

Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health

MINUTES

August 9, 2023 – 1pm

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, Mishel Caisapanta – CMRPC; Jack McLellan – Mendon; Jeanne Gniadek – Northbridge; Erin Hightower – Uxbridge; Diane Tiernan – Upton; Agnieszka Podstawka and Kristin Harris – Douglas; Bill Fisher – Hopedale; Sherry Patch – Millville; Deb Vescera, Danielle Edmands, Dan Markman, Jack Sullivan – BVPPH; Neal Nover - Guest

1. Approval of Minutes

Erin made a motion, seconded by Agnieszka, to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2023, BVPPH meeting. The motion to include this adjustment and approve the minutes passed unanimously.

2. Inspection Staff Update

Pulling together a guidance document on best management practices for the keeping of animals, similar to what we did for food. Nuisance complaints come in, but we need to define best practices. Between inspections, we are also working to standardize food application forms. Will have a draft to share in September, and we can discuss it with a small group in October. Sept 25 ServSafe course is scheduled.

3. Public Health Nurse Update

Just presented the bite lab in Northbridge. The turnout was great, and people were very interested in the information. She has another presentation in Douglas on August 16th at their library. Narcan trainings and Hoarding presentations are also being scheduled. Douglas will have the state do a clinic at their Octoberfest. Tick-borne diseases are increasingly common in Douglas.

4. Epidemiologist Updates

Still an uptick in wastewater levels of COVID. Given the amount of immunization, COVID does not appear to be any more severe. A New Omicron-specific booster is planned for the end of October, which will be critical for fall clinics. Public health could monitor wastewater for a high risk of substance use. BioBot also plans to monitor for norovirus in addition to COVID. Cost is around \$50k so we may instead suggest the state to dedicate state opioid abatement funds to monitoring in strategic locations. There may be limitations on the opioid abatement funds that may not cover this expense.

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5. Shared Service Coordinator Update

The group welcomed Mishel Caisapanta, CMRPC's new Public Health Training Manager
Review of WinWam cost proposal resulted in a decision to decline services given the cost. The group will work internally and with a Subject Matter Expert from DPH to develop uniform and updated Housing Inspection forms.

6. Unanticipated business

Next meeting is September 12 at 1pm.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:41pm.