



Region II Public Health Emergency Preparedness

Region II Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition Executive Committee Meeting MINUTES

Thursday, July 27, 2006 / 9:30 AM
Shrewsbury

In attendance: Derek Brindisi, Christopher Montiverdi, Lois Luniewicz, Paul McNulty, Ed Wirtanen, Jim Garreffo, Sandra Knipe, Jana Ferguson, Phil Leger, Nancy Allen **Coalition Staff:** Emily Reilly, Barry Lein, Walter J. DePaolo and Steve Saravara

Absent: Roger Mallet, Cheryl Rawinski, Howard Ziff, Karyn E. Card, Kerry Clark, and Peter MacDonald.

Meeting called to order at 9:49 AM by Derek Brindisi

Review & approve minutes of July 13, 2006. Motion by Paul McNulty, and seconded by Phil Leger, and unanimously approved.

Set date, time and location of next meeting: Thursday, August 10th 9:00AM – 10:00AM with the Steering Committee Meeting following immediately afterwards from 10:00AM – Noon / at 25 Meade Street, Worcester.

- **Staff Update:** Walter DePaolo spoke on behalf of Program Manager, Kerry Clark, who was absent due to military service. Walter told the Committee that there have been various attempts to contact Peter MacDonald to find what his intentions were, as far as staying on as a consultant with the program. Explaining that so, far has not returned any calls, even with regard to getting outstanding invoices for consulting services submitted.

Budget Update: Walter DePaolo gave the Committee the amount of funds remaining as of July 25, 2006. Personnel: \$54,458.89, Training: \$39,003.04, and Equipment: \$546.80.

Jana Ferguson spoke up to tell everyone that the recommendation from the Department of Public Health for budgeting for personnel is that the coalition should project out two months, August 31st through October 31st for the salary needs of all coalition staff.

Nancy Allen, brought up the fact that not all of the funding originally allocated for the Shrewsbury Anthrax Table Top Exercise was spent, and approximately \$12,000 would be returned to the coalition.

Walter DePaolo said that since we have extra money to be spent, before the end of August, one idea that Kerry Clark, that he wanted presented today, was to offer one more Risk Communication/Public Information Officer training toward the end of September. Derek said that we would have to book it soon since he heard that they were booking up fast. Jana Ferguson supported the idea saying that the training could actually occur up to 90 days after the money is spent on it.

Phil Leger made a motion, seconded by Paul McNulty, and approved by a unanimous vote, that the coalition use some of the remaining funds to offer another Risk Communication/Public Information Officer training, and it be open to other town officials besides Board of Health members, from the coalition communities.

Walter DePaolo brought up new information regarding the request for a generator by Roger Mallet for the Town of Orange. He showed the Board a facsimile of a letter from the president of Athol Memorial Hospital to Roger Mallet, indicating that the Armory in Orange, for which the generator was requested, would serve as an alternate care facility in the event of pandemic influenza, thus essentially being for the benefit of six communities, not just the Town of Orange.

Jana Ferguson said that she has brought generator request to her superiors at DPH, and it is being considered, however, she went on to explain that CDC does not permit its funding to be spent on power equipment. She said the guidelines for this could be found in the CDC Cooperative Agreement Guidance Appendix.

Derek said that we have a little more than \$60,000 we have to have obligated by August 30th. To this, Sandi Knipe ask whatever became of the plan to give money to the towns. Paul McNulty responded by saying that they only want to give money to the towns who can take it and maintain it separately, and not allow it to go into the town's general fund.

Jana Ferguson said she wanted to suggest that the Coalition consider buying signs for use at an EDS. She explained that the State of Washington has some pretty impressive ones.

Steve Saravara suggested that some of the available money be put toward communications and a GETS system. Jana Ferguson said such a thing would be an authorized expenditure. Phil Leger said that sometimes it's a matter of local police and fire not wanting others to be on their frequencies. Nancy Allen told the Committee that she has had radios that she purchased with some of the earliest grant money. Paul McNulty then suggested that we consider having some type of training on the use of radios. Walter DePaolo then told the Committee that Kerry Clark is already considering such a training.

Nancy Allen asked about Badge Makers, and said that she thought the coalition had already bought one. Derek explained that we as a Coalition need to ask ourselves, "do we want to ID and credential people?" He then suggested that we could use the MRC as a pilot program for this. But then Jana asked how that tied into the MSSAR. Nancy Allen said that we do need a way to know that someone has the license they claim to have. Derek responded by saying that they are hoping that the MRC will take care of that. Then Phil Leger asked whatever became of the money paid to Tom Connell for a credentialing system?

Phil Leger made a motion, seconded by Nancy Allen, and approved by a unanimous vote, that Derek Brindisi and Karyn Card, working through the Worcester Regional MRC, try to leverage Tom Connell to get IDs and Credentialing for the Coalition.

Phil Leger made a motion, seconded by Lois Luniewicz, and approved by unanimous vote, that all remaining funds be allocated for equipment purchases or money allocations for towns that can receive the fund for dedicated purchases, and further, that the equipment sub-committee be

empowered to make these decisions. And also, that a concise letter be sent to all Town Administrators, as well, as an E-mail to the Coalition E-mail distribution list, explaining the process for receiving the funds.

Paul McNulty asked about the time-frame available to allow the towns to submit their requests. Derek said that if a town is not already a registered vendor with the city of Worcester, a W-9 would have to be submitted by August 9th at the latest. Then Phil Leger explained that these cities and towns would have to have a dedicated account to receive this distribution of funds. Ed Wirtanen said that such a distribution is impossible with his town. And Jana Ferguson said that is one of the problems with making money disbursements to towns, that the department it is to go to, might have their overall budget appropriation reduced by whatever they may receive as a grand disbursement. But Paul McNulty asked why should all the other towns in the region be punished just because some have such prohibitive towns.

Jana Ferguson said that if the remaining funds were disbursed to the towns, the towns would then have to report back in 90 days on what they did spend the money on.

Walter DePaolo suggested that the coalition use some of its funding to buy specific things for the Worcester Regional MRC, such as some type of alerting system. To this Jana Ferguson said that the MRC can use the HHAN, as there is no longer any limit on who can be on it. Also, it was suggested by Derek Brindisi, that we should keep the MRC money separate from the coalition money.

Christopher Montiverdi suggested that a spending plan be submitted by the towns.

Deliverables Update: Walter DePaolo explained that the consultant have been making a push with the communities to get the various documents associated with many of the deliverables in, and it really shows if you look at the Scoreboard. Moreover, they have been asking the communities to submit their EDS plans, even if they are only partially complete, to show on the Scoreboard that work is at least being done. Jana Ferguson thanked the consultants for making this push.

MA DPH Regional Coordinator Updates: Jana Ferguson first discussed Pandemic Flu Planning Survey that had gone out several weeks ago. Saying that if enough communities, don't respond it could hurt the region, pointing out that she didn't have a completed survey from Worcester, which could severely skew the results. Lois Luniewicz asked if the information asked for in this flu survey was supposed to be different from what you're already doing with regard to your EDS planning. Jana Ferguson explained that you're not supposed to plan for a specific incident, however, at the federal level, they wanted to know what was being done to plan for particular scenarios. She also said that CDC required that this particular survey be used even though a lot of the questions didn't necessarily pertain to local boards of health.

Jana Ferguson then discussed the Pandemic Flu Exercises that DPH has planned. There are approximately 29 planned to run through UMass and the Community Colleges. Paul McNulty asked what they were supposed to be like. Jana Ferguson said that they are to be a series of Table Tops.

Jana Ferguson then discussed funding for the coalitions, explaining that with the 15% reduction, they've already lost staff at the Center for Emergency Preparedness. She said also, that there are still lots of complaints about basing funding on population versus the number of communities, and that another formula is being considered. The proposed new formula would base 80% of the funding on the population, and then 20% on the number of communities. Under this proposal which is currently being considered by the Commissioner, Region 2 would lose about \$30,000 dollars, which she said isn't too bad, when compared to region 4A, which could lose hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The last thing Jana Ferguson wanted to mention is that there would be evaluations going with regard to the Region Coordinators.

MRC Update: Derek Brindisi spoke on behalf of Karyn Card, telling the Committee that she had met with various applicants for the consultant positions for the MRC, and has picked the ones she plans to hire.

Next, Emily Reilly explained that they have just sent their brochures to the printer. She then also discussed some things with regard to the web site.

Barry Lein discussed meeting with the City of Worcester's technical people for the purpose of creating the data base. He said that they not only want to consider capturing data such as contact information, but also emergency contact information for if the people were ever hurt while serving. He said they also want to make sure they're capturing data such as skill sets, languages spoken, and other non-emergency skills, such as computer skills and bookkeeping. Barry Lein went on to explain that with regard to creating a template to use by the individual boards of health, there were concerns about security controls, and that they have decided it would be better to just have the boards of health direct the volunteers to the web site, and the MRC would simply periodically provide a list to the local board of health with all those who have signed up from that town.

On a final note, Barry Lein told the Committee that the Worcester Regional MRC does now have a web site, and though it is still under construction, the address is: www.worcesterregionalmrc.org

MHOA Conference & MAHB Workshop: Walter DePaolo told the committee that as of July 24, there were 35 people signed up for the MHOA conference for a total cost of \$16,645, counting both the hotel and registration fee. And then he said that there were a total of 19 people signed up for the MAHB Workshop, with a total cost of \$1,710.

Phil Leger brought up for discussion, the Northern New England Environmental Health Association annual Yankee Conference to be held in Portsmouth, NH, September 14, 15, 16, 2006.

Phil Leger made a motion, seconded by Paul McNulty, and approved by a unanimous vote, that the coalition pay registration fees and hotel fees for up to three people from each Region II member community, provided that those interested sign up by August 7, 2006. And also, this opportunity is open to coalition staff.

Host Agency Update: Derek told the Committee that Kate Kelly was hired recently by the Department of Public Health as the Assistant SNS Coordinator, and went on to say that she will be a great resource for the region, and he'd like to have her on the next agenda.

New Business / Old Business: Paul McNulty wanted to tell the committee about some of the things currently being considered at the Homeland Security Committee he also sits on, which serves 63 cities in towns in what is essentially Worcester County. He went on to explain their latest discussions have centered around the inter-operability of police and fire radios. Also, that the Homeland Security Region should be coming out with list of equipment that should be available to the communities in the region to use. And finally, that the Homeland Security group received an extension through March to spend down the funds in their grant.

Phil Leger said that he would like the Committee to recognize Paul McNulty and thank him for hanging in there, and being the voice for public health at these Homeland Security Regional meetings.

Meeting ended. At 12:07PM, a motion to adjourn was made by Lois Luniewicz, and seconded by Phil Leger, and by unanimous consent, meeting adjourned.