

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
October 23, 2008/10:13 AM
Milford Town Hall, Milford, MA

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Montiverdi (Worcester); Alyssa Rusiecki (Sturbridge); Trish Parent (Upton); Jamie Terry (Northborough); Phil Leger (Athol/Royalston); Missy Kakela-Bottoms (Mendon); Lenny Izzo (Hopedale/Milford); Cheryl Rawinski (Sutton); Paul McNulty (Westborough); Lois Luniewicz (Grafton); Jeanne Gniadek (Northbridge); Kalene Garbarz (Nashoba); Laura Cameron (Millville); Barbara Mard (West Boylston); Elizabeth Swedberg (Westminster); Mike Graf (Bellingham); Barry Lein (Program Consultant); Ken Gikas (Program Consultant); Forrest Price (Program Consultant); Kerry Clark (Region 2 Public Health Preparedness Coordinator).

Visitors: Kathleen Gilmore from Mass DPH, Division of Epidemiology and Immunization/Acting Region II Health Educator. Carole Mullen from the Hopedale Council on Aging.

The Meeting was called to Order by Vice-Chairman Phil Leger at 10:13 AM.

Minutes of June 26, 2008 Steering Committee Meeting were presented for approval. Several members asked if it would be possible to have meeting minutes sent out early enough for everyone to have a chance to review them before the next meeting.

Motion by Lenny Izzo to approve the minutes presented. Motion was seconded by Cheryl Rawinski. The motion was approved unanimously.

Next Meetings:

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held at 9:30am on Thursday, November 13, 2008 at the Department of Public Health, 25 Meade St, Worcester. The Executive & Steering Committees will meet at 9:00am/10:00am on Thursday, December 11, 2008 at the Athol Town Hall, 584 Main St., Athol. Phil Leger suggested that complete addresses of meeting locations be used for those individuals who use GPS systems to find directions to the meeting locations. He also stated that in the event of snow, the roads in this area were usually cleared fairly well and quickly.

Phil Leger introduced Kathleen Gilmore from the Mass DPH. She attended this meeting to talk about what DPH has in the way of training and education for the coming year. She stated that DPH was down to four Regional Health Educators versus the six they previously had. DPH was looking for feedback on how to take resources and continue to provide health education in the region. Kathleen stated that she was willing to take our feedback and frustrations back to DPH.

She handed out a listing of the programming for the coming year with detailed course descriptions and offering dates. She also stated that the Health Educators worked out of the Communicable disease program but that she was going to concentrate on training at this meeting. Several questions were asked if emergency responders and MRC members could take these courses. Kathleen replied that they could take the courses but often the MRCs wanted to take courses in the evenings.

Kathleen then began a review of the DPH course offerings, occasionally answering questions from committee members. She also reviewed several pages which showed how to locate the various courses on the Local Public Health website.

Carole Mullen from the Hopedale Council on Aging gave a presentation on a system which Hopedale developed to track personnel they considered to be a Special Population, the aged and disabled. She introduced the rest of her team; Fire Chief Scott Garwin, outreach worker Nancy Mosier, and Seema Kenney who provided technical assistance. Lenny Izzo also participated in this effort. Carole then went through the process they used to start this project and some of the materials they used to determine who and where this population was.

During this process Carole became aware that many people were a bit reluctant to be placed on another registry and were concerned about how many other people would now know of their situation.

Carole and Chief Garwin gave a detailed briefing on the project to include development, philosophy, problems, solutions, and other aspects which they feel gave them an effective and comprehensive result. They also passed out folders with detailed information which other towns could use to develop their own program. Committee members were impressed and grateful to Carole and her team for their in-depth briefing.

Program Manager Report: Kerry Clark

- Kerry introduced Forrest Price as the newest Program Consultant. Kerry further stated that he is negotiating with another individual for a part-time position which will leave one full-time position available. He also briefed on the program budget summary. Kerry then discussed the Workplan Template and the specifics and goals contained therein. He also stated that the template could be adjusted as necessary.

Jamie Terry made a motion to approve the Workplan Template which was seconded by Cheryl Rawinski. During the discussion Kerry talked about some of the information to be provided and the deadlines. The motion was passed unanimously.

Host Agency Report: Chris Montiverdi

- Chris had no updates to report. He stated that they were getting ready to submit the work plan and the 1st quarter budget report. Chris further stated that DPH had requested more detailed budget submittals from all of the coalitions. The reason for this was that as the coalitions got further in the budget year they should have more precise information on budget items. Kerry stated that he would work with Chris on this.

Mutual Aid: Andy Pelletier

- Andy was not present but Phil Leger stated that the Phillipston Mutual Aid Agreement has been signed. The Royalston agreement was with their Selectboard. The Paxton agreement has also been signed. Phil reiterated the fact that a community with a signed Mutual Aid Agreement has access to additional resources during an emergency. Jamie asked if the meeting could be opened up to other attendees to see if anyone was having problems getting their agreement signed. The Town Manager in Northbridge had not signed the agreement because of conflicting guidance on the standard agreement. The ensuing discussion highlighted the wide differences between towns and how they handled reviewing and signing agreements such as this.

Homeland Security: Chris Montiverdi

- No update because there had not been a meeting.

Local and State Advisory Committee: Sandi Knipe

- Sandi briefed that at a Monday meeting Mary Clark stated that the even with the state budget cuts the local Boards of Health should not be effected. Further, the coalitions should be okay due to the fact that our funding comes from the federal government, not the state.
- Mary Clark also stated that the public health coalitions were returning approximately \$75-100,000 from last year's funds. Region II had only returned \$1700. DPH was looking at trying to return this money to the coalitions for exercises or other uses.
- DPH is looking closely at both out-of-state and in-state travel. Regional Coordinators will no longer be able to attend the LSAC meetings. Mike Coughlin, the DPH Coordinator for the Regional Coordinators will be their liaison.
- There was an audit in New Hampshire and the Health and Human Services looked at the percentage of time that was documented by the planners and coordinators between the years 2003 and 2007. Five million dollars had to be returned due to a documentation issue by paid-time employees. The lesson is to make sure that you have a paper trail and that employees document their time carefully.
- Mike Coughlin also talked about "best practices" and how to share them. One suggestion was to post them on a website for the coalitions to share their ideas and things that are going on in the coalitions. There was a question of who would maintain this website. Another was the use of an e-newsletter.
- The idea of hiring a lobbyist was raised to address the issues of regionalization and mutual aid agreements. Our issues are with Boston but this idea appeared to be for the lobbyist to go to Washington.

Committee Reports:

Personnel Sub-Committee:

- Kerry had previously introduced Forrest Price, the newest Program Consultant. Forrest gave the committee a brief summary of his background as a retired USAF officer, a former MEMA employee, and currently the Assistant Emergency Management Director for the Town of South Hadley.

Equipment/Acquisition/Training Sub-Committee:

- The committee has no money left for this quarter but they do have various trainings going on. One is the Tri-epic exercise (Southbridge, Charlestown, Dudley, and Sturbridge) for \$16,000. We are funding Clinton for \$300 and Auburn for up to \$1000. We are also looking at funding ICF Consultants for \$60,000 (this is on the high side) to run a training exercise. And we still owe UMass Lowell \$16,000.
- Chris asked if any projects were being held up to no money being left in the quarter. Sandy stated that no projects are being held up for money at this time. Chris stated that the coalition has a carry-forward letter for the training account which allows us to spend beyond the quarter due to more money coming in.
- Sandy mentioned the satellite phones which are coming in (paid by last year's funds) and for which we need to know where they are going to be placed in the region.
- The Worcester MRC has been using an internal city database to track MRC volunteers. It can only be accessed by city employees and is not really user-friendly so we are looking for another external database for this use. They are looking at several different products, one of which is an existing in-use program called EM Credential.

- Kerry stated that he is still waiting for the shipment of books to be distributed to the BOHS.
- Kerry also mentioned the upcoming MHOA conference.

Strategic Planning Sub-Committee:

- Phil Leger - No meeting has been held so there is no update to present to the group.

MRC Sub-Committee:

- Jamie stated that the committee has finalized the MRC budget but they are still waiting on Wachusett to see if their goals and objectives fit with the rest of the region. The committee has reached out to them twice so far without a response and is holding \$3000 for them if they do participate.
- The MRC sub-committee is also looking at establishing Standard Operating Procedures in order to insure that when different MRCs work together that they operate under the same procedures.
- The sub-committee has directed a question about CORI checks to Regina Villa. We want to know if checks must be re-accomplished on any regular basis. Some organizations use three years for a re-check.

New Business:

- Kerry discussed a change to the membership of the Executive Committee. Instead of just electing 13 primary members, this change would allow the coalition to also elect two alternate members who would attend meetings and, in the absence of one or two primary committee members, would be able to step in, participate, vote, and possibly insure that a quorum was available to conduct business. Kerry also stated that the intent was not to elect those members today but rather change the wording in the operations procedures to allow this to happen at the next election. The change in wording reads: "The Committee will have fifteen members: thirteen elected primary members, one being the chair person, and two elected alternate members."

Chris Montiverdi made a motion to change the membership of the Executive Committee to elect fifteen members, consisting of thirteen primary and two alternate members. Paul McNulty seconded the motion. After some discussion clarifying the language the motion passed unanimously. At the next Steering Committee meeting we will solicit names for Committee membership.

Old Business:

- Paul recognized Lenny Izzo for supplying refreshments for this meeting.
- Phil asked the membership if they wanted to change the Milford meeting location from the Birch Street Fire Station to the Town Hall. The sentiment of the group was to remain at the Fire Station
- Kerry summarized the recent successful Worcester EDS Drill in which Worcester gave out about 1016 shots at the EDS location and with three mobile teams which went out to different locations.
- Jaime asked about opening up sub-committee meetings to other people. Phil mentioned that they could be attended through call-ins.

Cheryl Rawinski made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Lenny Izzo. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.

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