

Berkshire Public Health Alliance
Q & A and Discussion Notes
April 28, 2011
BRPC, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 1 Fenn St., Pittsfield, MA 01201

Towns/City Represented:

Adams – Richard Frost (BOH Chairperson)	Peru – Erin Kirchner (BOH Agent)
Great Barrington – Mark Pruhenski (BOH Agent)	Richmond – Andy Fisher (BOH Member) and Tony Segal (BOH Member)
Egremont – Sandra Martin (BOH Agent and BCBOHA)	Sheffield – Rene Wood (BOH Member)
Hancock – Richard Hamilton (BOH Member)	Washington – Rose Borgnis (BOS and BOH Member)
Hinsdale – Ed Goddard (BOH Chairperson)	West Stockbridge/Richmond – John Olander (BOH Agent)
Lanesborough – May Hickey (BOH Chairperson)	Williamstown – Ron Stant (BOH Member)
Mt Washington – Ellie Lovejoy (BOH Agent)	Windsor/Washington/Peru – Valerie Nickerson Bird (BOH Agent)
New Marlborough – Scott McFarland (BOH Agent)	
North Adams – Manuel Serrano (BOH Director)	

Partners Present:

BCBOHA – Laura Kittross and Diane Persson	MDPH – Charlie Kaniecki and Don Snyder
BRPC – Tom Matuszko	

Questions & Answers

Q: Will towns need to sign one agreement or multiple?

A: The initial agreement should be broad enough to cover all services so a new agreement doesn't need to be signed for every additional service

Q: Will the legal agreement be the same for every town?

A: There will be one agreement that all will sign and every participating town will be listed in the agreement

Q: Will there need to be Select Board or voter approval?

A: The Select Board can vote to sign an Inter-Municipal Agreement that forms the Alliance and allows it to share services.

- If towns/cities want to appropriate money, that has to go through their normal procurement process which usually means a town meeting or city council vote.

Q: Fees are different for every town. How will fees for various services be decided?

A: The Alliance Governing Board will set the fees for all services that go through the Alliance.

- If a town has a lower fee for a service that the town wants to use, that town can cover the difference through a town appropriation, by raising their fee or by deciding not to use the shared service and continuing to do their own work,

Q: If a service is used once, does it need to be used all the time or can it be on an as needed or as wanted basis?

A: Governing Board will decide that. Since every town/city has a vote on the Governing Board, we expect the use of services to be as flexible as possible.

- Although, if the Board decides to hire staff commitments need to be made and honored for the agreed on time (i.e., one year)

Q: What happens when grant money runs out?

A: Although we expect the Governing Board to continue to apply for grants and look for other sources of revenue, the Governing Board will need to look at ways to make the Alliance self-sustaining. One way is for the Alliance to create a Fee for Service (FFS) structure that will make the Alliance mostly self-sustaining. Towns who sign on need to sign knowing that we are working towards sustainability

Q. How would shared services be provided?

A. This would be up to the Governing Board. The Host Agency might contract with a city or town for a shared service like housing inspections or hire a part-time qualified inspector or take on a full-time staff person who would do inspections as part of his/her duties.

Shared Services Suggestions

See Attached

Homework for Next Meeting

1. **Share** what you learned with your Board of Health, Selectmen/Mayor, and others as appropriate.
2. Agree on a **Point of Contact** (POC) for this work so we can have consistency at the meetings and keep moving forward. If your POC can't be at a meeting, make sure the Alternate is briefed.
3. Fill in the **Core Duties Assessment** handout, indicating whether or not your community needs that service, is willing to share that service, or if it is a non-applicable service (i.e., no pools or beaches in your town.)

Moving Forward

Q: Would the group prefer to break up into Subcommittees or continue to meet as whole group

A: The group agreed the whole group should continue to meet.

Q: How would the group like information to be disseminated?

A: Paper handouts at meetings and on request and all information available on the BCBOHA website at www.bcboha.org

Meeting schedule (Refreshments at 5:30)

Thursday, May 12th at 6PM at BRPC

Thursday, May 26th at 6PM at BRPC

Thursday, June 9th at 6PM at BRPC

Thursday, June 23rd at 6PM at BRPC

Shared Services Suggestions

- Pool Inspector
- Housing Court
- Enforcement Officer
- Camp Inspector
- Public Health Nursing
- TB Follow Up and Monitoring
- Flu Clinics
- Temporary Food Event Inspector (esp. on weekends)
- 24/7 Hotline/Question Service
- Vacation Coverage
- Beavers
- Animal Inspector – Rabies
- Permitting – Web-based Service
- Title 5 Plan Review
- Title 5 Inspector/Perc Tests
- Emergency Response – Mutual Aid
- Outdoor Wood boilers
- Nuisances
- Small Transfer Stations (new mandate)
- Sharps/Medical Waste
- Collective Advocacy
- Wellness
- Training
- Regulations Information Sharing
- Chairperson Role and Responsibility Training