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By Karen Wilber/Assistant Town Clerk at 12:01 pm, Jun 16, 2023

TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH BOARD OF HEALTH
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MEETING MINUTES

**Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health (GBPH) Advisory Board
May 17, 2023, at 12:30 pm by Zoom**

PRESENT VOTING MEMBERS: Kristin Black, PhD, MS (Northborough), Heather Alker, MD, MPH (Southborough), Sarah Barrette (Boylston)

ALTERNATIVE VOTING MEMBER: Chelsea Malinowski (Southborough) and Ann Marie Muckenstrom, RN (Boylston)

PRESENT NON-VOTING: Taylor West, RN (Southborough), Isabella Caruso, MPH, and Erin Couillard, RN

12:33 – Call to Order

Kristin Black called the meeting to order. A roll call of voting members took place; Kristin Black, Heather Alker, and Sarah Barrette, all present.

12:35 – Public Health Excellent Grant

Kristin Black provided an update on the Public Health Excellence (PHE) Grant. We are ending our second year of the PHE grant and planning for the Fiscal Year 2024. Black shared that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has awarded Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health an additional \$160,856.23 for FY24, with a new total of \$460,856.23. The budget will be similar to last year's, however, it will likely include COLA/merit adjustments to salary, including fringe benefits and health insurance, as well as moving the epidemiologist position from the contract tracing grant to the PHE grant. Lastly, there will be increases in health communication, inspection supplies, membership fees, nursing supplies, technology hardware, and travel line items. Black shared that we are anticipating unallocated funds of \$50,000-\$70,000, to be used for new programs/ideas.

Kristin Black reviewed the draft budget. Program support staff including the public health nursing contract through Salmon VNA, the health agent, epidemiologist/shared service coordinator. Northborough has a \$13,000 line item for a health agent, which is put towards the salary of the agent. The fringe benefits are low based on the assumption of only one employee opting in for health insurance. Black updated the board that this year MDPH is requiring Health Department budgets for FY23 and FY24. Isabella Caruso will be emailing each town following the meeting. This is to ensure that no towns are supplanting funds. The budget draft also includes one desktop station for an intern, one replacement iPad, food and housing software, and mileage for the health agent and epidemiologist/coordinator positions. Heather Alker requested an additional user for the food and housing software. Sarah Barrette reported Boylston does not need any additional software users. Black will send inspection reports for each town following the meeting. Black also shared that the CART assessment was utilized to create this draft FY2024 budget. Sarah Barrette requested a noise meter. Black requested towns send additional information about suggested noise meters to purchase.

Kristin Black reviewed potential project ideas, including a large plotter/scanner for septic systems. This is not an allowable expense under the PHE grant, but we can consider approval for the Contact Tracing Grants. Other project ideas include a community health assessment and community health improvement plan, which is likely to be above procurement, translation of health materials, expansion of nursing programs, including maternal services and CPR classes, development of standard operating procedures, tobacco control services, expansion of technology software, possibly adding a pool module, and digitizing board of health files. Septic, pool, housing, and food inspection, and board of health meetings would likely be allowable. Heather Alker and Chelsea Malinowski expressed interest in the SOP development and digitizing files. Sarah Barrette will discuss these ideas with the Boylston Board of Health.

Kristin Black opened the meeting up for members to share other project ideas. Chelsea Malinowski discussed including a backup inspector line item for septic inspection in the budget to fill any gaps in coverage. Michael Seager will soon be certified in soil evaluation, which may fill this gap, as well. Black shared that she will add a \$5,000 general backup inspector line item to the budget.

1:06 – CPR/AED Training

Be Well Northborough has been running CPR/AED trainings for residents using ARPA funding. Other towns routinely offer these courses. Our nurses, Taylor West and Erin Couillard will be trained to be instructors through the American Heart Association. The Contact Tracing Grant will likely cover the costs of the CPR manikins and AED machines. The goal would be to host CPR/AED trainings in the region for free or at a low cost for residents. Heather Alker and Sarah Barrette expressed interest in this program. The courses can either be offered as a blended course or fully in-person. Chelsea Malinowski recommended that town-organized sports leagues should be CPR/AED trained.

The draft PHE budget is due Friday, May 26th. Kristin Black will update the advisory board on the final budget.

1:14– COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Grant

Kristin Black provided an update on the COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contract Tracing grant. The grant is currently supporting Penny Giacobbi and Isabella Caruso. The FY 2023 Budget was \$219,504, which was \$160,000 plus the FY2022 rollover amount of \$59,504. We anticipate ~\$100,000 unexpended funds from FY2023 that can be rolled to FY2024. In all, we will have an FY2023 budget of \$160,000 plus any FY23 rollover, as allowed. Black reviewed that a community health assessment and SOP development would both be allowable expenses for FY2024. We will discuss the Contact Tracing Grant budget at our next quarterly meeting in June.

1:21 – Disease Investigation

Erin Couillard reviewed best practices for disease investigation to ensure we are meeting the requirements of the Contact Tracing Grant. Couillard created an SOP to formalize our current practices. The SOP will be shared with Hillary Johnson, who is the point person for the grant.

Isabella Caruso shared a COVID-19 update. Caruso shared that we will be discounting individual case investigation and contact tracing for COVID-19, in line with the end of the federal and state public health emergency, as well as MPDH recommendations. Staff will continue to monitor outbreaks and provide recommendations. Kristin Black asked all staff to share this information with the Board of Health. If towns need additional support or work related to COVID-19, they can reach out to Erin or Isabella.

Kristin Black announced that Northborough received 1,500 free test kits through the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). Towns can reach out to Black for the link to order. The State has test kits available for purchase.

1:28 – Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 8, 2023

Heather Alker made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 8, 2023. Seconded by Sarah Barrette. The motion passed (3,0,0).

Meeting minutes will be sent following the meeting, as well as posted on the GBPH website.

1:30 – Confirm Future Meeting Dates

Future quarterly meetings are tentatively scheduled for June 14th, September 13th, December 13th, and March 13th.

Heather Alker motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:31. Sarah Barrette seconded the motion. The motion passed (3,0,0).