



RECEIVED

By KWilber/Assistant Town Clerk at 10:46 am, Dec 14, 2023

TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH BOARD OF HEALTH

Town Hall Offices • 63 Main Street • Northborough, MA 01532 • 508-393-5009 • 508-393-3130 Fax

MEETING MINUTES

Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health (GBPH) Advisory Board September 20, 2023, at 2:00pm by Zoom

PRESENT VOTING MEMBERS: Kristin Black, PhD, MS (Northborough), Heather Alker, MD, MPH (Southborough), Jennifer Sullivan (Westborough), and Ann Marie Muckenstrom, RN (Boylston)

ALTERNATIVE VOTING MEMBER: Chelsea Malinowski (Southborough)

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

2:05 – Call to Order

Kristin Black called the meeting to order. A roll call of voting members took place; Kristin Black, Chelsea Malinowski, Heather Alker, Jennifer Sullivan, and Ann Marie Muckenstrom, all present.

2:06 – Public Health Excellent Grant

Kristin Black shared the FY24 Workplan and Budget were approved, which we reviewed in our last advisory meeting. Black reviewed that Massachusetts Department of Public Health awarded Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health an additional \$160,856.23 for FY24, with a new total of \$460,856.23. The PHE budget now supports our 1.5 nurses, our epidemiologist, and health agent/inspector. No other changes to the budget, at this time.

2:09 – Food Insecurity

To accommodate Gabriella Knox's schedule, DPH intern and BU MPH student, we moved her earlier in the agenda. Knox shared findings from her food insecurity project, which included identifying existing hunger relief programs in the GBPH region and Worcester County, through semi-structured qualitative interviews. Key findings from the interviews included the increased utilization of food pantries in the last 12 months, the importance of client-choice pantries, and the significance of food pantries acting as a social resource for many clients. The final product will be a comprehensive food resource guide with a number of food resources. Knox will send a draft of the guide to all health directors to review and provide suggestions. To distribute this information, Knox will be posting the final guide on the website, as well as creating postcard with the QR code to distribute widely, including the food pantries.

2:17 – Community Health Equity Initiative (CHEI) Survey

Isabella Caruso provided an update on the Community Health Equity Initiative (CHEI) Survey, state-wide health assessment. The survey will be open until the end of October 2023 and the final data will be available late Fall/early Winter. As of 9/18/23, Boylston has 16 respondents, Northborough has 115, Southborough has 12,

and Westborough has 29. Caruso shared the importance of continued outreach and the availability of the

social media promotion toolkit, available online. The survey is available in printed form. Heather Alker and Jennifer Sullivan expressed interest in having a printed survey available in the library and senior centers. PHE funds can be used for incentives related to the survey. Chelsea Malinowski expressed concern in using funds for gift cards. We will follow guidance from the state regarding incentives and PHE funds.

2:28– Immunizations

Erin Couillard provided an update on immunizations. Currently, Boylston and Northborough only have access to the standard dose flu vaccine. Wegmans Pharmacy will be coming to the Northborough Senior Center to provide the 65+ dose for Boylston and Northborough residents. More information will be sent out once finalized. Westborough and Southborough have access to the 65+ dose through their town department's budget. The Northborough Southborough drive-thru clinic is scheduled for Saturday, October 14th. Our Public Health Nurse, Penny, will be assisting with at-home flu vaccines, for those who are home-bound.

There is also a program for in-home COVID-19 vaccines, through the State. Couillard shared that Northborough residents have had positive experiences with the program ([Mass.gov/Vaccinesathome](https://www.mass.gov/vaccinesathome)). Heather Alker shared that recent COVID-19 vaccinations statistics from the MetroWest Health Foundation are low in our region. Although GBPH will not be hosting any COVID-19 clinics this year, we will distribute health information and education and assist residents in making appointments at local pharmacies.

2:36 – Substance Use Prevention Work

Isabella Caruso shared a flier for the Municipal Opioid Settlement Funds Regional Webinars, through DPH and John Snow Institute (JSI). Kristin Black explained the state has contracted with JSI to assist with the municipal opioid settlement Funds. In addition, the Central MetroWest Substance Awareness & Prevention Collaborative (CMSAPC) is led by the Town of Hudson. Their collaborative hosted an Action Planning Retreat to brainstorm regional strategies to address substance use and use the funds.

2:39 – Open Meeting Law Public Health Excellence Collaborative

Kristin Black discussed the Open Meeting Law for the Public Health Excellence Collaborative, which allows a PHE collaborative to only require the host community, in this case Northborough, to post the meeting, following a formal vote. Communities can still post the agenda to their town's site if they'd like. A memo will be drafted and submitted to the Attorney General. The motion reads, "to adopt the Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health's host district website, www.town.northborough.ma.us/greater-boroughs-partnership-health-advisory-board as its official notice posting method." Kristin Black made a motion to approve the alternative method. Seconded by Jennifer Sullivan. Kristin Black, Heather Alker, Jennifer Sullivan, and Ann Marie Muckenstrom approved the alternative method.

2:44 – Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 14, 2023

Heather Alker made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from June 14, 2023. Seconded by Kristin Black. Kristin Black, Jennifer Sullivan, Heather Alker, and Ann Marie Muckenstrom approved the minutes.

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

1:45 – Confirm Future Meeting Dates

Future quarterly meetings are tentatively scheduled for December 13th, March 13th, and June 12th.

Jennifer Sullivan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:46pm. Heather Alker seconded the motion, all in favor.