



Serving the Towns of Alford, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox,
Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis,
Sandisfield, Sheffield, Stockbridge and Tyringham

"The mission of the Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative is to leverage partnerships in order to provide quality public health services that directly improve the health and well-being of the entire community."

SBPHC Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2024 @ 9AM
Great Barrington Selectboard Conference Room
334 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA
Hybrid with Zoom Option

Present in Person: Dianne Romeo (Chair, Lenox), Brandi Page (Vice Chair, Otis), Rebecca Jurczyk (Gt. Barrington), Jordan Chretien (New Marlborough), Betsy Spears (Mt Washington), Jayne Smith (Alford), Jason Dragonetti, SBPHC

Present via Zoom: Jim Wilusz (Lee), Thomas Mensi (Monterey), Terry Gould (Otis)

Meeting called to order at 9:30am

1. ADMINISTRATIVE

- **Approval of November 17, 2023 SBPHC Minutes:** Jim Wilusz made a motion to approve the November 17th, 2023 minutes. Pat Levine seconded the motion. Motion passed by roll call vote: 7-0 with Betsy Spears abstaining because she wasn't present at the November meeting.

2. PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING UPDATE

- **FY24 Q2 SBPHC Quarterly Report:** Jayne Smith presented both the Q1 and Q2 Reports since the Q1 report was included this month because it was not available at the last meeting.
 - **MAVEN:** She clarified that the TB listed from the quarterly reports is latent TB and not active TB and clarified that there are no active TB cases at this time. Rebecca Jurczyk had some questions about the Great Barrington cases. Jayne explained the process of what happens in the case of a reportable disease and what the thresholds are for notifying the Board of Health.
 - **Blood Pressure/Wellness Sessions:** Jayne Smith explained that the blood pressure clinics have resumed, and Jill will be having Masters of Public Health student shadowing her to develop some programming for those senior center wellness sessions.
 - **Car Seat Program:** We continue to get requests for car seats, but we are now out. There is a significant need beyond what was provided in the state car seat grant, including the need for newly arrive immigrants. We are looking to cover the gap between what we can get via the state grant by using things like community benefit funds, other grants, the car

seat manufacturers, and perhaps vaccine revenue if there is flexibility in the budget. As the Collaborative becomes more fully staffed, there will be more capacity to pursue other sources of funding. We are working to address language and cultural barriers associated with car seat installation and use.

- **Vaccine Clinics:** The clinic numbers listed in the FY24 Q1 reports are by town residents who attended the clinics and not the numbers at the clinics held in each town. Ruby Chang made the suggestion that the clinics be spread out and continue into the New Year because doctors are recommending that people wait to get vaccinated 2-3 months into the flu/COVID season. It was brainstormed that we could either have a later clinic or provide walk in hours after the clinics have stopped. It was discussed whether we should purchase the minimum order of vaccine, which is very expensive, and see if any of our community partners would be willing to share the order.

3. OLD BUSINESS

- **Equity Access Coordinator/CHW Position Update:** We received several good applications for this position. We posted it as part-time, but the position may be shifted to full-time if the right person fills the position and we have the resources.
- **Language support for Local Board of Health offices:** The Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative has a contract with iTi that provides document translation, phone translation and in-person translation. We are working on getting accounts for a contact in each town's Boards of Health.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- **FY25 Town Budgets – Level Funded:** Jayne asked each Board of Health let their town know that the public health nursing contracts are level funded for FY25.
- **FY24 PHE Budget Allowable Expenses:** The state has expanded allowable expenses under the grant, which now includes COVID, Flu and Hepatitis vaccine. We are already looking at purchasing COVID vaccine, which is approximately \$11,500 for the minimum order. Jayne will ask that each Board of Health let her know what their Board of Health needs to meet the minimum standards. Jason added that we are currently working on the setup and first year of online permitting, first for Sandisfield and Mt Washington, and then check with Sheffield to see if they want to join. We are providing the updated version of Full Circle that is individualized for each town in order to allow for local control. We are not set up at this time to pay individual BOH members for their time (either hourly or via a stipend) but the PHE grant can pay for the cost of the actual trainings. This has repeatedly been identified as a barrier and is something that we should flush out, including whether there is an ethics issue. Jayne said she will try to map it out for a future discussion.
- **HHAN & Arbovirus Coordinator for each town.** Jayne will send out an email to all the Boards of Health to see who the representatives are for HHAN and Arbovirus Coordinator and also ask who would like a language support pin.
- **Location/ Date/ Format for 2024 Meetings:** The group confirmed that we would holding hybrid meetings quarterly on the second Friday of the quarter and continue to use the Great Barrington Conference Room. If something time sensitive comes up, we hold another meeting in addition to the quarterly meeting.

- **TRAIN Accounts:** Jayne Smith talked about the TRAIN account system, which is the MA DPH's new tracking system for training. Staff hired by the public health excellence funding have a higher standard of training than the Board of Health members. Right now, individual TRAIN accounts do not have suggested courses but hopefully will by the time it is fully rolled out in April. The Workforce Standards may be rolled out as mandatory at some point and we want to be ready. Most of the upcoming courses and prerequisites will be tethered to TRAIN.

Jim Wilusz thought that one thing that would be helpful is to create an easy process for the emergency management minimum standards to start. Jayne said she will send a list of minimum standards for BOH members with links. Mike Hugo shared that much of the materials will be shared at the MAHB Board of Health training later this year. There were questions about whether MAHB and others would consider having hybrid options for these trainings to accommodate different work and volunteer schedule. Mike said that they have had hybrid options in the past. Also, MAHB is willing to come out to do a training in our region if that helps make it accessible for BOH members and Jayne was asked if she can poll BOH members to see if we could pull together a local class to address our local issues. Also, once the new TRAIN system is fully live, we can work with individual BOHs to help set them up. The cost of trainings is an allowable expense.

5. UPCOMING TRAININGS .

- **Racial Equity:** Virtual Learning Communities: Racial Equity Cohorts
- **Orders to Correct:** February 12, 2024 from 3-4pm: How to Write an Order to Correct (virtual)
- **Food Inspector Introductory Training:** January 9 @ 1:30pm (virtual). [Register in advance](#)
- **MA PHIT Housing Refresher:** [Register](#) if you have completed PHIT housing course already.
- **MA PHIT Food:** Must work on [co-requisites](#) and [register](#) for multi-day course

6. MEMBER UPDATES

- Pat Levine reminded everyone that as long as your town has not met their maximum, they can continue to order COVID tests as well as sharps containers, shields and soap. Rebecca Jurczyk shared that Great Barrington has a large amount of sharps containers that she is willing to share with others.
- Tom Mensi shared that Monterey is working with his town on updating their AEDs and wondered if there were any other towns that have experience with working with the requirements, how to do exterior installation, keeping it current, etc. Mike Hugo put his email in the chat and said if Tom emailed him, he would connect him with the State.

7. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME: None

8. NEXT MEETING DATE: April 12, 2024

9. ADJORN MEETING: Meeting was adjourned at 10:22am