

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 4, 2016/9:00AM
Worcester Health Department
25 Meade Street
Worcester, MA

IN ATTENDANCE: Stephen Baccari (Westborough)(Chair); Kalene Gendron (Pepperell); Lenny Izzo (Hopedale); Sandra Knipe (Gardner); Philip Leger (Worcester); Dorothy McNamara (Fitchburg); Trish Parent (Upton); Andy Pelletier (Southbridge)(Vice-Chair); Dawn Farmer (Grafton); James Philbrook (Charlton); Tom Bonci (Clinton); Colleen Bolen (Worcester DPH/CMRPHA); Alissa Errede (Worcester DPH/CMRPHA); Barry Lein (IT Consultant); Jamie Terry (Program Planner); Sara Darlagiannis (Program Planner); Liz Foley (HPP Coordinator/WRMRC).

Called in Remotely: Darlene Coyle (Auburn)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Stephen Baccari at 9:00AM.

Minutes Review: The minutes from the January 7, 2015 Steering Committee were presented for review and approval.

After suggested revisions and corrections in spelling were made, Sandi Knipe made a motion that we accept the January 7, 2016 steering committee meeting minutes. This was seconded by Lenny Izzo. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meetings:

- Steering Committee Meeting: March 24, 2016/9:00AM/Location: 25 Meade Street, Worcester, MA, Room 109
- Steering Committee Meeting: April 7, 2016/9:00AM/Location: 40 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507, Charlton Public Library)
- Steering Committee Meeting: May 4, 2016/9:00AM/Location: 28 Providence Road, Grafton, MA 01536, Grafton Police Station, 2nd Floor

Program Coordinator Update:

- **Staffing Update:**
 - Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management (OPEM) has announced the filling of two positions within their office. Lisa Crowner will serve as the Region V Public Health Coordinator and Donna Quinn will oversee the PHEP program at MDPH.
 - Due to an injury, Forrest Price wished to share with the group that he will take some time away from the field and available remotely. In the interim, please do not hesitate to contact any of the Office of Health & Medical Preparedness within the Worcester Department of Public Health (WDPH).
 - Alyssa Rusiecki submitted a letter of resignation informing the steering committee that she has Sturbridge for a new position at University of Massachusetts. We wish Ms. Rusiecki good luck in future endeavors.
- **Concurrence and Budget Period 5 (BP5):**
 - OPEM is aiming to expedite the concurrence process and the awarding of Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) funds through the early identification of deliverables. Ideally, the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) will be presented at an earlier date so that state and local partners can

meet to ensure that progress can be made on this front. The intent is to have each PHEP Region's host agency with both an executed contract and funding in place by July 1, 2016. It was noted that Mary Clark of OPEM has already begun to facilitate work regarding the concurrence process through the use of small discussion groups.

- Discussion took place regarding Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) funding; as it is separate from the CDC funding stream and obtains funding through the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). ASPR plans to release funds late fall of 2016 which could possibly impact operations within the MRC. Discussion took place regarding the steering committee's future consideration to use a portion of PHEP funding to bridge the delayed MRC funding.
- Moving forward into BP5, it is anticipated that all resource requests will be closely reviewed to determine need, eligibility, and recent similarly requested assets. Additionally, any single item exceeding \$1,000 and electronic (laptops, iPad, etc.) requests will require OPEM approval. Progress relative to budget period deliverables may also be considered in the review process. The awarding of assets may also be correlated to higher performance rates. For example, a recently awarded iPad may be tied to an expected higher response or participation rate in HHAN/WebEOC drills. As we move further into the Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition (HMCC), this data may be especially important if funding streams diminish. The root cause of the changes may be to ensure the proper use of federal dollars and that requests through the PHEP funding stream are not used to supplant a municipality's operational budget.
 - As a reminder, if regional partners have decommissioned or broken equipment, a formal notice should be submitted to the City of Worcester as host agency. Along with a formal letter of record, the asset tag associated with the resource should also be returned.
- **Conference Updates:**
 - All requests that came before the committee at the January PHEP meeting have been approved. However, OPEM is verifying eligibility of reimbursement for the MAPHN conference. Recognizing the time sensitivity associated with this conference, Worcester will provide an update as soon as possible.
 - As a reminder, please note that alcohol and gratuities are not considered eligible expenses for reimbursement.
 - Car rentals are no longer considered an eligible expense for reimbursement.
- **Animal Sheltering:**
 - WDPH met with representatives from State of Massachusetts Animal Response Team (SMART) and Central Massachusetts Animal Response Team (CMDART) to discuss the capability of each organization had to provide animal sheltering training during disaster.
 - In the past, Region 2 has helped support CMDART with resources and/or funding. For this particular training, CMDART has requested a \$300 charge for these services. This fee would be used by the non-profit organization operational purposes as well as to print items such as emergency preparedness checklists for animals and assemble animal disaster go-kits. SMART is willing to provide training at no-cost.
 - Recognizing that response/planning considerations will vary for each community, discussion amongst the group occurred regarding the possibility of one town demonstrating their animal sheltering plan at an upcoming meeting.
 - The group discussed the value of animal sheltering planning considerations prior to emergencies and decided that a review of resource listings that may be needed per a 10,000 population was necessary to make an informed decision on upcoming training opportunities.
 - WDPH will provide a resource listing to the group.

- **Planner Evaluations:**
 - The timeline to submit completed planner evaluations has been extended until February 13, 2016. Please submit evaluations and comments before this date.
- **Budget:**
 - A presentation of the most current budget was shared with the group that showed an available balance of more than \$120,000 remained.
- **WebEOC/HHAN:**
 - As a reminder, please verify account information and ensure that HHAN and WebEOC accounts are functioning as intended.
 - WebEOC will be getting a facelift. With a new look and feel, the updated version of the program is designed to better the user's experience and replaces an older outdated version. WebEOC now will have the feel of a modern website and allows users to open "tabs" as opposed to separate "windows" in an effort to streamline efficiency and increase usage. Aligned with the regional project, Region 2 will work closely in the coming weeks/months to help pilot the new program.
- **Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) Assessment Tool**
 - As of February 4, 2016, over 50% of Region 2 had participated in the EDS assessment tool. Weekly updates are provided to this office and will be communicated accordingly. The final day to complete the EDS assessment tool is February 28, 2016.

Host Agency Update:

- **Quarter 2 Reporting**
 - Both the HMCC and the PHEP budgets were submitted separately and on time.

Homeland Security Council Update:

- **UMASS to Hold Full Scale Exercise:**
 - UMASS University Campus will be holding a mass casualty full scale exercise with city partners. This training is tentatively scheduled for mid-June.
- **Public Health Hazardous Materials Training:**
 - A training opportunity regarding public health and hazardous materials (HAZMAT) has been shared with the group. Examples of public health's involvement with HAZMAT has been the mercury incident at Grafton Street Elementary in Worcester, as well as the appearance of an unknown substance, later determined to be glycerin, found in United States Postal Service (USPS) correspondence in the towns of Athol, Royalston, Petersham, and Phillipston. It was noted that during the USPS incident, Deb Karan Vondal was very involved and effective in public health messaging.
 - The group wished to learn more about the training before making a decision.
 - **UPDATE: Email excerpt taken from a February 9, 2016 email:** "The Western Region Homeland Security Council recently conducted a successful Hazmat Emergency Trends training series. This series provided one, four-hour, awareness level training in each county of western Massachusetts. The training noted the important role that Boards of Health/Public Health play in the response to and recovery from Hazardous Material incidents, especially those that occur within residential locations. The training also revealed a gap in Boards of Health awareness of their role in these incidents and their ability to identify such incidents if they were to discover them during a health inspection."

Mutual Aid:

- **Nothing to report**

Local State and Advisory Council (LSAC)

- **January LSAC Meeting:**
 - Other regional partners have reported representation issues from different disciplines at the HMCC level. At the most recent meeting, LSAC members met prior separately from

MDPH partners; a practice that was thought to have been discontinued. During the MDPH participation portion of the LSAC meeting, three main issues were topics to that were addressed: public health money, regional response plan, and the enhancement of local commitment.

- **Public Health Money:** Spending discretion will be made at the PHEP and Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) levels and not necessarily at the HMCC level.
 - Discussion took place regarding how the money would be allocated to the HMCC host agencies. Because WDPH reports each PHEP and HPP budgets separately as the money is coming from two different funding streams; ASPR and CDC, there will be two separate pots of money.
 - Budgets will first be reviewed HMCC level to assess potential trends/interests/duplication between PHEP and HPP. It is important to recognize that each of public health funding stream has specific deliverables that need to be met.
 - An example of similar interests between both PHEP and HPP is in active shooter scenario training. Because this training holds a shared capability in Responder Safety and Health, the two funding streams would be available to be used interchangeably for the training.
- **Regional Response Plan:** The completion regional response plan for June may be unrealistic as some of the HMCCs are not yet or very recently formed.
- **Enhancement of Local Commitment:** As a result of poor turnout for the Region 3 HMCC meeting, MDPH partners are seeking more commitment at the local level.
 - Conversely Region 2 HMCC/PHEP representatives are distinct voices at HMCC meetings and ensure that PHEP is properly represented. Thank you to Trish Parent, Sandi Knipe, and Dottie McNamara for being professional representatives of Region 2.
 - Discussion regarding of the importance of facilitating partnerships within all disciplines/ regions occurred and was decided to be an effective means to progress in the HMCC process.
- **Training and Opportunities**
 - Representatives from Local Public Health Institute (LPHI) and New England Public Health Training Center both presented at LSAC and shared information on upcoming trainings and module reviews. Training modules, such as the recently released farmers market, animal control, and administrative search warrant online modules, are an invaluable resource that greatly benefits local public health. The modules depend on volunteers to provide feedback to increase efficacy of the programs offered.
 - LPHI announced that they are considering reducing the number of opportunities within the LPHI fellowship program. They may only offer the fellowship program every few years as opposed to annually.

Massachusetts Health Officials Association (MHOA)

- Community Sanitation Program
 - The Community Sanitation training will be held in Devens on April 5, 2016.
- 2013 FDA Food Code
 - MDPH Food protection program is exploring transitioning the Commonwealth to the 2013 FDA Food Code but would first like to review and consider feedback/comments

from local public health officials regarding benefits of 105 CMR 590 and the 1999 FDA Food Code.

HMCC Update:

- **February HMCC Meeting:**
 - **Extending Partnerships:**
 - Region 1 partners attended the most recently held meeting. Because Region 1 has many small towns without full time public health agents, they are considering having planners represent local boards of health at the HMCC level.
 - As we move forward Region 2 HMCC is exploring the possibility of interregional exercises/trainings with our bordering regions
 - **Terrorism Conference:**
 - Identifying speakers for the upcoming Terrorism Conference has been challenging. The date for the conference may need to be moved.
 - **Regional ESF-8**
 - Discussion was held regarding regional Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8 implementation and how public health Region 2 will utilize the HMCC host agency for immediate support. As HMCC host agency, WDPH has the capability to provide 24/7 coverage, and will activate and staff a regional ESF-8 in the event of a public health emergency. Ideally, the regional ESF-8 would first triage and attempt resolve emergencies locally but may utilize the state ESF-8 for additional support and resources. As a result, communication will increase and be streamlined amongst all partners within Region 2. The regional ESF-8 will also be utilized for resource requests.
 - **Health and Human Services Alert Network (HHAN)**
 - HHAN group amongst executive committee members will be created to add another layer to filter necessary messages before communicated to the entire Region 2 distribution list.
 - **HAM Radio**
 - Information was shared regarding the possible purchase of radio equipment and amateur radio operator training at the HMCC level. It was noted that there is interest at hospital and community health levels and is participation is now extended to the local public health agencies. This training is designed to be given in two phases; the first being a classroom “HAM Cram” session and licensure test administration, and the second will be the purchasing of equipment.
 - PHEP committee will contribute a portion of money to support this effort.
 - **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)**
 - MRC just applied for a National Association of County and City Public Health Officials (NACCHO) grant and will also include the HAM radio training as offerings to volunteers. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and other trainings will also be offered by local MRC units. As previously mentioned, Alyssa Rusiecki is no longer working for the Sturbridge BOH/MRC has submitted a letter of resignation outlining that January 29, 2016 as her last day. With Ms. Rusiecki’s departure, the town of Sturbridge will remain a host for the remainder of the year.
 - **Active Shooter**
 - The training and vendor have been approved by OPEM. HMCC expressed difficulties experienced in identifying locations to facilitate both the lecture as well as the practical portions of the active shooter training. Although the location

is to be determined, walk-throughs of communities willing to host the training are being scheduled.

Personnel Report:

- **Planner Evaluations**
 - Planner evaluations have been extended and are now due February 12, 2016.

Equipment, Acquisitions, and Training (EAT):

- **Town of Orange**
 - Reimbursement sought under Capability 4: Emergency Public Information and Warning for an electronic signboard battery replacement originally purchased using PHEP funds in the amount of \$550.65.
 - **Motion to accept by Phil Leger and seconded by Andy Pelletier. The motion unanimously passed.**
- **City of Worcester**
 - Funding in the amount of \$5,171.18 for the purchase of multiple items to be stored within public health mobile response trailers. Discussion occurred on the source of the original funding stream for the trailers. A similar request was granted to both the towns of Auburn and Sutton in the past. Ultimately, the assets were purchased using federal funding and can be used to benefit the entire region.
 - **Motion to accept by Phil Leger and seconded by Sandi Knipe. The motion unanimously passed.**
 - A suggestion was brought before the entire committee for the regional purchase of emergency car kits. The group wanted more information before taking a vote on this potential purchase. This discussion was decided to be tabled until the group can review the potential purchase. Information on this resource will be shared by WDPH. The costs of two potential kits are as follows.
 - Auto travel Kit-\$60.84
 - Emergency Kit \$44.60
- **EDS Bulk Printing**
 - A suggestion was made to bulk print and bind communities' EDS plans. Although bound, the plans would be accessible so that in the event that small revisions needed to be made, one or two pages could be replaced instead of the entire plan.
 - Funding in the amount of \$10,000 was agreed upon to be used in the capacity.

Old Business:

- There was no Old Business to discuss.

New Business:

- Capabilities Planning Guide (CPG)
 - The steering committee attendees were split into work groups to compare results from last year and to update the planning guide to prepare for future budget periods. The results will be made available to the group.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 by unanimous consent.

Minutes approved at the March 3, 2016 Steering Committee meeting.

Respectfully submitted: _____ **Steven Baccari, Chair, Region 2**
PHEP Coalition