

JAMES MULLEN, Chair  
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CHARLES P. OGDEN, Treasurer

NATHANIEL W. KARNIS, A.I.C.P.  
Executive Director

## MEETING NOTES

### **Berkshire Public Health Alliance District Incentive Grant Meeting**

Thursday, June 23, 2011  
6:00 – 8:00 (Refreshments at 5:30)  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
1 Fenn Street  
Pittsfield, MA  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
(directions at: )

#### Towns/Cities Represented

**Adams** – Richard Frost (BOH Chairperson)  
**Becket** – Ginger Conner (BOH Chairperson)  
**Dalton** – Lois Bessette (Public Health Nurse)  
**Egremont** – Sandra Martin (BOH Agent/ also  
BCBOHA staff)  
**Great Barrington** – Mark Pruhenski (BOH Agent)  
**Lanesborough** – Nancy Simonds-Ruderman (BOH  
Agent)  
**Mt. Washington** – Ellie Lovejoy (BOH Agent)

**North Adams** – Manuel Serrano (BOH Director)  
**Peru, Washington, Windsor** – Valerie Nickerson-Bird  
(BOH Agent)  
**Richmond** – Andy Fisher (BOH Member)  
**Richmond/W. Stockbridge** – John Olander  
**Sandisfield** – Kathleen Segrin (BOH Member)  
**Washington** – Jim Huebner (BOS/BOH Chairperson)  
**Windsor** – Steve Bird (BOS/BOH Member)

#### Partners Present

**BCBOHA** – Diane Persson  
**BRPC** – Tom Matuszko

**Institute for Community Health** – Jessica Waggett  
**MDPH** – AJ Juarez

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Approval of Meeting Notes from June 9, 2011 meeting

- M. Serrano motioned, V. Nickerson-Bird seconded, J. Huebner abstained, unanimously approval of meeting notes

Reports / updates from municipalities

- Egremont – Board of Health (BOH) has approved recommending it to the Select Board (BOS). BOS will discuss at next meeting.
- Adams – Core duties assessment done. Will go forward to BOS with Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) at July meeting
- Dalton – on 7/11 agenda for both BOH and BOS
  - Either L. Kittross, S. Martin, or T. Matuszko will attend BOS meeting
- Richmond – Town Administrator wants the BOH to vote to recommend before signing. BOH will meet in July.
- W. Stockbridge – not sure if Kopleman & Paige have reviewed IMA
- North Adams – reviewed all services. They don't need any services now, but are willing to provide services to others. Attorney is reviewing the IMA now and will report back soon.
- Great Barrington – reviewing IMA in July. Town Manager is very supportive.
- Peru – waiting to hear from Kopleman & Paige. BOS is very supportive.
- Windsor – attorney emailed comments. BOS meets 6/27 to discuss.

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- Becket – BOH is working on completing the core duties assessment and wants to see the proposed fee schedule for BOH review. BOS will review at next meeting.
  - S. Martin noted that everyone should complete the core duties assessment knowing that it is contingent on affordability
- Sandisfield – BOH is favorable
- Washington – BOH / BOS have voted to approve IMA
- Mt. Washington – attorney has it and the BOH is reviewing. BOH already knows that disease reporting would be helpful to them.
- Lanesborough – BOH has voted to recommend the IMA. Paul Boudreau, Town Administrator has it for review and will report back next week.
- Hinsdale – could not attend meeting; however, E. Goddard did send an email that T. Matuszko shared with the group. IMA will be reviewed on 6/28 by the BOH.

#### District Incentive Grant evaluation process

- Jessica Waggett from the Institute for Community Health explained the evaluation process. Evaluators will attend meetings to see how groups are progressing and collect minutes and other supportive documentation. There will be a few interviews; however, those will occur much later in the process and will not include everyone involved.
- Institute can also provide assistance with TA's who will be involved with the implementation phase as well.
- J. Waggett also handed out packets – Local Public Health Activities Capacity and Technical Skills Survey (Local PHACTS) – which looks at local Public Health capacity
  - Last time a statewide survey was done, bigger staffed departments responded, skewing the data

#### Intermunicipal Services Agreement (IMA) update

- Conference call went well. There were some suggestions to improve clarity; but, no substantive changes were made.
- V. Nickerson-Bird asked if the most current draft is the final draft
  - No, even though the deadline for attorney response was 6/23 there are a few that still reviewing it
  - The IMA draft is to be approved by BOS and a final version will be signed by all the BOS the names of all the participating communities is known. This will happen sometime in August.
- G. Conner expressed concern that one person could be appointed by multiple towns to the governing board, making one person have several votes, skewing power
  - T. Matuszko and S. Martin explained that while this could theoretically happen, the group wanted to maintain each communities rights and not limit any community's right to appoint whomever they wanted
- T. Matuszko asked the group what they wanted to do with towns who did not sign the original DIG application that may want to get involved now and sign the IMA
  - In DIG application, it was stated that all towns would be offered the opportunity one more time before IMA signing
  - Group decided that all towns would be offered but that they must sign without the right to make any changes to the final IMA
    - The towns include: Cheshire, Clarksburg, Florida Lee, Lenox, Monterey, New Ashford, Otis, Pittsfield, Stockbridge and Tyringham

#### Shared Services discussion – Public Health Nurse (PHN) focus

- L. Bessette, L. Kittross, and S. Martin compiled a list of everything that a PHN does and asked the group to go through and prioritize
- S. Martin thinks that disease surveillance would be about ½ of a PHN's time
  - Estimated 650 disease reports in the participating communities in 2009
  - An updated report has been requested from DPH
- E. Lovejoy would like to see BOHs and the PHN focus on advocating that other agencies and community providers fulfill their contractual requirements
  - I.e.: hospitals educating teen moms before, during and after birth
- Advocacy and making sure people have access to resources is a crucial PHN role
- M. Serrano said that EDS planning would be a low priority since BOHs have spent so much time, especially recently, on updating EDS plans
- A vast majority of the group agreed that PHN are seen as less threatening when providing social services to those in need because approach is more helpful than enforcement

- AJ Juarez said that some districts have found it helpful to look at health indicators in identifying grants and resources for the future

“Business Plan” discussion. Maintaining a Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan is another key task for the PHN.

- PHN Service/Business Plan
  - Per diem nurses could be cheaper and if scheduled properly, a great resource, but they still require supervision by a PHN.
  - Insurances can be billed for vaccinations, making this a self-sustaining task for the Alliance
    - R. Frost said that the estimated number of flu clinics was too low
      - In Northern Berkshire alone, there were ~ 35 clinics held
  - L. Bessette said that if the PHN was not running the clinics, they should at least be involved in the planning of them
  - Group seemed to agree that 1 full-time PHN should be hired with several per diem nurses hired
  - E. Lovejoy pointed out that during camp season, nurses going out at the same time trying to cover all the camps’ immunizations would be overwhelming
  - How should we deal with excessive demand and limited resources?
    - This is something to consider in relation to all shared service categories, not just camps or nurses
      - If we get implementation grant, we will have time to work out these types of issues
  - Next step – invited VNAs for a discussion to determine if they can fulfill the Alliance’s needs
    - Most towns are would like to see improvement in the VNAs contracts.
  - T. Matuszko asked the group if PHN should continue to be looked at for planning purposes
    - J. Huebner suggested focusing on things that are more consistent, breaking out camps and flu clinics because they are limited bursts
      - Work with camps last ~ 2-3 weeks and work with flu clinics last ~ 6 weeks
  - Moving forward – break out camps and clinics and set up appointment with VNAs to determine volume, nurses available, hours available, and tasks to be completed
    - J. Huebner said that we should try to coordinate with the VNA, if possible; otherwise, in essence, the Alliance will become competition with the VNAs which is not the intent.
  - S. Martin summarized work done on the business plan from previous meetings, including time, cost per hour, mileage and overhead estimations

Rules and Regulations for Operating Procedures discussion

- Tabled for next meeting

Next Meeting

- Tentatively scheduled for July 7, 2011
  - R. Frost and M. Serrano indicated that they will most likely not be able to attend
- Agenda items

Adjourn

- Group adjourned at 7:47PM