



**MINUTES OF HAMPDEN COUNTY HEALTH COALITION
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2018**

LOCATION: Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
60 Congress Street
Springfield, MA 01104

CALLED TO ORDER AT: 10:05 a.m.
MEETING ADJOURNED AT: 11:58 a.m.

ATTENDEES:

Kathleen Auer	Health Agent, Agawam Health Department
Stephanie Bozigian-Merrick	Public Health Emergency Preparedness Planner, PVPC
Soloe Dennis	Deputy Commissioner, Springfield Health & Human Services
Thomas FitzGerald	Health Director, Southwick
Jeanne Galloway	Co-Chair; Health Director, West Springfield
Beverly Hirschhorn	Director Board of Health, Longmeadow
Erica Johnson	Senior Planner, PVPC
Angela Kramer	Public Health Nurse, Ludlow
Debra Mulvenna	Public Health Nurse, Westfield Health Department
Aimee Petrosky	Health Agent, East Longmeadow
Joseph Rouse	Director of Public Health, Westfield; Health Agent, Russell
Deborah Schaier	Public Health Nurse, Holyoke
Tammy Spencer	Co-Chair; Sanitarian, Health Department, Chicopee

GUESTS:

Benjamin Bland	Mass in Motion Springfield
Cheryl Messer	Director of Nurses, Ludlow Board of Health
Sherry Petrucci	Public Health Nurse, Agawam Health Department
Dillon Sussman	PVPC Environment and Land Use Senior Planner

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED AT THIS MEETING:

- Agenda
- Minutes of Hampden County Health Coalition, Thursday, December 7, 2017
- HCHC FY 18 Financial Statement for the Month of January 2018
- HCHC Purchase Requests FY18-BP1:7/1/17-6/30/18 – January 2018 Requests
- Stephanie Bozigian-Merrick, PHEP Planner – November 2017 and January 2018 Monthly Reports
- Upcoming Grant Opportunity – CBAC’s “Better Together” Grants
- National Healthcare Disaster Professional Board Certification through ANCC
- COCA Call - informational flyer – Tuesday, February 13, 2018
- Memo from the Executive Office of Health and Human Services - *Local Health Internship Program 2018*
- New England Public Health Training Center – *LPHI Emergency Preparedness Training Certificate*

1. Meeting Called to Order

Jeanne Galloway called the February 1, 2018 meeting of the Hampden County Health Coalition (HCHC) to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. Welcome & Introductions

Ms. Galloway welcomed HCHC members and guests and she asked everyone to introduce themselves.

3. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Galloway asked if there were any comments or questions regarding the December 7, 2017 HCHC meeting minutes. There being no comments or questions, Ms. Galloway then called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2017 HCHC meeting.

SOLOE DENNIS MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 7, 2017 MINUTES; DEBRA MULVENNA SECONDED THE MOTION AND THE HCHC MEMBERS PRESENT APPROVED THE MOTION WITH TWO HCHC MEMBERS, JOSEPH ROUSE AND KATHLEEN AUER, ABSTAINING FROM THE VOTE.

4. Financial Report

Erica Johnson presented the HCHC Financial Statement for the month of January 2018 and she noted that the balance of PHEP funds as of January 23rd is \$122,143.89. Ms. Johnson reported that the state approved the Coalition's budget modification request and there is no longer a negative number under *Coalition Travel/Conferences/Memberships*. She explained that funds were moved from the *PHEP Intern* line to cover the full cost of the Massachusetts Health Officers Association (MHOA) participation and other expected expenses for *Coalition Travel/Conferences/Memberships*. In response to a question raised by Mr. Dennis, Ms. Johnson stated that the MHOA payment has been taken care of and she thanked everyone for promptly sending her their certificates.

Ms. Galloway then called for a motion to approve the HCHC FY 18 Financial Statement for the Month of January 2018. SOLOE DENNIS MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE HCHC FY 18 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2018; THOMAS FITZGERALD SECONDED THE MOTION, AND ALL THE HCHC MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

As suggested by Ms. Galloway, Ms. Johnson next addressed agenda item 5 (k) Review of Expenditure Requests. Ms. Johnson referred to the January 2018 Purchase Requests noting that there are 2 requests listed under *Supplies*, namely \$59.94 for a cell phone case for the City of Holyoke and \$213.14 for ink cartridges for the Town of Longmeadow. As regards the *Equipment* category, Ms. Johnson stated that a laptop was purchased in the amount of \$233.99 for the Coalition's badging machine. In addition, the City of Springfield is requesting \$820 for an iPad and keyboard. Ms. Johnson stated that the balance of \$2,290.77 is based on the last budget modification and she noted that HCHC is allowed two more budget modifications before the end of the grant. As regards the badging machine, Ms. Johnson pointed out that it is very old but it is still working and she felt that it was in the Coalition's best interest to continue to maintain the machine rather than purchasing a new one at this time. In response to a question from Mr. Rouse, Ms. Johnson stated that a vaccine refrigerator is not an allowable expense for HCHC, noting that no refrigerators of any kind are allowed. Mr. Rouse remarked that the cost of a large refrigerator is prohibitive, noting that the cost for a small countertop model is \$2,700. Ms. Galloway stated that the Coalition might be able to use some of the additional funds

that are available through the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC) and she suggested that HCHC members forward information regarding needed equipment to Raine Brown at Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

There being no further questions or comments, Ms. Galloway called for a motion to approve the January 2018 purchase requests. JOSEPH ROUSE MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE HCHC JANUARY 2018 PURCHASE REQUESTS AS PRESENTED; KATHLEEN AUER SECONDED THE MOTION, AND ALL THE HCHC MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

5. Business At Hand

a) Food Insecurity in Hampden County

Ms. Galloway welcomed PVPC Environment and Land Use Senior Planner Dillon Sussman who talked to HCHC members about food access planning in the Towns of West Springfield and Palmer. Mr. Sussman noted that he is the Mass in Motion Coordinator for those communities and he explained that Mass in Motion is an effort by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) to promote active living and healthy eating. Mr. Sussman noted that race is one of the major social determinants of health in Massachusetts and he pointed out that African Americans and Latinos experience disproportionate health disparities. As regards the populations in the Towns of West Springfield and Palmer, Mr. Sussman stated that Palmer is primarily white while West Springfield is a more racially and ethnically diverse community. He remarked that in both Palmer and in West Springfield, it has been difficult to make connections with people who experience food insecurity given that he does not have a strong association with either community. In addition, he noted that the groups PVPC has partnered with similarly do not have strong connections to people with food insecurity regardless of their racial or ethnic backgrounds. Mr. Sussman noted that this is a challenge that he continues to work on and he asked HCHC members to let him know if they have connections to people of color, or recent immigrants, as well as people in lower income groups in Palmer or West Springfield. Angela Kramer suggested that Mr. Sussman attend one of the Hampden County CHIP committee meetings. She noted that they have been discussing issues regarding food challenges and that he could possibly find contacts through that group. Mr. Sussman stated that his colleague, PVPC Planner Corrin Meise-Munns has gone to at least one of those meeting but he agreed that it would be helpful to attend more.

Mr. Sussman reported that PVPC has gathered data and has conducted focus groups and surveys in Palmer and he stated that the cost of healthy food is a genuine barrier for many people, adding that most people want to purchase healthy, fresh food but cannot afford it. Mr. Sussman stated that the survey results were different for those who self-identify as being food insecure from those who do not. He noted, however, that when asked what they value when making food purchases, individuals who are more food insecure put a higher priority on nutritional value. He remarked that it is not that people don't want to eat healthy food or don't know how to eat well but they are simply not able to do so, noting that cost has been a big issue as well as access to transportation.

Mr. Sussman then presented a color-coded *Food Access Map for Hampden and Hampshire County*. He stated that the various colors on the map represent proximity to healthy foods and he explained how the colors are used to indicate areas with few challenges compared to areas with many challenges. Mr. Sussman noted that the color orange represents the area of most concern. He stated that these are households that are experiencing low healthy food proximity and high household food access challenges. Mr. Sussman stated that the food access map was first created for Hampshire County as part of the food assessment process that Healthy Hampshire is working on. He noted that when they did the same methodology in Hampden County, he was surprised by the results as regards food proximity in the urban areas. Mr. Sussman pointed out that there is a high concentration of stores that sell food in the urban areas and when you add in the fact that there is more transit access in the urban core, the map suggests that relative to the county there is reasonable food proximity in Springfield and Holyoke and he was not sure if that is accurate. Mr. Sussman noted that there may be a lot of food stores in the urban area that are convenient but they may be selling food that is much less healthy. Mr. Sussman stated that the map seems to be working in the outlying areas of the county but he was not sure if it is working in the urban core.

Mr. Sussman then responded to several questions raised by HCHC members and a brief discussion followed. Mr. Sussman stated that the food access map can be found on the PVPC website and he offered to send a link to HCHC members noting that it is a good tool for initiating a discussion around the topic of food insecurity. Ms. Galloway thanked Mr. Sussman for his presentation and she moved to address agenda item 5 (b).

b) Supplemental Environmental Projects

Ms. Galloway then talked about EPA's Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP) program which offers opportunities for a violator of environmental laws to contribute to a corrective project in the field related to the individual's violation. She noted for example, if the EPA is taking punitive action against a landlord for not disclosing lead presence, the landlord might contribute money to a program about lead training or education. Ms. Galloway asked HCHC members to let her know if they would like more information about the SEP program.

c) Population Urban & Rural Community Health

Ms. Galloway next talked about the Population Urban & Rural Community Health (PURCH) program which she explained is a UMass Medical School cooperative with Baystate Medical Center that provides a four year training program for physicians. She stated that the program accepts approximately 25 students each year and the doctors learn how to work in Public Health in both urban and rural communities. Ms. Galloway stated that Dr. Sarah Perez McAdoo has agreed to come to either the March or April Coalition meeting talk about the program. HCHC members expressed interest in having Dr. McAdoo attend the March 1st Coalition meeting.

d) HCHC Intern Update

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick announced that the Coalition now has a PHEP intern. She stated that her name is Rebecca Piscia and she has been accepted in the transitional advanced program between the Public Health undergraduate

and graduate program at UMass.

e) Closed POD Project Update

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick noted that the Coalition's intern will be working on the Closed POD program. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that HCHC will now have 10 hours a week of Closed POD help and she encouraged HCHC members to take advantage of this assistance.

f) Group Home Outreach Project

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that HCHC is ready to move forward with the Group Home Outreach project but she first wanted to finalize the EDS components and drills which are almost completed. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick reported that HCHC may be able to dovetail somewhat with an upcoming Pan Flu Subcommittee supported project related to people with functional access needs.

g) PHEP Deliverables Update & Next Steps

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick noted that the Coalition appears to be having some issues using WebEOC and she asked HCHC members for their ideas on how to make it easier to use WebEOC. Mr. Rouse pointed out that the last drill was after hours and he suggested that access to WebEOC needs to be made better available, noting that he does not bring his laptop home. Ms. Spencer stated that she was able to participate using her phone noting that the app is now much improved. Mr. Rouse suggested that there needs to be a discussion to make sure everyone is set up with that option and he underscored that remote access is a problem. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that she will look at that before the next HCHC meeting to see if we can come up with something for remote access in case a real event happens when HCHC members are not in front of their laptops. Ms. Spencer also stated that there should be a more realistic timeframe for the drills. A discussion followed about whether or not this drill is actually useful however, Ms. Bozigian-Merrick pointed out that as it stands now, everyone who has an EDS up and running needs to be using WebEOC if there is more than one EDS open at the same time. Ms. Spencer suggested that a WebEOC "cheat sheet" should be embedded in the email that is sent out and Ms. Bozigian-Merrick felt that was a good idea. At this point, Ms. Galloway mentioned that WRHSAC will be presenting an *Operationalizing ICS* training which could be a refresher for HCHC as well and she will let HCHC members know when this training has been scheduled.

h) Baystate Health Better Together Grant

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick reported that at last week's meeting of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), Annamarie Golden from Baystate talked about the Better Together grants. She explained that through the Determination of Need (DoN) process, if a hospital requests and receives funds for structural improvements, they might need to provide a percentage of the funds to support needs in their community that are related to provision of healthcare. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that this year the Community Benefits Advisory Council (CBAC) has put up four \$25,000 Better Together grants for which the RFP will soon be released. She noted that some of the topics to consider are outlined in a handout that she had provided. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that the general

information session will take place on February 7th at PVPC from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. and she noted that there will be a required letter of intent (LOI) to apply for the grant. Ms. Galloway explained that one of the reasons for the LOI is that those who don't have a lot of experience writing grants can have access to an excellent grant writer.

i) New Opportunity for Board Certification as a Healthcare Disaster Professional

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick next referred to a handout she had provided about the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) which has now developed a national healthcare disaster certification. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that most HCHC members would be eligible to take this exam to become certified as a National Healthcare Disaster Professional and she stated that the fee is \$290. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick also referred to an informational sheet about the Local Public Health Institute (LPHI) Emergency Preparedness Training Certificate. She stated that this is a 16 module certificate program for Public Health Emergency Preparedness, noting that there is no fee and it is possible to do one module at a time.

j) MDPH Summer Internship Program

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick reported that the MDPH is offering an opportunity for a summer intern to help local Public Health and she noted that more details about the program are included in the handout which she had provided. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that MDPH would like a clearly defined project that they could use to interest a potential candidate and she noted that the application is due on February 9th. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that the interns will receive no money, noting that they are working for school credit and at the end of the project the health department host will go with the intern to the Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory where the intern will present their poster. Ms. Messer reported that Ludlow is applying for this program.

k) Review of Expenditure Requests

This item was discussed as part of agenda item 4.

6. News and Updates

a) MRC & PV COAD Updates

Tammy Spencer reported that Lois Luniewicz recently attended the MRC Advisory Group (MAG) meeting in Northampton where they announced that the Franklin County MRC Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Disaster Animal Response Team (DART) will be officially dissolved which is apparently due to lack of support from their volunteers. Ms. Johnson noted that the Franklin County MRC felt that it was perhaps in their best interest to have either the MRC in Berkshire or Hampshire County take over responsibilities of providing MRC services in Franklin County and to also oversee their volunteers. In response to a question raised by Ms. Schaiel, Ms. Johnson stated that there are 54 registered volunteers for Central Hampden County MRC, which includes the communities of Holyoke, Chicopee, West Springfield and Agawam. Ms. Spencer next reported that there was a regular Hampden County MRC unit meeting in January and she noted that there was a meeting of the Central Hampden County MRC Oversight Committee on January 10th. Ms. Spencer stated that they are working with Ms.

Johnson to determine the best way to advertise the unit leader position. Ms. Spencer reported that Ms. Luniewicz also attended the Pioneer Valley COAD meeting and she noted that they talked about having some COAD members become members of the MRC. Ms. Spencer also noted that they hope to soon hear about the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) 2018 Challenge Awards.

b) HMCC Update

Ms. Galloway stated that the quarterly HMCC Steering Committee meeting will take place in March and she will ask Mark Maloni to let her know the date of the next full coalition meeting.

c) MCD Update

Ms. Galloway stated that the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District (PVMCD) is now in existence and she reported that the PVMCD was awarded an Efficiency and Regionalization grant in the amount of \$150,000 which is mostly for supplies and some administration. Communities are being asked to sign a letter of interest, nominate a potential commissioner member to be vetted by the State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board (SRMCB), and hopefully get this into warrant for the next fiscal year. Ms. Galloway stated that there is still a question about how much each town needs to pay for the grass roots work adding that the letter that went out to all elected officials and boards of health includes a range in the area of \$4,500 – \$7,500 per community. Ms. Galloway recommended that interested communities send back the letters with their nominations and to contact Greg Lewis with any questions.

d) Western MA Public Health Advisory Group (WAG)

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick reported that the WAG is continuing to work on devising a meaningful template for an EDS plan that would be standardized across the region.

e) LSAC Update

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that the Local State Advisory Committee (LSAC) meeting will take place later in February and she noted that LSAC meets every other month.

f) WRHSAC Updates

Ms. Galloway reported that the Pan Flu Subcommittee is working on a Pediatric Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) report and they are trying to put an event together. She again noted that the Training and Exercise Subcommittee has funds remaining that they want to use and she stated that she will get back to them about the potential for HCHC refrigerators. Ms. Galloway stated that there will be an Emerging Threat training session at the Eastern States Exposition in March and a flyer will be available with more information. She noted that WRHSAC is also working on a large event training which will likely take place sometime in June at the Eastern States Exposition. Ms. Galloway reported that FRCOG developed a new brochure which describes WRHSAC's activities and she stated that she could obtain more copies if the Coalition is interested.

g) MAVEN Report

Angela Kramer noted that it has been a very busy month at MAVEN and she reported that since January 1st she has seen over 240 people with the flu. Ms. Kramer also stated that she has been seeing more and more cases of *Group A Streptococcus* during 2017 and 2018. Ms. Kramer stated that she is discovering that usually the individuals who contract this disease are people who do not have good access to care, they may have a history of diabetes or they might be obese. She stated that they are prone to complications which include loss of limbs noting that one person died. Ms. Kramer noted that she has been seeing more people with Pertussis and she also reported that she has seen a few cases of the tick-borne related disease *Granulocytic Anaplasmosis*. Ms. Johnson noted that since the last HCHC meeting Ms. Kramer has taken on work in the Town of Wilbraham and the towns now receiving MAVEN services include Granville, Russell, Blandford, Palmer, Montgomery, Hampden, Wilbraham and Monson.

h) Upcoming Events, Trainings & Exercises

Ms. Bozigian-Merrick stated that WRHSAC and FRCOG have decided to conduct table top exercises regarding regional shelters in each of the 4 counties in western Massachusetts. Ms. Galloway stated that she understands that WRHSAC would do the training but given that Hampden County doesn't have a regional shelter, there might be an event that would involve discussing regional shelters in Hampden County. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick asked HCHC members how they feel about participating in regional sheltering discussions. Cheryl Messer noted that Ludlow opened a shelter during the last snow storm and she asked how this is different from regional sheltering. Ms. Bozigian-Merrick explained that technically whoever is involved in the regional shelter would send their folks to that shelter. Ms. Galloway noted that the City of Chicopee opened a regional shelter during one of the snow storms however according to a survey, only one woman and her two children were from Chicopee.

Ms. Hirschhorn stated that the Town of Longmeadow does not want to be a part of regional sheltering and she therefore saw no point in attending a discussion about regional sheltering. Mr. Rouse felt that it is more important to talk about sub-regional shelters. He noted that during a weather emergency, people from Russell, for example, are not going to travel to a shelter in Holyoke and he stated that a regional shelter will only serve the contiguous cities or towns. Ms. Johnson pointed out that she has been directly involved with multiple projects which included funding streams, consultants, emergency preparedness planners in Hampden County that have been tasked with bringing together regional sheltering in Hampden County and none of that has come to fruition. She pointed out that the individual departments and municipalities in Hampden County work together and get things done and she cited the 2011 tornado as an example of how Hampden County successfully worked together during that emergency event. Mr. Rouse suggested that Hampden County should have a discussion about educational materials and home emergency preparedness kits that people could have in their homes so they can shelter in place during an emergency. Ms. Johnson agreed that unless there is an evacuation order, most people will not leave their homes regardless of where they are living if they have the resources to stay where they are.

Ms. Schaier suggested that perhaps informational flyers could be sent out through the gas and electric company and

she also noted that Holyoke has a television channel that can be used to share information. Ms. Auer remarked that this might be a great project for the Coalition's intern. Ms. Galloway stated that FRCOG's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Dan Nietsche was looking for people to be part of a planning team and she noted that Tom FitzGerald has volunteered to be on the planning team. Ms. Galloway suggested that the Coalition might want to offer their ideas about sub-regional shelters and sheltering in place. She also stated that she will inform Dan Nietsche that HCHC members do not wish to participate in a county-wide regional shelter table top exercise.

8. Other Business

Ms. Galloway gave a brief update on the Casino Health Impact Assessment. She stated that there will be more meetings on this topic and she would be happy to share more information if HCHC members are interested. Ms. Galloway also stated that she learned that the Human Trafficking Taskforce in the region is working with MGM. Ms. Galloway also reported that there is a Pioneer Valley Coalition for Suicide Prevention that has a non-crisis call line which she noted is 413 - 341-0501. At this point, Ms. Galloway asked if there was any other business to conduct. Mr. FitzGerald announced that the annual spring MHOA seminar will take place in March but he noted that unfortunately it will not be in the western part of the state adding that the closest location is Devens. Ms. Schaier also reported that she attended the Hoarding Task Force meeting on January 10th in Florence. She stated that if anyone is interested, the next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 14th and they anticipate having it in Holyoke. Ms. Galloway asked Ms. Schaier to send this information to Erica Johnson who will email it to HCHC members.

9. Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Galloway called for a motion to adjourn today's February 1, 2018 HCHC meeting at 11:58 a.m. THOMAS FITZGERALD MADE THE MOTION TO ADJOURN THIS FEBRUARY 1, 2018 HCHC MEETING; SOLOE DENNIS SECONDED THE MOTION, AND ALL THE HCHC MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Respectfully submitted, Lynn Shell, Support Staff - Pioneer Valley Planning Commission