



CPHS Oversight Board - Online Meeting Minutes January 18, 2024, 5-7:30 PM

Member Attendance:

Ashfield	Lynn Dole	Hawley-	absent
Bernardston-	absent	Heath-	Susan Gruen
Buckland-	Carmela Lanza-Weil	Leyden-	Beth Kuzdeba
Charlemont-	Doug Telling	Monroe-	absent
Colrain-	absent	Northfield-	Karen Boudreau
Conway-	Jackie Choate	Rowe-	absent
Erving-	Jeff McAndrews	Shelburne-	Fritz Vohr
Gill-	Jeff Blomstedt		

Staff Attendance: Randy Crochier, Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Phoebe Walker, Jasmine Ward, Lisa White

Introductions & Town Updates – Who is the Emergency Management Director in your town?

- Buckland: Herb Guyette
- Charlemont: Dennis Annear
- Conway: Amanda Herman (Asst Phil Kantor)
- Erving: Phil Wonkka
- Heath: Tim Lively (Asst Sheila Litchfield)
- Leyden: David Pomerantz
- Northfield: Skip Dunnell (Asst Amanda Dunnell)
- Shelburne: Tom Williams

Approve Meeting Minutes

With a motion by Vohr, seconded by Choate, the minutes of the November 30, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously, with affirmative votes from Lanza-Weil, Telling, Choate, McAndrews, Blomstedt, Gruen, Kuzdeba, Boudreau, and Vohr. (Dole had not arrived at time of vote.)

Agenda Item(s)

Public Health Nursing Report

White described a recent training of Buckland and Shelburne town office staff, conducted by CPHS Community Educator Maureen O’Reilly, on the use of naloxone to reverse an opioid overdose. A “nalox box” has been installed in each office, making the antidote available/free, relatively anonymously, to community members. CPHS has recently received certification as a MA controlled substance distributor. Vohr expressed his appreciation for the talk and installations, and voiced concern that the box is accessible only when the town halls are open. Telling thanked O’Reilly for enabling members to offer fentanyl test strips. Choate will give a talk on narcotics in Conway on Wednesday evening. White referenced the recognition of CPHS Public Health Nurse Meg Ryan as one of 15 MA & NH community leaders at an Alzheimer’s Association conference in New Orleans later in the month.

Monthly Vaccine Report

White summarized CPHS involvement in vaccine administration during fall 2023. At “mass vax” clinics arranged by CPHS and administered by Cataldo Ambulance Services, Inc. in west and north county, 700 individuals were vaccinated. The decision regarding whether or not to contract with Cataldo for fall 2024 will be based, in part, on its response to concerns expressed by Oversight Board and CPHS staff members. At town drop-in hours and home visits throughout the district, White, Ryan and Conway BOH member Jackie Choate, RN, administered 516 vaccines (approx. half COVID-19, half influenza) to 368 individuals. White provided a link for BOHs to request COVID antigen tests, and referenced CPHS’s recent designation as a vaccine administrator/distributor by the federal government. She plans to pursue CPHS designation as an administrator of the polio vaccine from the state government.

PHE 101 – What is a Public Health Excellence grant/community and how does it work?

Walker explained that the primary goal of the state’s PHE program is to increase Local Public Health (LPH)’s ability to meet statutory and regulatory requirements by implementing sharing of public health services (such as inspections, epidemiology, and public health nursing) across municipalities. Our health district is “way out in front” in doing this, she said. She is working with the public health staff and BOHs of other health districts in our PHE to encourage them to adopt shared permitting and inspection software. She described the PHE program structure, including grantee requisites such as training and regular meetings, to promote the sharing of best practices, policies and staff. Walker referenced slides listing available resources, the workforce standards for health department staff and BOH members, and the performance standards and data system recommended for PHEs that were adopted in 2023. (See “Quick Orientation to PHE Program”, attached.) She noted that Crochier has been appointed to a committee reviewing Requests for Proposals for a comprehensive statewide public health data system – and that the PHE grant provides approx. ¼ of CPHS funding. Kuzdeba and Boudreau spoke of the usefulness of the training courses comprising the “Foundations of Local Public Health” (offered through LPHI until 3/31/24 and through TRAIN MA indefinitely). A BOH member does not have to become [a public health professional] but can improve one’s understanding of that work in order to be a more informed consumer of the services they are providing to the town(s). Further, the courses clarify the responsibilities of BOH members.

Public Health Emergency Planning

Walker reminded attendees that the COVID-19 emergency After Action Review (AAR) recommended that PHEs be the organizing unit for emergency planning in the region moving forward, as they will be the places that share vaccine management, in particular. She spoke of the importance of a regional communication plan that could be activated in the event of an infectious disease outbreak, an extreme weather event, or a vector-borne disease outbreak, among other emergencies. The latter will be the context for the CPHS sponsored tabletop exercise in June, and communications planning will be its focus. The FRCOG Emergency Preparedness Program will run the event, and CPHS OB members will be asked to personally invite their EMDs and other stakeholders to participate. Walker requested and received support to move forward with planning the event.

Updated Tobacco Regulations

Before addressing agenda items under his purview, Crochier recognized and thanked Walker for her 30 years (achieved on 1/11/24) work on improving the public health of Franklin County.

Crochier requested that members review, before the next meeting, an initial draft of regulations on the sale of tobacco and vape products. Following the February meeting, he will incorporate member feedback

into a final draft, he said. He suggested that the review of it be added to the March agenda of all of the district BOHs, and that BOHs subsequently revise and host public hearings on these. He emphasized the importance of putting regulations in place even if no tobacco vendor currently operates in the town.

Proposed Fee Adjustments

Crochier requested that members review, before the next meeting, the proposed revised CPHS fee schedule. There are additions and adjustments pertaining to issuing regional permits, levying late fees, and reviewing complicated plan revisions, among other processes.

Proposed Food Establishment Permit Policy Updates

Crochier requested that members review, before the next meeting, the draft CPHS Temporary Food and Mobile Food Policy. The draft was developed by staff to address issues that have arisen with the dramatic increase in the number of food trucks seeking permits in recent years. He spoke of advocacy work to enable health districts to issue a single permit for a vendor to operate within its borders rather than having to issue individual permits for it to operate in each town.

CPHS is offering another 3-in-1 Food Safety class – on April 3 in Shelburne -- for food establishment staff and volunteers in need of the required certification for food handling, allergen awareness, and choke saving. All CPHS staff members were recently certified in Basic Life Support.

Health Agents Report – 2024 Permit Renewals update

Ward reported that the annual renewal process (for food establishment, tobacco delivery product sales, temporary lodging, mobile home parks and septic haulers and installers), which began mid-November, is wrapping up. She noted that the CPHS online system is much more manageable than the paper-based system used by her previous employer. In 2023, CPHS approved the following: 65 Soil Evaluation Percolation Tests; 61 Disposal Works Construction Permits; 90 Title 5 Inspections; 31 Short Term Rental properties.

FY24 Budget Report / FY24 Budget Process

Walker reminded the board that it voted to approve the CPHS budget at the November meeting. As promised then, she indicated that the individual town assessment totals for FY25 remain the same as those for FY24. (This is despite FRCOG staff insurance rising 10%, not the anticipated 4%, and a slight decrease in projected revenue.) The FRCOG Council will vote on whether or not to adopt the budget next week. Towns will vote on whether or not to pay their assessments at spring town meetings.

Next Meetings: February 22, and March 28, 2024

On a motion by Dole, seconded by Telling and approved unanimously, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Documents/Websites Viewed or Referenced:

- [CPHS Oversight Board Meeting Agenda_2024.01.18](#)
- [CPHS Oversight Board Meeting Minutes 2023.11.30 DRAFT](#)
- [Model-Tobacco-Sales-Regulations-2023](#)
- [video of our fall 2023 Tobacco Updates workshop](#)
- [CPHS Fee Schedule 01.18.2024 Draft](#)
- [DRAFT CPHS Temporary Food and Mobile Food Policy 2023.01.16](#)