

Executive Committee Meeting

January 22, 2023

3:30 pm to 5:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Attendance

Tim McDonald (Needham); Joanne Belanger (Lexington); Melissa Ranieri (Walpole); Natasha Waden (Arlington); Nancy Porter (Cambridge); Vivian Zeng (Sudbury); Kerry Clark, Terri Clover (MRPC/HMCC); Garrett Simonsen, Steven Mauzy (Regional PHEP Planners); Liz Foley (MDPH OPEM)

Meeting Minutes

- Nancy Porter (Cambridge) opened the meeting at 3:32 pm.

I. Approval of the December 18th PHEP EC Meeting Minutes

- Joanne made a motion, seconded by Melissa, to accept the December 18 EC meeting minutes— motion approved.

II. HMCC Updates

- Kerry opened with a budget update. The storage unit line item was overestimated, and there will be about \$2,300 in unspent funds. Kerry asked the group to begin thinking about ways to spend down remaining funds. Nancy (Cambridge) agreed that we should begin talking about spend down and asked for the budget to be a standing agenda item. Kerry asked about historical spending, and Tim (Needham) said technology purchases have historically been difficult to coordinate with CHA. Joanne asked what is in the storage unit. Teri responded that there is not much in the storage unit. Items include: stop the bleed supplies, a mobile badge printer with supplies, and some folders from MetroEast. The storage unit is at Life Storage in Waltham. Joanne followed up with a question: are there things that we should buy now that we have storage? Items that are hard to store, such as big tents, could be useful. Vivian (Sudbury) asked if there was a list of allowable items; Liz (MDPH) responded there is not an official list. Garrett (PHEP) said that generally, if we can demonstrate that a purchasing request is connected to an identified gap or after-action report, MDPH is willing to approve something. Past purchases included tablets for registration at EDS sites and drive-through EDS signage.
- Natasha (Arlington) voiced a concern that engagement has been difficult, and while eliminating community-level funding and items like cell phones has allowed for more programmatic work to be done, engagement could increase if people felt like they got something more tangible out of PHEP. Liz asked if there was an appetite for offering mini-grants. In discussing engagement, Tim noted online meetings are more convenient, but compared to pre-COVID, fewer people are attending. Is lack of attendance because the physical connection and networking were that meaningful, because public health seems busier, because we don't pay for cell phones, or a combination? Natasha asked if the committee or coalition wanted to do some more strategic planning. What do we want out of PHEP? Is the most important thing for towns that they can call on volunteers? Nancy

(Cambridge) suggested a needs assessment asking communities what they are struggling with. Garrett suggested strategic planning around the cooperative agreement and noted there has been a huge personnel turnover, and a lot of new people without a lot of background in PHEP. He noted the new cooperative agreement will be a look at the next five years, perhaps marking a time for engagement. Kerry (MRPC) suggested forming a strategic planning subcommittee. Nancy suggested a PHEP 101. Other suggestions included CPR books or Stop the Bleed materials, and the handbook of infectious diseases.

- There is one candidate for the Regional MRC Coordinator position and the MetroWest Coordinator position has been filled.
- Not all funding in the MRC line item has been requested by MRC Units, so a message was sent to all units asking if additional funding is needed. Three units submitted requests, the total of which is over budget, but given the need to spend down unused funds, this committee may vote on a reallocation. Middlefolk requested roughly \$7,500 for stamps and envelopes to mail badges, Office 360, BLS CPR training books, and CPR, First Aid, and Sheltering training for roughly 200 volunteers. Central Middlesex requested funds for a ProPac tent and pet first aid. NC-8 requested funds for CPR training, access and functional needs training, and funding for additional unit coordination.
- Natasha made a motion to approve the MRC funding requests; Nancy seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

III. DPH Updates

- Liz updated that we are still waiting for the cooperative agreement form the CDC, which has signaled it may arrive mid-February. A timeline has been built out to develop the deliverables, after which there will be a statewide call to go over programming and direction moving forward. The next budget modification is due February 23. Hospitals continue to be busy, have limited capacity, and are meeting weekly in 4AB. A new data modernization tool is being developed in partnership with GE.

IV. Principles of Operations

- In reviewing the principles of operation, the EC decided to reword the section dedicated to service terms. The current version stipulates only two terms may be served on the committee. Additional language will be added to allow for additional terms if no successor has been named or if the General Coalition has approved the term. Such language ensures the committee remains staffed and also allows for individuals who feel dedicated to the PHEP program to continue their service on the committee. Clauses related to the defunct finance committee will be struck from the document, and language will be added to allow for virtual meetings. The minimum number of updates from MRC units was changed from bi-annually to quarterly. References to “former 4A” and “former 4B” were removed.

V. Planner Updates

- Garrett opened the updates on NACCHO by saying registration is in the process of being paid. He also updated that flights have been more expensive than anticipated (\$830 per person as opposed to the budgeted \$550). In order to make up for the additional expense,

while maximizing the number of people who can attend, the opportunity for reimbursement will need to be cut. Staff met with the EC Co-chairs, given the short turnaround time with the travel agent. There may be a need for flexibility around per diem reimbursement on a needs basis. The three main hotels for the conference are already booked, but staff have reached out to the other conference hotels, all of which are within a 10-minute walk. There are two flight choices, both leave early, and one would mean missing most of the Thursday programming at the conference.

- The contract for JSI and the Extreme Temperatures project has been submitted; we are waiting for final approval on the SubID from MDPH.

VI. Meeting Schedule

- Given that multiple EC members are coming from a meeting that has been extended to 3:30, this meeting will be rescheduled to run from 3:30 - 5:00 instead of 3:00 - 5:00.

VII. New Business

- No new business

VIII. Vote/Adjourn

- Natasha made a motion to adjourn; Joanne seconded. All members voted to adjourn.