



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Berkshire Public Health Alliance
Governing Board Meeting**

**Thursday, September 12, 2013
Second Floor Conference Room
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
1 Fenn Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201**

Meeting Minutes(DRAFT)

Municipalities Represented

Tim Drumm, Alford
Sandra Martin, Egremont
Richard P. Hamilton, Hancock
Nancy Ruderman, Lanesborough
Scott McFarland, New Marlborough
Valerie Nickerson-Bird, Peru
Andy Fisher, Richmond
Kathleen Segrin, Sandisfield
Priscilla Cote, Sheffield
Jim Huebner, Washington
Ron Stant, Williamstown

Municipalities Not Represented

Adams
Becket
Clarksburg
Dalton
Great Barrington
Mount Washington
North Adams
Savoy
West Stockbridge
Windsor

Partners Present

Laura Kittross, Director
Jennifer Kimball, Grants and
Administration
Thomas Matuszko, BRPC

Jim Huebner called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

Jennifer Kimball took roll call.

Jim Huebner asked for a motion to approve the minutes from June. Nancy Simons-Ruderman seconded the motion. APPROVED. All aye, no abstentions.

Thomas Matuszko gave an organizational update. Jennifer Kimball and Laura Kittross are now employees of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission rather than independent contractors. The transition has gone well.

Laura Kittross gave the Director Committee update. In the last meeting, the committee voted to support BRPC solicitation for back-up inspectors for the Alliance, and to provide LIMITED public health nursing services in selected situations to non-Alliance/contracted towns for \$50/hr. The committee also decided not to bid on the Foothills job.

The Alliance continues to provide comprehensive inspectional services for Egremont, Washington, and Peru. We have contracted with the Town of Becket for up to \$2,500 (inspectional hours). The Alliance provided vacation coverage for Great Barrington, and did camp inspections for Sheffield. We are in conversation with North Adams to provide additional inspectional services (namely food inspections).

The Alliance is now providing public health nursing services to 7 towns: Clarksburg, Great Barrington, Egremont, North Adams, Peru, Washington and Windsor. We are also providing back-up services and DOT (directly observed therapy) for a TB patient to the City of Pittsfield. Flu Clinic meetings have been scheduled, we hope to start clinics in September. We continue to develop wellness programs (Mosquito and Tick-Borne illness program has been given in Washington, Clarksburg, and Windsor so far) and to visit different community events.

Laura Kittross circulated MAVEN "Read-Only" contracts for the board members to sign, and emphasized the importance of a regional approach to disease reporting and management.

Laura Kittross stated that the Alliance is still in need of a medical director. We will continue to work with Fairview Medical; they have a doctor who will sign the standing orders for the flu clinics.

Thomas Matuszko updated the board on new and upcoming grants. The grant for the next round of Community Innovation Challenge Grant (CIC) funding (supporting the PHN program) is due November 22. **Jim Huebner made a motion to approve the Alliance application for FY14 CIC grant funding to expand & enhance the Public health nursing program. Tim Drumm seconded the motion. All aye.**

BRPC and the Alliance have been working with the Community Health Initiative group on a potential application to the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund (PWTF). \$42M is available statewide over four years. Larger awards will be made (6-12 awards in total): the potential is there for up to \$2M/yr for 3-4 years. Certain priority health areas are required to be addressed using specific evidence-based interventions. The committee has chosen three of the four priorities: falls, hypertension, smoking and one optional area: diabetes, based on the statistics showing need in Berkshire County. The grant

must focus on evidence-based interventions; there is a strong clinical component to this grant. Therefore, BMC will be the lead. Additional partners on this grant are the City of Pittsfield, Tri-Town Health, North Adams Regional Hospital, Fairview Medical, Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, and the United Way. Thomas Matuszko suggested that the board vote to support the application.

Jim Huebner made a motion to seek to be part of the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund application, granting the Director Committee the ability to authorize this application. Sandra Martin seconded the motion. All aye.

Thomas Matuszko stated that the Be Well Berkshires RFQ was not funded; BMC was the successful applicant.

The Alliance will be applying to the Blue Cross Blue Shield Catalyst Fund (\$5K) to support primarily the PHN program (equipment and marketing materials). **Jim Huebner made a motion to endorse the Alliance application to the Catalyst Fund. Nancy Simons-Ruderman seconded the motion. All aye.**

Thomas Matuszko gave the finance report (handout). Some line items will need to change now that the Alliance staff transition to BRPC employee has been made. At this time we still have sufficient grant funds. .

Laura Kittross updated the committee on the Berkshire Opioid Abuse and Prevention Collaborative (BOAPC) grant. The Steering Committee has met twice and is meeting regularly. This has been a huge learning curve for the Alliance. Partners have been very involved and energetic. We are in the assessment phase. There is a community forum re: opioid use and abuse scheduled for October 30 in Pittsfield.

Laura Kittross updated the board on the Toxic Use Reduction (TURI) grant (total \$18,000, awarded to Franklin Regional Council of Governments) that was submitted by FRCOG in partnership with the Alliance and Hospitality Green. The focus is a pilot program to train food inspectors to talk to restaurants about less-toxic cleaning, sanitizing and pesticide alternatives. The Alliance will be getting a small stipend (\$2,000) to attend meetings in Lowell; FRCOG is administering the grant. Stipend to towns will be in the \$600-\$1,000 range. Most funds will go to design and printing of an educational booklet.

The Alliance bought a sharps kiosk with the Local Public Health mini-grant (\$1500 award). This will be used as part of a regional plan for sharps collection.

Jim Huebner updated the board on the DIG Learning Collaborative meeting. The focus was on sustainability and how to get town executives to “buy-in” to using our services. There is a concern that the new state commissioner may not be as on-board with the DIG program. Laura Kittross agreed to meet with the commissioner on approval of the board for the expenditure of (travel) funds. **Jim Huebner made a motion to support Laura Kittross participation in speaking to the commissioner about the importance of the DIG program to the Berkshires. Kathleen Segrin seconded the motion. All aye.**

Sandra Martin inquired about technical assistance (TA) for a business/financial planner. The State has not come forth with help for us; it was decided that we would get our own and not wait for the State to act.

Also noteworthy was that one DIG recipient has been defunded; that group had made no progress (no IMA).

Laura Kittross spoke about the Community Health Initiative working group, and other collaborations going on around the county (touching on the PWTF and CHA activities discussed earlier). BHS now sees BRPC/the Alliance as a partner; we have a good working relationship. Many groups have come together for the PWTF.

Jim Huebner read from Article 5 Section 5 of the Operations By-Law. He asked the committee members about their opinions about progress we have made, and what they feel needs to be worked on harder. Each committee member was given a chance to speak (paraphrased).

Richard Hamilton, Hancock: No interest in the program currently, taking care of ourselves. Seems like you are doing good work.

Sandra Martin, Egremont: We are very happy with the services we are receiving.

Ron Stant, Williamstown: The Alliance seems to be on the right track.

Scott McFarland, New Marlborough: It would be helpful if you could come out to visit not just our board, but all the boards, 1 or 2 times a year.

Kathleen Segrin, Sandisfield: We have many issues with our Board of Health, and the support and information that I receive from the Alliance has been very helpful.

Tim Drumm, Alford: Regards program positively. We need to do more outreach and strive towards self-sufficiency. We need a business plan.

Priscilla Cote, Sheffield: Regards the Alliance programs positively. The Sheffield Select Board will need to get on board for the Town to hire the Alliance.

Andy Fisher, Richmond: We were worried initially, but are happy with what we see. We need to seek out more support from outside Foundations such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and NACCHO. Towns need to have the Alliance as a line item on their agendas and in their budgets.

Valerie Nickerson-Bird, Peru: We need to change the viewpoint that the Alliance is taking (local) health inspectors'/BOH jobs.

Nancy Simonds-Ruderman, Lanesborough: We should send a list of Alliance accomplishments to our towns.

Jim gave a summary that the feedback was primarily positive, that we need to do more outreach, and strive for more self-sufficiency. We also need to move ahead with a business plan.

Laura Kittross asked the board members what they would like to see at each meeting. The consensus was that we need to do less reading from already printed/circulated reports. Maybe there should be a round-table discussion of a 'hot-button' topic or an educational component. Priscilla Cote suggested that meetings have less administrative

details (members can read reports ahead of time/when they are circulated) and have more open discussion and problem solving. Jennifer will send an email to board members before the next meeting, asking them if they have any problems in particular that they would like to address/ask advice on.

Laura Kittross stated that the speaker at the BCBOHA Annual Dinner will be addressing drinking water. NIMS/ICS training is 9/17. The last BOH orientation class is in North Adams on 9/24. Jeffrey's Journey (bullying) is 10/3.

The next meeting of the BPHA Governing Board will be Thursday, November 7, 2013 at 6 p.m.

Tim Drumm made a motion to adjourn. Jim Huebner seconded the motion. All aye.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Itemization of Handouts Made Available at Board Meeting:

- 9/11/13 Agenda
- June Governing Board Minutes
- ADC Minutes 8/7/13
- ADC Report
- Flu Clinic Handout
- Jeffrey's Journey Handout
- Opioid Forum Handout
- Treasurer's Report