker

### Introductions & Town Updates

Regarding how opioid settlement funds will be used in their towns, representatives indicated the state of discussions within and between their BOHs and BOSs.

- **Ashfield:** The BOH has not discussed the matter.
- **Charlemont:** Upon receipt of information from Phoebe Walker, the BOH will forward their recommendations to the BOS.
- **Colrain:** [not present for this agenda item]
- **Conway:** The BOH and BOS have discussed whether or not funds due to Conway should be pooled for regional efforts, but have not voted affirmatively or negatively.
- **Hawley:** The BOS/BOH has discussed this, and a final decision is pending.
- **Heath/Gruen:** The BOH is in favor of pooling the funds for regional use.
- **Leyden:** the BOS, which has the information, has not yet turned its attention to the matter.
- **Shelburne:** The BOS has not responded to the BOH's request for their thoughts on the matter, but may do so on Monday.

### Approve Meeting Minutes

As a quorum was not present, the vote was tabled until the next meeting.

### Regional Updates

Crochier summarized the plan for FRCOG's Field Training Hub, funded through MA's Public Health Excellence grant, to offer field training to health agents in all of Franklin and Hampshire Counties (excepting South

Hadley), three towns in Worcester County, and 2 towns in Hampden County. He noted the signing of the contract, and the hiring of Bri Dupras as Lead Field Training (starting 3/20/23) and Liz Jacobson-Carroll as Permitting and Training Coordinator (started part-time 2/6/23.)

Crochier indicated that the state's consulting team will share the results of DPH's Capacity Assessment of CPHS member towns at the March meeting, and will strongly encourage all oversight board members to attend. He noted that the district has grown quickly, and that he welcomes feedback about aspects of the program that need improvement.

### **Budget Update**

Crochier explained that two organizations recently announced significant increases, from FY23 to FY24, in what they will charge FRCOG. Despite the increase in rent by the FRTA, and the increase in the cost of employee health insurance by the Hampshire Group Insurance Trust, CPHS will not raise the amounts of the previously announced annual assessments to towns. Assessment figures remain available in the January meeting minutes, and will be emailed to town administrators and finance committees in the middle of March.

Staff members continue to look for opportunities to fund ongoing Age-Friendly Communities work, and to re-think the equation by which CPHS fees are calculated. Crochier will introduce a new fee schedule for oversight board review, and a vote, at an upcoming meeting.

### **Public Health Nursing Report**

Ryan mentioned presentations on understanding Alzheimer's disease and dementia in Greenfield and Bernardston, and invited attendees to contact her if they would like one in their town. FRCOG now has maps indicating which towns participate in various programs, including Age-Friendly Communities, Mass In Motion.

### **Health Agents Report**

Schellenberg has taken on greater responsibility for conducting food inspections, and will be taking a soil evaluation certification course this spring. In advance of the summer season, staff is working on clarifying and better communicating the many requirements of the Recreational Camps for Children permitting process. Further, the automatic permit renewal option in our software has been discontinued, thus encouraging the submission of current documents. Agents continue to work with Camp Apex on a pool permit application.

### **Epidemiology Update**

O'Reilly indicated that CPHS will be co-hosting a "train the trainer" course, along with Health Resources in Action (HRiA), on May 26, on NARCAN® administration. A brief on-line component will be followed by several hours of in-person practice. The course will be tailored to board of health members and town staff more than to healthcare professionals.

O'Reilly provided a summary of CPHS (excluding Deerfield) monitoring for 2022. This included 2757 cases: 21 of "reportable diseases" entered into the MA Virtual Epidemiological Network (MAVEN); 123 of tick-borne illness; 113 of influenza; and a staggering 2504 of COVID-19. Noting that BOHs/staff have a mandated responsibility to investigate MAVEN cases, Lisa White explained the four behind-the-scenes ways that this is achieved:

- Confirming lab results, then contacting the patient and provider (ex: campylobacter—a bacterial infection of the gut). This is the most common, and can be difficult, White said, as it may involve preventing the individual from returning to work, often causing financial hardship.
- Contacting a DPH epidemiologist) to determine whether the patient may have been infected (with streptococcus, for ex.) while in a congregate living facility, then working to contain the disease on-site.
- Monitoring travelers, according to CDC guidelines, upon their return to the area, especially if the patient resides in a congregate living facility – such as one of the local boarding schools – where containment work is necessary.
- Collaborating with out-of-region/state colleagues when the case involves a patient who spends time in MA, usually for employment, but resides in another state – and is therefore not logged in MAVEN but may require contact tracing. (ex: Varicella (chicken pox))

Discussion topics included the monitoring of sexually-transmitted diseases by the State, and the problematic reporting of the numbers of tick-borne disease cases by zip-code rather than municipality.

### **BOH/CPHS Work and American Public Health Association Values**

Telling summarized the four APHA values: science and evidence-based decision making; health equity; prevention and wellness; and real progress in improving health. He asked attendees to consider how to pursue these goals amidst political differences. Subsequently, he initiated discussion regarding how BOH/CPHS can partner with local communities to address our most significant public health needs.

Attendees identified these significant local public health needs:

- Addressing the specific needs of an elderly population (ex: transportation to vaccine clinics)
- Educating residents about the increasing prevalence of tick-borne disease in the area
- Providing convenient physical locations for residents to find and share information
- Offering centralized referral service, for elders and others, to relevant agencies and programs
- Locating services and programs conveniently within communities, including those that address needs for health maintenance and chronic disease management
- Inspecting food vendors
- Promoting an increase in the availability of housing

Members noted that considerations in addressing these include:

- A need for continued development of a foundation, begun in response to the pandemic, for public health education and communication
- A need to raise the awareness of the general public of the work that we do; most do not realize that we inspect food establishments, for example.
- The importance of continuing to build personal relationships within the community to enhance our status as trusted sources of information. Attending community events, especially in lieu of a dearth of public gathering spaces, is important, as is working with local leaders in public-facing municipal entities (esp. EMS), schools, service agencies, religious and civic organizations, and realtors.
- Developing a simple pair of lists itemizing what public health nurses and public health agents do

Crochier clarified the relationship between BOHs and CPHS, noting that the BOHs have authority, and that they direct CPHS agents to conduct their business – much like a school committee has authority over and directs the work of a superintendent.

### **Announcements, Future Meetings, Adjournment**

Telling recognized the extensive work of O'Reilly to improve and expand communication within the district. He asked attendees to consider what they learned during the pandemic that they can incorporate into their ongoing work.

Choate indicated her preference for in-person meetings, noting that while she had a lot to say on the evening's topics, she was not comfortable enough to do so. Others shared their own preference for virtual meetings. The possibility of seasonal switches between the formats was mentioned.

Llamas thanked participants, indicating that the next meeting will be held on March 23, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

### **Documents Viewed or Referenced:**

- CPHSOvBrd Agenda\_2023.2.23
- 2023.01.12 CPHS OB Minutes
- Epi and Community Health Ed budget report 2023\_02\_14
- PHE budget report 2023\_02\_14
- 2022 FRCOG report from TickReport on test #s and results
- CPHS town assessments FY20-FY24
- Municipal Funds Report 2023\_02\_14
- Age Friendly Grant budget report 2023\_02\_14
- Discussion Prompt (Telling)