

Buckland, MA Board of Health Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2023

Via Zoom

Agenda

1. Open the meeting
2. Review/approve March minutes
3. Review/process mail, email, and website
 - a. Narcotics.com
 - b. Bostley request for sewer files
4. Health Agent Report
5. FC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Planning (PHEP) – Where we are as a County – Where we are headed as a County. possible vote
6. Opioid dollars- recommendation
7. Discuss Age- Friendly report
8. COVID-19: Cases, updates, regs/guidance
9. Organization of minutes, permits, other BOH paperwork at town hall
10. Any other items not reasonably anticipated by Chairman 48 hours prior to meeting
11. Public Comment.
12. Adjourn the meeting.

Attendees

Peggy Hart, chair

Julia Godfrey, member

Carmela Lanza-Weil, member

Herb Guyette, Buckland Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director

Kurt Schellenberg, CPHS

Randy Crochier, CPHS

Maureen O'Reilly, CPHS

Items

1. Open the meeting
Chair Peggy Hart opened the meeting at 4:03 pm
2. BOH members engaged in conversation with Herb Guyette, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director, particularly about assistance the BOH might be able to provide when power outages occur and individuals might need a welfare check in order to secure appropriate assistance.
 - Some contact info is available from Eversource and Triad for \pm 20 residents, though there may be more need than is currently documented as the lists are "opt in"

- There are limitations on who can access health status information due to HIPPA confidentiality requirements. Randy Crochier noted the town of Hawley has instituted a system that seems to be working well to both develop a list and honor privacy.
- Checks are now made "as needed" by fire and ambulance personnel. The storm in March 2023 was challenging as people weren't able to get out of their own properties to offer assistance to others
- In the event of a significant emergency, the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) could be deployed, but a process is needed to do that
- There is a draft plan to use the high school as a shelter, but this hasn't been finalized due to deficiencies at the facility. Chief Guyette noted that most people don't go to a shelter if a storm is forecasted; Mr. Crochier confirmed this, saying that in rural areas, residents tend to shelter in place or go to relatives in advance of a weather-related event.

BOH members made a number of suggestions to move forward with being more involved with emergency response.

- Review the Emergency Response plan on the town's website
- Publicize opt-in opportunities with a town-wide mailing, piece in the West County Shopper circular, etc.
- Tap MRC members who live in Buckland
- Partner with adjacent towns
- Work with the Buckland-Shelburne-Ashfield Senior Center
- Tap the Age Friendly initiative in order to develop a list
- Consult Meg Ryan, CPHS

Next steps identified include: working out a process to address the issue (in a BOH public meeting); executive session or designated BOH representative to meet with Chief Guyette, who will also research who has the authority to maintain and access lists with health information.

3. Maureen O'Reilly reported on vaccination clinics held at the Buckland Library in February 4 and March 25 - see attached summary reports

4. Opioid dollars - recommendation

Ms. O'Reilly spoke about programs being implemented for harm reduction in regards to funding available from the opioid settlement.

- Train the Trainers May 26 at Buckland Town Hall - how to recognize, and respond to, an urgent situation. Member Lanza-Weil asked if people leave the trainings with a supply of Narcan? Ms. O'Reilly responded this possibility is working its way through the bureaucracy. Member Lanza Weil asked about first responders' use of Narcan; Ms. O'Reilly responded this varies by municipality.
- Ashfield has opted to train lifeguards to administer Narcan

- Member Lanza-Weil will be available at Town Meeting on May 6th to answer any questions about the separate account the town has set up to receive opioid settlement funds.
- The Buckland Select Board is seeking recommendations from the BOH; Member Lanza-Weil will obtain a list of possible programs/actions so the BOH might choose what to do.

5. Health Agent Report

- a) Mr. Crochier made a presentation on the recommendations for the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHC) as detailed in the After-Action report drafted in light of COVID-19 (summary report attached):

Recommendations:

- Develop a new, overarching Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) plan for Franklin County that is flexible, scalable, and deployable at various locations within the region
- Eliminate the confusion of what MAPHC is and does by renaming it to make the Coalition function more clear; rewrite Principles of Operation to reorganize the Coalition and give it specific and measurable duties/authorities
- Reorganize the Coalition governance model to be composed of public health professionals
- Pursue service area changes with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and municipal officials of Williamsburg, Orange and New Salem. Move Williamsburg to the Hampshire County PHEP and move Orange and New Salem into the Franklin County PHEP

Mr. Crochier reviewed the “asks” of local BOHs:

- Assign a LBOH member to serve as a full-coalition representative/liaison. Provide that contact information to Dan Nietzsche at FRCOG
- Commit to send a member to the June MAPHCO Annual Meeting to ratify the recommended changes.

Member Lanza-Weil asked if any of the actions recommended would make changes to the “Red Book” which guides the work of LBOHs; Mr. Crochier said it would not.

BOH members agreed to put the issue on their agenda for the May 18th meeting, with language for the motion suggested by Mr. Crochier.

- b) Kurt Schellenberg reported his work on Title V applications is picking up; also, he’s currently training as a soil evaluator for perk tests, etc.

Member Lanza-Weil asked if there were more short-term residential rentals applying for permits; Mr. Schellenberg replied the number is about the same as last year.

Chair Hart asked for an update on the State St. RV situation. Mr. Schellenberg replied there is an absentee owner whose daughter is serving as "manager." Though the interactions with the RV occupant have been unpleasant, the situation does not yet represent a violation.

Member Lanza-Weil asked about a property on Conway St. across from Malley Park; it appears there is no running water on the property, but the shed at the rear of the property is being occupied. Based on the information provided by the BOH, Mr. Schellenberg will initiate an investigation.

6. Discuss Age - Friendly report

Chair Hart suggested members of the BOH familiarize themselves with the report, and noted it appears just 70 residents of Buckland responded to the survey.

7. COVID-19: Cases, updates, regs/guidance

Chair Hart noted Buckland was in the yellow designation of risk as of March 20th, and cases appear to be trending down, though there is not a lot of information to support actual case numbers. Member Julia Godfrey noted hospital cases are also down, and present as less severe.

8. Organization of minutes, permits, other BOH paperwork at town hall

Chair Hart noted there are five file cabinets at Town Hall which contain BOH material, and that the information needs to be organized by property to make it more accessible. Member Lanza-Weil and chair Hart will begin this process.

9. Review/process mail, email, and website

Member Lanza-Weil noted a letter from Pan Am Railroad, notification of the spraying of herbicides along their right-of-ways; member Lanza-Weil asked if the BOH should notify the public.

Chair Hart offered gratitude to member Lanza-Weil for updating the website. Member Lanza-Weil noted narcotics.com has asked if their website can be linked on the Buckland town website? This is a question for the town administrator.

In regards to the Bostley request for sewer files, the BOH was unclear about the request.

There were no voicemail messages.

10. Review/approve March minutes

Chair Hart moved to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2023 meeting; member Lanza-Weil seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

11. Adjourn the meeting

Member Lanz-Weil moved to adjourn the meeting; chair Hart seconded the motion; all voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 5:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Alison Cornish, Boards Clerk

Documents Referenced

Final Briefing Sheet for PHEP AAR

Buckland Public Library Vaccine Clinic summary March 25 2023

Buckland Public Library vax clinic summary 4 Feb 2023