

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
February 26, 2009 / 10:00 AM
25 Meade St, Worcester, MA

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Montiverdi (Leicester/Worcester); Paul McNulty (Westborough); Trish Parent (Upton); Roger Mallet (Orange); Cheryl Rawinski (Sutton); Jamie Terry (Northborough); Andy Pelletier (Auburn); Lee Jarvis (Spencer); Lois Luniewicz (Grafton); Laura Cameron (Millville); Elizabeth Swedberg (Westminster); Jeanne Gniadek (Northbridge); Alyssa Rusiecki (Sturbridge); Dorothy McNamara (Fitchburg); Valerie Daigle (Phillipston); Joyce Crouse (Templeton); Robert Moore (Shrewsbury); Bernie Sullivan (Gardner); Barbara Mard (West Boylston); Darlene O'Connor (Leicester); Marleen Bacon (Douglas); Mike Graf (Bellingham); Tom Purcell (Webster/Dudley); Kerry Clark (Reg II PHEPC); Shawn Winsor (Reg MRC Coord); Seth Peters (Reg II PHEPC); Ken Gikas (Reg II PHEPC); Sara Delisio (Reg II PHEPC); Barry Lein (Reg II PHEPC); Forrest Price (Reg II PHEPC).

On Conference Call: Lenny Izzo (Hopedale); Bill Fisher (Medwick); Sara Allen (West Brookfield); Sandi Knipe (Hubbardston).

The Meeting was called to Order by Paul McNulty at 10:06am. He started the meeting by having all individuals present at the meeting introduce themselves.

Minutes of the January 08, 2009 Steering Committee Meeting were presented for approval. Lois made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and this was seconded by Tom. The motion was passed unanimously.

Next Meetings:

- Executive Committee: Mar 12, 2009/9:30am/25 Meade St., Worcester
- Executive Committee: Mar 26, 2009/9:30am/9 Dewey St., Spencer.
- Executive Committee: April 09, 2009/9:30am/25 Meade St., Worcester.
- Executive & Steering Committees: April 23, 2009/9:00 & 10:00am/Shrewsbury.

Program Manager Report: Kerry Clark

- Kerry briefed on the email he had sent out with program updates.
- He stated that \$16,800 had been committed for the Tri-EPIC exercise but was not reflected on the budget report.
- Paul asked when the grant money had to be spent. Kerry replied that it had to be encumbered by Aug 09. We should have 45 days after this date to cut any checks.
- Kerry said that the EAT committee would be meeting next week and have several projects under consideration. He also asked the committee that if anyone had any suggestions on other projects that we should consider funding that they bring them to his attention.

Mutual Aid: Andy Pelletier

- Paul said that Andy had reported that 45 communities had signed up to the Mutual Aid Agreement.

Local and State Advisory Committee: Sandi Knipe

- In Sandi's absence, Kerry briefed on the email update Sandi had sent to him. It covered some of the Chapter 529 budget cuts. The email also contained a letter from Dr. Auerbach. He also gave the committee a brief review of what the LSAC was.
- Sandi joined the meeting on the conference call and briefed on the regionalization bill. This was passed but no start-up funds were being provided.
- The next meeting will be Mar 16; Sandi and Phil both will attend this. Sandi said that the committee realizes that there are a lot of local issues going on and she briefed the committee on the new format for the LSAC meeting. The members will meet first and discuss issues before being joined by the DPH personnel.
- The budget cut is another big issue being discussed. This will affect local Public Health. The committee wants to ask DPH how they are going to handle this rather than DPH putting the burden on local BOHs.
- Derek Brindisi asked the committee members if we should spend some time discussing our local budget situations to bring to the LSAC. Sandi suggested that people who wished to should send her an email. Derek brought up a few topics to include the potential loss of positions as examples of items to send forward.
- Roger stated that he felt the BOHs were taking unfair cuts, possibly because they were perceived as easy offices to cut despite their legislated tasks. He felt that legislation was necessary to protect local BOHs and allow them to accomplish their mandated tasks.
- Derek pointed out that the bad economy meant that many people would need more Public Health services rather than less which would require budget increases instead of cuts. He suggested that the LSAC look at this and bring this forward to the state. He used the example of inspection services to drive home this point. He strongly felt that we needed to press this point to DPH.
- Bernie Sullivan said that we need to be careful of what we ask for. He pointed out last that legislation almost never includes a funding mandate and this could add to our tasks without also adding funding. He also stated that we should be proactive and let people know the positive things which Public Health has such as addressing small pox, polio, and Legionnaire's Disease.
- The issue of needle-take back was also brought up. Derek stated that the state was working on a law but that it might be faster to address the issue on the local level. Several different community programs were mentioned.

Committee Reports:

Personnel Sub-Committee: Lenny Izzo

- Lenny stated that he and Kerry will meet tomorrow to discuss the last planned part-time hire and a request to split this person's hours.
- Kerry also briefed that the contract for a planned part-time hire was at the city legal department for review.

Equipment/Acquisition/Training Sub-Committee: Sandi Knipe

- Sara briefed the committee on the HHAN training which she was trying to organize. She is also working on ICS100/NIMS700 training for those who need it.
- Sandi stated that the last meeting was January 14. Many issues were discussed but none were resolved.
- Dave Clemmons from the City of Worcester attended and gave some good advice on our radio situation. In response to some of the towns present he offered to give radio classes to BOH personnel. He also offered to check radios if people would bring them in. He was not in favor of

the FRS radios. The current BOH radios only have one channel programmed which can cause radio congestion.

- The Satellite phones are in and the coalition is looking at how these should be placed in the region.
- EDS signs are being ordered for all towns which have an EDS.
- The San Diego trip.
- Emergency Preparedness Books.
- We are looking at purchasing and stocking trailers which will be strategically placed within the region to respond to emergencies.
- We are also looking at buying battery re-conditioners to improve radio battery life and performance. They cost \$1200 each but will be cost-effective by restoring life to our current stock of batteries.
- The coalition is also planning to buy the book "The Unthinkable" by Amanda Ripley, the keynote speaker at the San Diego NACCHO conference. Several members who attended the conference made favorable comments about her presentation of the subject matter and felt that the book would be a good read for our people. This led to an extensive conversation between committee members on some of the ideas presented in the book.
- Chris gave an extensive overview on the purchase of the Satellite phones and the concept of usage which the coalition wanted to put into place.
- Bernie stated that a good use (and test) of the Satellite phones would be to pass HHAN alerts through them. Kerry stated that regular testing of the phones would be conducted.

Host Agency Report: Chris Montiverdi

- Chris returned to the meeting and stated that the pending move to City Hall was still on but we should be able to continue to hold meetings at the Meade Street office.

Homeland Security: Chris Montiverdi

- Chris reported that the Homeland Security Council's Mass Care/Pandemic sub-committee has \$300,000 available for projects for this grant cycle. These must be regional/multi-community and multiple jurisdictional in order to receive these funds.
- Chris also asked that if any communities have had problems with Reverse 911 to send him the information.

Strategic Planning Sub-Committee: Tom Purcell

- Tom stated that the State allows development of a regional health coalition without Town Meeting approval. This allows small communities to work together and share the cost of providing services. He provided a draft template for anyone to use if they wish to try this approach.

MRC Sub-Committee: Jamie Terry

- Jamie stated that they met Tuesday on a conference call were just about up-to-date with the state reporting requirements. They only have one more item to get in.
- All three MRCs are continuing recruitment and re-connection efforts with their personnel.
- They discussed the ice storm; how it impacted the MRCs and ways they could improve their efforts.
- Chris is looking at setting up a meeting with the hospitals so that all agencies would be on the same page considering what MRCs could offer in emergencies.

- Some towns do not recognize how MRCs could be useful in an ice storm or other emergency. CERT Teams seemed to be used more. Towns probably think that MRCs are only for medical situations.
- Shawn Winsor will run the MRC sub-committee while Jamie is on maternity leave.
- There is no answer yet on whether CORI checks have to be re-accomplished. One MRC is doing interviews in place of a re-check. The CORI Board changed it's regulations in January and so far we have no word on how they were changed.
- The MRC is still re-entering personnel information into the city system. We will continue looking at obtaining another personnel system.

New Business:

- Chris reported that he attended a meeting at MEMA on a proposed Mass Fatality Event plan. DPH has hired a vendor to develop this plan and hopes to have it out by May and hold a table-top exercise to work out any bugs.
- Kerry briefed that Peter MacDonald has volunteered to brief the committee on the ice storm and the evacuation of his long-term care facility that resulted from the storm.

Old Business:

- Wibby asked about Mike Coughlin's Best Practices website. Kerry is going to check on this.

Cheryl Rawinski made a motion that we adjourn. This was seconded by Lee Jarvis. This was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 11:42am.