

Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health

MINUTES

June 6, 2023 – 2pm

This meeting was held remotely under the provisions allowed by Acts (2021) Chapter 20, An Act relative to extending specific COVID-19 measures adopted during the state of emergency (<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2021/Chapter20>) approved on June 16, 2021

Attendees: Connor Robichaud– CMRPC; Jack McLellan – Mendon; Jeanne Gniadek – Northbridge; Erin Hightower– Uxbridge; Trish Parent – Upton; Agnieszka Podstawka – Douglas; Bill Fisher – Hopedale; Deb Vescera, Danielle Edmands, Dan Markman, Jack Sullivan – BVPPH

1. Approval of Minutes

Erin made a motion, seconded by Jeanne, to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2023, BVPPH meeting. The motion to include this adjustment and approve the minutes passed unanimously.

2. Inspection Staff Update

Working on town resource guides. Draft is complete and will be shared Design work is needed. Inspecting in Blackstone. Seasonal inspections like pools and camps are picking up.

3. Public Health Nurse Update

Maternal health program outline and resources sent out. The mission statement for the hoarding program and hoarding task force meeting in Uxbridge today. Narcan Training Preparation. Available to serve as an alternate for PHEP. Ready to present bite lab as requested.

4. Epidemiologist Updates

Not much data coming out of MAVEN, but some indications that we are seeing an uptick. Elevation of infection level in wastewater where that data is available. Other infectious diseases, especially ticks, would be worth tracking. Also, hep c and hep b. Also, investigating the relationship between toxic pollution related to industrial waste for another region is available to do that type of research in this role.

5. Shared Service Coordinator Update

- a. Connor presented a draft FY24 work plan based on the capacity assessment, focusing on Environmental Health, Disease Control and Prevention, Tobacco Use Prevention, and Workforce Training. Trish motion Jeanne seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

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- b. Equipment – consider respirators/hazmat suits, boots to wear in a hazardous environment, new Ipads have flash cameras, housing inspection software. Baby scale, no touch thermometer, a disposable measuring tape. MHOA memberships. MAPHN November conference in Falmouth.
- c. Performance evaluation forms Updated from last year to be more specific and measurable. Each town will have to fill these out. Hold off until August for anniversary dates in October.
- d. Epi Priorities – Tick-borne illness – analyze the geography, compare mosquito control towns vs not, environmental linkages like pollution, water, asthma, well testing, PFAS. PHN - Programs around Narcan; maternal-infant home visit program, contacting OBGYN providers to help promote; expanding hoarding task force to other towns.
- e. Jeanne seconded a motion to pursue Option 2: Full-time Community Health Worker and Part-time Community Outreach Worker. Full-time Community Health Worker: This role would require in-person and hands-on engagement, with office hours in towns four days a week. The focus of this position could be on mental health support, specifically for vulnerable populations. Duties could include mental health first aid, coordinating events with senior centers, providing resources for healthy aging, and acting as a liaison for research and community events. It is important to note that this position would not involve direct counseling but rather connecting individuals to appropriate resources and coordinating educational seminars and presentations.
We would also include the part-time Community Outreach Worker from Option 2. This role would involve a hybrid approach and focus on public health education through welcome packages, brochures, social media, and other effective channels.

6. Unanticipated business

Next meeting is July 11 at 1.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:59 pm.