

**CPHS Oversight Board**  
Online Meeting Minutes  
**April 27, 2023**



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

**Member Attendance:**

Ashfield	Caroline White	Hawley-	Hussain Hamdan
Bernardston-	absent	Heath-	Susan Gruen
Buckland-	absent	Leyden-	Beth Kuzdeba
Charlemont-	Doug Telling	Monroe-	Alice Houghtaling
Colrain-	Nina Martin-Anzuoni	Northfield-	Ali Wahlstrom
Conway-	Devon Whitney-Deal	Rowe-	absent
Erving-	absent	Shelburne-	Fritz Vohr
Gill-	absent		

**Staff Attendance:** Randy Crochier, Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Maureen O'Reilly, Meg Ryan, Kurt Schellenberg, Phoebe Walker, Lisa White

**Introductions & Town Updates**

- **Ashfield/White:** Town officials continue to work on a noise ordinance prompted by complaints about gunfire.
- **Charlemont/Telling:** Telling remembered former Charlemont BOH member Ruth Cannavo, a founding member of the district and of MAPHCO.
- **Colrain/Martin-Anzuoni:** The BOH lost one member. The Town is hosting an effort to remove inappropriately discarded tires, and looking for grant funding to get rid of those they collect. Crochier mentioned some of the costs and issues, as well as the state of multi-party discussions, pertaining to the 26 residences that will need sewer/septic service when Barnhardt Manufacturing shuts down in August.
- **Conway/Whitney-Deal:** Community members have formed a Neighbor-to-Neighbor group. "The BOH voted to remain in MAPHCO."
- **Heath/Gruen:** Two members of the BOH have stepped down. Gruen, Sheila Litchfield and Claire Rabbit continue to assist homebound residents.
- **Leyden/Kuzdeba:** The BOH is looking for funding to assist residents whose wells went dry during the drought last summer.
- **Northfield/Wahlstrom:** Much is being planned for the Town's 350th anniversary celebration. Residents voted down spending on a new safety complex, as affirmative votes were shy of the requisite 2/3 majority.
- **Monroe/Houghtaling:** Monroe recently upgraded their small public sewer system and drilled a few new wells.
- **Shelburne/Vohr:** The BOH continues to look for a 3rd member.

**Agenda Item(s)**

➤ **Approve Meeting Minutes**

With a motion by Martin-Anzuoni seconded by Kuzdeba, the minutes of the January 12, February 23, and March 23, 2023 meetings were approved unanimously, with one abstention (Hamdan).

➤ **Next Steps on the PHE Grant Work Plan and Capacity Assessment**

Walker outlined the Dept. Public Health (DPH)'s recent efforts to improve public health infrastructure throughout the state that resulted in CPHS's 15 towns receiving Public Health Excellence grant funding. Standards for workforce training and performance were established, and the CART has measured our ability to meet these. Walker then reviewed the recap/summary of the CART, prepared by staff, itemizing for the board specific ways for BOH members and CPHS staff

(and BOH members and health district staff in other Franklin County towns) to address the broad recommendations in six categories:

1. Improve paperwork/documentation and improve administrative capacity
2. Get more training – agents
3. Get more training – BOH members
4. Improve our tobacco control work across the 15 towns
5. Consider doing more service-sharing within the 15 towns to increase consistency and efficiency, especially in food, housing, and Title 5.
6. Increase staffing for communicable disease work.

➤ **Spring Tick community education events at Transfer Stations, Libraries, etc.**

O'Reilly distributed an info sheet regarding tick-borne illness in the district. It included:

- 2022 tick borne illness numbers for context as members consider approaches for the 2023 season
- Municipal approaches to tick testing: municipalities prepaying for tick tests (which allow residents to access tests at a discounted price)
- Individual approaches to tick testing using TickReport or (new this year) TickEncounter. Using the latter, people can scan a QR code, submit a photo, and get an expert response with tick ID in <24 hrs.
- Strategies for prevention: in addition to increasing awareness through newsletters, signs, and flyers --shoe spraying events! MOR envisions staffing these (at fairs, transfer stations, libraries, etc.) with the help of a BOH member at each location throughout the summer.

➤ **Public Health Nurse Update**

White distributed an info sheet summarizing the CDC's updated guidelines on the use of COVID vaccines. She reviewed the main points regarding availability and advisability (for those over 65 years of age and the immunocompromised) of the latest bivalent mRNA dose. She referenced her own search for greater clarity, promising more information when it is available. The nurses are planning to offer it to the homebound, as they have done previously and successfully.

O'Reilly will update the FRCOG website to reflect the end of the COVID emergency as defined by the federal government, and to guide people to local resources for testing and vaccination.

Ryan reported on her continuing age-friendly work, and her attendance and presentations at related conferences, including a large one at GCC in June. A great deal of her time and attention are focused on extensive coursework to become a SHINE counselor -- Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone.

White described the upcoming wellness fair at the Erving Senior Center on May 16, which will include over 20 tables hosted by local practitioners and others service providers. She referenced a First Aid/CPR class being offered in Erving, too.

➤ **Health Agent Update**

Schellenberg reported that his year-long sprint toward various health agent certifications is paying off, as he is now in the field 4 days per week conducting Title 5 inspections and issuing DSCPs. He says he will be "useful" at perc tests this summer, and may soon be able to issue Local Upgrade Approvals. He is working on lead determinator certification, and eyeing Registered Sanitarian status. Meanwhile, he has implemented a tracking system for large septic-related projects using Trello software. Crochier said that the volume of applications for Title 5 inspections does not indicate any slowdown in the real estate market.

➤ **Updated Inter-Municipal Agreement for CPHS members**

Walker explained that the IMA that establishes CPHS must be renewed – signed by each BOH – every four years, and that some towns have expiring ones this spring. We will review an updated version at the next meeting.

➤ **Board of Health Policy Discussion**

Crochier praised Charlemont BOH members Telling and Tanner for developing comprehensive body art regulations, and suggested that other towns consider adapting and then adopting these for their own purposes.

Walker will soon be attending a Cannabis Control Commission meeting to address the varied regulation of public consumption of cannabis statewide (at events, cafes, etc.). Subsequently, staff will draft sample regulations for oversight board members to revise, then bring to their local boards. Ideally, there will be consistent regulation amongst CPHS towns.

Crochier referenced his attendance at local BOH meetings to explain FRCOG's recommendations for streamlining the work of the local Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) coalition, on which each town has a vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.

**Documents Viewed or Referenced:**

- CPHSOvBrd Agenda April 27, 2023
- Minutes:
  - January 12, 2023
  - February 23, 2023
  - March 23, 2023
- DPH Capacity Assessment Recap and Next Steps
- DPH Capacity Assessment Report (CART)