

Heath Board of Health
April 12, 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, Sheila Litchfield

FRCOG Health Agents: Randy Crochier

- COVID Update
 - Franklin county is considered LOW COVID transmission risk, but Susan feels this is a false low as positive home test results are not reported to the CDC and she knows of several positive cases in town alone.
 - There is a new variant XBB41 spreading in India and now in Nebraska. People's boosters are now waning. There is no recommendation for additional boosting, at this time.
 - Sheila suggested that a message go out regarding the fact that because the virus keeps morphing, people can be reinfected with each variant. People should not be complacent, and the best protection is wearing masks.
 - Susan has confirmed with Walgreens that after May 15, 2023, insurance companies will no longer be giving out free rapid home antigen test kits.
 - Gene supports the idea of getting a message out either via robo call or via a poster and word of mouth.
 - Sue Lively mentioned that at the Select Board meeting on 4/11/23 they talked about Annual Town Meeting and the COVID precautions that should be taken. A meeting with the Town Coordinator, Town Clerk, Emergency Management and Board of Health was recommended. Elissa volunteered to represent the BOH in the meeting.
- Review / Approve minutes from 3/8/23
 - Elissa moved a motion to approve 3/8/23 minutes with corrections. Susan seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- Chairman's Report
 - Gene cannot attend today's MAPHCO meeting. Elissa will attend.
 - Sheila is attending a potential new BOH member. Gene asked her to submit her CV and letter of intent to the Select Board.
- Regional Health Agent Updates - Randy
 - There are more requests for perk tests and title five now that Spring is here. Homes are still selling and above market value. He gets regular Mohawk Estate beach test results.
 - FRCOG is now hosts a hub for all public health staff, health agents, health directors. For BOH members there is online training available but trainings are not required at this time.
 - Randy gave a presentation about the after-action report following COVID organized by MAPHCO (Area Public Health Coalition) which is the designated Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition for 24 Franklin County towns and one Hampshire County town to address and continually improve public health emergency preparedness.
 - Develop a single site plan to be used during emergencies.
 - Eliminate the confusion of MAPHCO by changing its name and rewriting the orders of operation.
 - Reorganize to be made of public health officials

- The annual meeting is June 21, 2023, it will be hybrid.
 - Randy is asking for a vote for the BOH to support the change and send someone to the annual meeting to vote for the change.
 - Gene made a motion to support the proposed changes to MAPHCO and commit a BOH representative to attend the MAPHCO annual meeting and to authorize any BOH representative to vote in favor of this change at the said meeting. Susan seconded the motion. All were in favor. Sheila Litchfield plans on attending the meeting.
- New Business
 - Nurses Report
 - Continue with weekly home visits. There is still an issue with a need for follow up care for discharge planning. Overlook has no nurse to provide care for all the demand. They have just hired an intern who has no experience. The town nurse is trying to educate the elderly about wearing masks. Susan, Sheila and Claire have taken the class about how to administer NARCAN. There have been some requests for food as well.
 - The review for the town nurse is coming up soon. There is a need to update the town nurse job description since it has not been updated since 2006. Because the town nurse is under the supervision of the BOH, a review should be done with the nurse and the BOH. There is a need to confirm the documentation of when the town nurse's hours were increased from 7 hours to 8. Susan suggested the minutes of Annual Town Meeting be researched as an increase in hours would have been voted on during a meeting. The salary paid to the town nurse could also be researched.
 - Phoebe Walker from FRCOG sent an email to the Select Board which provided information about what services are offered through The Public Health Nursing Program. Elissa will email copies to everyone.
 - Perc test bag
 - Elissa shared that in the BOH office there is a black perc test bag. She asked if the bag should be given to FRCOG since they conduct these tests on our behalf. Randy suggested we look inside the bag to see if there is Munsell Book which could be worth some money.
 - Elissa needs to submit her letter of resignation effective May 1, 2023 however her intention is to continue to be as active as possible with the BOH. She would like to stay involved with Pioneer Valley Mosquito District going forward.
- Ongoing Business
 - Local Board of Health Report – Lorraine
 - There has been a slight increase in Opioid Settlement funds. The town of Heath will receive a total of \$ 4,465 over 15 years. The Board of Selectmen will need to sign up for this new fund by April 18, 2023 with FRCOG. Gene reported that Hilma confirmed the sign up has been completed. Sue Lively mentioned that on the Annual Town Meeting warrant there will be the option of a stabilization fund. There was discussion of what then could be done with the money (pool the money with other towns, education).
 - Cooperative Public Health Service – Susan
 - Great evaluation of what members were deficient in, getting health care in rural areas. Now in phase three. Would like the color hand outs to be given to all BOH members.

- Heath Herald Article – Elissa
 - Next issue possibly discuss ticks and mosquitos and Pioneer Valley Mosquito District. Will check with town nurse about her topic.
- Pioneer Valley Mosquito District – Elissa
 - The commissioners met for their annual meeting and they voted to have our \$4,000 overpayment serve as credit in the years to come. Documentation of this agreement will be sent to the Town of Heath.
- Adjourn
 - Elissa made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:34am. Lorraine seconded it. All were in favor.
 - Next meeting is May 10, 2023.