

BPHA Governing Board Remote Meeting

Thursday, March 10th, 2022, 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Meeting opened at 5:04 by Jim

Present: Adams, Becket, Clarksburg, Dalton, Egremont, Great Barrington, Hancock, New Marlborough, Peru, Richmond, Savoy, Sheffield, Pittsfield, New Ashford, Windsor

Not Present: Alford, Cheshire, Florida, Lanesborough, Mt. Washington, Sandisfield, W. Stockbridge, Williamstown, Middlefield

1. Welcome, Roll Call, Minutes

- Jim makes motion to approve minutes from —Martin approves, unanimous approval except two abstentions for not being present
- Question about appointing members

2. Welcome New Staff

- Jennifer Scott Epidemiologist
- Andy Ottoson, Planner, SUD
 - Healing communities study—800,000 research study focused on opioid abuse
 - Restarting Berkshire Opioid Addiction Prevention Collaborative (BOAPC)
 - Working with NBEMS to launching post overdose outreach teams
 - Youth coalition work starting up
- Morgan Ovitsky, Project Specialist, Rural Health Equity Grant (Central County)

3. Welcome New Municipal Members

- Jason Jayko from New Ashford
- Amanda Staples new voting member from Dalton
- Middlefield —couldn't make it tonight

4. Grants Update

- New FDA Grants (Sandra)
 - Obtained 2, 3-year FDA grants, hoping to get one, got both. 112,000 a year.
 - Significant work for the money
 - Will be doing risk factor studies of each food establishment for towns that use the Alliance services.
 - Will also be available for towns that don't currently contract for services
 - Will have a plan based on risk for inspections
 - Need to meet other FDA standards that are very comprehensive
 - Will develop policies that will help meet these standards
 - Share standards with all towns to make standard
 - Will help move forward online permitting

- Sheffield, Middlefield, Lanesborough coming on soon
 - **If you aren't online yet and are interested, let us know**
 - Alliance pays the start-up costs and generally the cost of the first year. Municipality must allow access to the Alliance for data collection and agree to pay the operating costs in future years (assuming they like the program).
- ELD Grant Update / PHE Amendment
 - Contract tracer grant allowed hiring extra help during the hardest time of the pandemic
 - Got an amendment of \$55,000 in December to the Public Health Excellence (PHE) Grant but it was COVID response money more related to the contact tracing/COVID response grant.
 - Were supposed to hire community health workers (CHW) to assist with people who tested positive and needed help or to assist populations that were disproportionately affected by COVID.
 - Nurses and contact tracers were able to keep up with that and we don't have the infrastructure to help community health workers – takes a fair amount of oversight.
 - Hoping to develop this type of infrastructure and bring training to BCC
 - Not able to do it this year and are reaching out to partners who already employ community health workers to help people who are still affected by the pandemic and its aftermath
 - Money will go away if we don't spend it!
 - Governing Board agreed that contracting to community partners makes sense to cover the CHW need

5. Inspectional Services Updates

- FY 23 Contracts/Fees
 - Ed had been getting the contracts out and getting them back
 - Not getting any significant pushback about increases to cover the costs
 - Still need to work on developing a consistent fee schedule (the fees that the towns charge)
 - Add to agenda for April
 - Have a recommended fee schedule from 8-9 years ago, but needs updating

6. PH Nursing Update

- FY 23 Contracts/Fees
 - Most towns were told what the amount was, but contracts haven't gone out
 - Hopefully done tomorrow or Monday
- Insurance Update
 - Berkshire Vaccine Collaborative
 - Large vaccination clinics in Berkshire County were done through our provider number and at the end we would divide up # of shots based on the number given at each site & distribute any insurance proceeds accordingly.
 - Had very little control of how the billing happened

- Just went in and added the 10,000 vaccinations that weren't accounted for in the earlier distributions
 - \$1,637,496 and we got about 37% (\$604,891)
 - Of that 600,000, we paid county ambulance about 75,000 because they came to every single clinic and stayed to the very end
 - Total Alliance disbursement around 525,000
 - Staff time it not accounted for in there and some other expenses, but much of that was covered by other emergency COVID funding.
 - Need to think about what to do with this money, how much to save in case the state money goes away, how much to use.
 - Perhaps it should stay there for a little while, until November – put it in a fund
 - This is likely/hopefully a one-time deal
 - Difficult to separate flu from COVID, but working with Commonwealth Medicine.
- Survey / BOH meetings
 - Working on developing new PHN activities – the fun stuff!
 - Reaching out to towns to learn what towns need best
 - Willing to come to BOH meetings, just let us know!
 - Please fill out the survey you will receive!

7. Training

- Meeting tips
 - Working on a training for running a BOH health meeting
 - Heard from several people having difficulty at meetings
 - Stick to the agenda, chair runs the meeting, hecklers-ask to leave or shut it down! Have time limits on agendas. Just because it is a public meeting, doesn't mean everyone has a right to speak.
 - If someone brings something up that wasn't on the agenda, you can tell them you will add it to the next agenda, but cannot discuss it then
 - Only give them 3 minutes, only address the chair
 - FDA temporary food inspector training class in the spring
 - BCBOHA exec plans to have a dinner this spring – look back after action report, improvement plan.
 - Probably May no set date (country club)

8. Current Public Health Issues

- Mobile Syringe Access
 - Berkshire Harm Reduction has gotten grant funding for a mobile van which offers many services (including syringe/needle exchange and fentanyl test strips and many other health services)
 - To do syringe exchange part of the services, each municipality's BOH must approve
 - If your municipality has not yet approved and is interested, let us know.
- Fire/police Narcan update
 - Providing free Narcan and free training

- Seeing good progress with towns that have agreed to carry Narcan
 - Laura—will send the table out to the Governing Board members after she checks with Stephen Murray that he doesn't mind.
- COVID After-Action Report (AAR)
 - Berkshire County Board of Health Association, which acts as the emergency preparedness coalition in the county has been working on an After-Action report and Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) concentrating on the first few months of COVID response.
 - Focusing on initial reaction and steps to make our response better next time around on the Berkshire County level
 - Will conclusion of survey and report be prepared for spring dinner?
 - Hopeful it will, but will be circulated, if not
 - Not recognizing the rural areas have less resources to meet the demands of an emergency response

9. State and Regional Updates

- SAPHE 2.0
 - Pending in house and senate for a year
 - Would accelerate and solidify regulations on local and regional health
 - Data and other requirements on local public health
 - Bring MA into the 21 century and goes hand in hand with the other grants
 - It is not an unfunded mandate
 - It is mandate that is bringing MA up to the level needed to protect public health
 - Not unfunded
 - Expected that shared services will be the solution
 - May be our last and best change to get professionalization of local and public health
 - Has a lot of support at state level, but you never know
 - May be calling on members for support
- PH ARPA Funding
 - DPH has until April 1 to get back to legislature
 - Will build data systems, training programs to meet workforce requirements, etc.

10. Unforeseen business?

- Question about mosquito spraying

11. Upcoming Governing Board Meeting Dates

- Not a lot of people wanted to meet in person – is it out of convenience or COVID?
 - Hybrid would allow
 - Zoom allows some to participate after so many weekly meetings—makes it easier to attend in cases where couldn't otherwise
 - Gas prices!
 - No time to get there – work until 5.
 - Would do later for in-person

- June 9 (elections)
- September 15 (standards)
- November 17 (budget)

12. Upcoming Events

- Alternate Fridays: BOH Working Group (next meeting 1/14) – let Laura know if you want to be added to the list
- Dr. Doyle calls – Wednesday as needed, contact if you want to be added to the list
- Tuesdays at 3:00 PM, DPH LBOH Webinars
- ADC Meetings, first Tuesday at 2:00 PM

Meeting adjourned by Jim at 6:20