

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
October 22, 2009 / 10:00 AM
Fitchburg Town Hall, 718 Main St., Fitchburg, MA

IN ATTENDANCE: Phil Leger (Athol/Royalston); Joyce Crouse (Templeton); Missy Kakela-Bottom (Mendon); Sandra Knipe (Hubbardston); Dorothy McNamara (Fitchburg); Paul McNulty (Westborough); Chris Montiverdi (Leicester); Trish Parent (Upton); Andy Pelletier (Auburn); Cheryl Rawinski (Sutton); Jamie Terry (Northborough); Roger Mallet (Orange); Sherry Grant (Millville); Steve Curry (Fitchburg); Jeff Stephens (Fitchburg); Lois Luniewicz (Grafton); Barbara Mard (West Boylston); Rita McConville (Westminster); Kalene Garbarz (NABH); Kerry Clark (PHEP Program Manager); Barry Lein (Program Consultant); Forrest Price (Program Planner); Shawn Winsor (Worcester MRC); Deb Renholm (Sutton).

The meeting was called to Order by Phil Leger at 10:12am.

Minutes of the August 27, 2009 Steering Committee Meeting were presented for approval. Cheryl Rawinski made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and this was seconded by Andy Pelletier. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meetings:

- Executive Committee Meeting: November 12, 2009, 9:30am, Worcester.
- Executive Committee Meeting: November 26, 2009, 9:30am, Worcester. (Must re-schedule due to Thanksgiving)
- Executive Committee Meeting: December 10, 2009, 9:30am, Worcester.
- Executive & Steering Committee Meetings: December 17, 2009, 9:30am, Location TBD/Central Region.

Phil reviewed the proposed meeting schedule and a previous suggestion from the Steering Committee that they should meet on a monthly basis. He then asked the committee what they wanted to schedule.

Roger Mallet made a motion that the Steering Committee meet once a month during the duration of the H1N1 situation. This was seconded by Cheryl Rawinski. The motion passed unanimously.

Jamie Terry made a motion that the Steering Committee meet on November 19th. This was seconded by Cheryl Rawinski. The motion passed unanimously.

Phil then asked about the December schedule. After some discussion about the dates Andy made a suggestion that they hold both meetings on the second Thursday of each month to allow them the option of scheduling additional Executive Committee meetings if they were deemed necessary.

Cheryl Rawinski made a motion that we change the schedule to hold both Executive and Steering Committee meetings on November 12th and December 10th. Jamie Terry seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Program Coordinator Update: Kerry Clark

- Kerry mentioned the many emails and HHAN alerts that had gone out on vaccine availability.
- The PHER II money has been awarded, the invoices submitted, and checks should be out shortly.

- The PHER III contract is for \$1.2 million and is at the City Manager to be signed. Kerry briefed that the Steering Committee will need to make a decision on how to distribute these funds and send that back to DPH with the signed contract.
- Phil reviewed the proposed spending plans and the specific figures. The first decision was whether to offer Worcester a 10% or 15% fee as Host Agency. The Executive Committee recommends 10%.

Roger Mallet made a motion that the Steering Committee offer Worcester 10% (Host Agency) of the contract for the Host Agency portion. This was seconded by Jamie Terry. This motion passed unanimously.

- The next decision was how to divide the funds. Option A was a straight division based on population. Option B was to give each community \$2000 and then divide the remaining funds by population. Option C was to give each community \$3000 and then divide the remaining funds by population. The Executive Committee recommends Option B.

Chris Montiverdi made a motion that the Steering Committee choose Option B. This was seconded by Jamie Terry. During the discussion Dottie suggested that a straight population division would do more for large, diverse cities such as Fitchburg. Andy Pelletier suggested Option B with a 10% holdback for emergency use. Sandi Knipe reminded the committee that the state already had \$1.5 million being held for emergency situations. The motion passed with three “Nay” votes.

Host Agency Update: Kerry Clark

- Kerry repeated that the PHER III contract was at the City Manager for signature.

Homeland Security Council: Chris Montiverdi

- Chris stated that the council had voted to order 100 N95 fit test kits to be distributed to the 61 communities in the region.
- They will be holding N95 Fit Test training (Train-the Trainer) which will be open to everyone.
- NIOSH is looking to fine those agencies who do not follow CDC guidance.
- The Sheriffs Department is reaching out to all communities to provide training on the system. They are also looking for additional funding to add 48 more lines and bi-lingual capability. Each additional language costs about \$20,000. He stated that this would help address our Special Needs populations.
- Sandi asked if this system was appropriate to use to announce H1N1 clinics. Chris stated that we would have to ask the Sheriffs Department about this.
- Joyce asked if different N95 Mask manufacturers required different tests. Chris did not think this was an issue and stated that they had bought a universal fit testing machine.
- Jamie said that it her understanding that it was up to the communities to decide what goes out on Reverse 911 but Chris said this was not so.
- The Council had approved a Serve-Safe training to be held in Holden at Central Mass EMS.

Mutual Aid: Andy Pelletier

- Andy reported that we have approximately 57 communities who have signed up to the Mutual Aid Agreement. This gives us a 75% compliance rate.

Local and State Advisory Committee: Sandi Knipe

- Sandi reported that there was a four-hour meeting on Monday which centered on H1N1.
- The state is just as frustrated as the local BOHs at the changing guidance from the feds.
- DPH is anticipating more 9C cuts. They are already down 300 positions.
- DPH feels that we are losing credibility due to the changing guidance and erroneous reports.
- Kerry requested that anyone hearing of plans to disrupt H1N1 activities to please notify him.
- The vaccine coming in has been going to hospitals and providers but is now starting to go to local BOHs.
- The reason for the lack of vaccine appears to be a lack of media with which to grow the vaccine.
- Five of the Public Health Coalitions still do not have their PHER I/II funding.
- There is a HIPAA concern with volunteers. The state has a 25-question test for volunteers to take. There is a concern that this may have a negative effect on volunteers. Trish stated that this is the state ethics test which will be mandatory in April 2010.
- Kerry stated that PHER II invoices are complete for our region. Equipment items exceeding \$1,000 must be approved by DPH.
- Dottie asked how and who we report our H1N1 expenditures. Kerry replied that there was no format yet and communities should keep track of their expenditures. Tomorrow's conference call should cover this.

Committee Reports:

Personnel Sub-Committee: Lenny Izzo

- Phil briefed that an evaluation form for the contractors is being developed.

Equipment/Acquisition/Training Sub-Committee: Sandi Knipe

- Sandi stated that our first quarter BT money has been spent and some equipment is still on order.
- We will need to decide what sort of supplies and equipment we wish to place in the trailers.
- The state is working with some agencies to lock in prices for communities who need to contract for H1N1 clinics (Kerry will check on this).
- Phil used a new trailer to pick up his PPE orders for multiple towns and it worked very well.
- Jamie suggested that we consider buying thermometers for our H1N1 clinics.
- There are 49 people going to next week's MHOA conference.
- Sandi asked if Kerry had been able to correct the problem with the MEHA conference. He stated that he had and people should be seeing either reversals on their credit cards or a return of their checks.
- Kerry is working on the roster of people for the MHAB.

MRC Sub-Committee: Jamie Terry

- Jamie reported that the MRCs received \$70,000 from PHER I/II. \$50,000 is going to Worcester MRC with \$10,000 each for Wachusett and Grafton. Shawn plans to use part of the Worcester MRC money to advertise for all of the MRCs.

Old Business:

- None.

New Business:

- Roger briefed that the Mahar Regional School District Superintendent had money to purchase seasonal flu shots for low income people. They worked to develop a seasonal flu clinic but he was upset that there was no vaccine to purchase.
- The November 12th meetings will be held in Worcester.
- The December 10th meetings will be held at a Southern location.

Cheryl Rawinski made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Trish Parent. The meeting adjourned at 11:12am.

DRAFT