

Heath Board of Health
March 8, 2023 Meeting
9 am via Zoom

Call meeting to order: Meeting called to order 9:00 am by Gene Garland

Members Present: Gene Garland, Susan Gruen, Elissa Viarengo, Lorraine Berger

Others Present: Sue Lively

FRCOG Health Agents: Absent Kurt Schellenberg

- COVID Collaboration update (please note this is not a separate meeting)
 - Rename COVID Collaboration to “COVID Update”
 - Susan Gruen noted Franklin County has risen to CDC COVID Risk of Transmission rate to “MEDIUM”. Rapid Antigen self-test kits continue to be handed out. Reported cases of COVID remain at zero because no one is reporting positive test results anymore. May 1, 2023, will bring the end of free rapid antigen self-test kits. Greenfield Community College will drop the COVID vaccine requirement. UMASS has had no change in regulations.
 - Gene Garland stated there has been no UMASS email traffic regarding COVID, no weekly or monthly updates but a few of his students have been out but not for known COVID related illnesses.
 - Elissa Viarengo stated that there had been a severe upper respiratory illness circulating at UMASS where her son is a student.
- Review / Approve minutes from 2/8/23
 - No changes needed. Susan Gruen made a motion to accept the 2/8/23 BOH minutes as written. Elissa seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- Chairman’s Report
 - Still no response from Pioneer Valley Mosquito District about the necessary \$4,000 refund. Going forward, we can view it as credit. Carolyn Ness, a Select Board from South Deerfield, was the leader in getting this program started and presented the program to the town of Heath. Gene mentioned he would reach out to Carolyn.
 - Gene was not able to meet in person with Alice, but did email with her regarding work flow and process. He included all BOH members on those emails.
 - MAPCO meetings: Gene has been unable to find any meetings. He will reach out to Randy and the FRCOG. There is an Emergency Management meeting on 3/13 at 4:30 pm.
 - There is a need to recruit new members for the Board of Health. Elissa has submitted an article to the Heath Herald seeking interest. Members do not need to be a Heath resident but do need to attend meetings in person. A background in healthcare is appreciated but not necessary. The FRCOG offers free online training. Gene will also reach out to “Heath Connects” an email group initiated by Pat McGahan, to get word out.
- Regional Health Agent Updates
 - Kurt is not in attendance. Gene will follow up with him.
- New Business
 - Porta potty application was signed and dropped off at Jacobs Road. BOH Clerk, Alice, could not find it. Gene will sign another one and get it to her.
 - Nurses Report via Susan Gruen – Susan and town nurse, Claire Rabbit, attended a NARCAM program yesterday (3/7/23). Claire continues to see people for home visits and is holding her exercise program.
 - One permit for septic

Minutes taken by Elissa Viarengo

- Table Perc test bag discussion – Elissa has no idea what this is about. Gene will follow up.
- Ongoing Business
 - Local Board of Health Meeting Report – Lorraine Berger. Lorraine tried to join the Local Board of Health zoom meeting and was not able to get on. Follow up about Opioids Settlement, Lorraine sent BOH members several emails about it. Lorraine will attend the next LBH meeting. Lorraine asked Susan about the Narcan program. Susan said it was put on by Massachusetts Reserve Corps. (MRC) that she and Claire Rabbit are a part of. It's an educational course, not training course. Local towns are interested in pooling the Opioids Settlement money and then local BOH would decide on how best to use the money. Many towns don't carry Narcan because they don't have a place to store it. Susan reports it can be stored in your glove box for a year. Elissa asked if you need to be a healthcare practitioner to administer Narcan. Susan said no, you just need to be educated on how to use it properly.
 - Cooperative Public Health Service (CPHS) Oversight Board Meeting Report – Susan Gruen
 - Maura Healey and Paul Mark are trying to extend zoom meetings past March 31st.
 - The town assessment went up 4%. Our assessment is about \$300 more from last year.
 - Opioid update – suggestion is to have local Select Boards vote to agree to have settlement money pooled so that local BOH can decide how to best use the funds.
 - Carol Jacobson is a new person in charge of education programs. Brie Dubries is a new hire to start 3/31/23 from Northampton.
 - Department of Public Health (DPH) grant phase one and two have been completed, now on to phase three. Susan Shared two maps. Phase one – Randy's evaluation. Phase two – each Board Member evaluated their knowledge of the BOH. Mid March the FRCOG will be given an evaluation of our system of things that we need to update, correct and suggestions.
 - March 23rd, Susan will attend CPH meeting.
 - Kurt has been sent back to school to become a soil tester.
 - Maureen O'Reilly – she is a part of the Narcan trainer. She followed 91 % of the COVID cases. We had over 2,000 in Franklin County. 4 % of her time was spent following ticks and tick related illnesses. 4% following up on Influenza cases. 1 % following up on "other". She also followed up on an exposure of Ebola Virus, which took 20 days.
 - Considering raising the price of food vendor permits.
 - Discussion of how to educate the public about the duties of Boards of Health. Perhaps a pamphlet.
 - Susan asked Sue Lively to bring up the idea to the Select Board about pooling our Opioid Settlement funds. Sue asked for something in writing. Gene said he would follow up with her about that.
 - Heath Herald BOH Article and MVP report – Elissa will write an article to entice new members. MVP report is finished and should be removed from the agenda.
- Susan Gruen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 am. Elissa seconded it. All in favor. Next BOH meeting is April 12th, 9 am, location TBD.