

## **Executive Committee Meeting**

*June 23, 2025*

*3:30 pm to 5:00 pm*

*Zoom Meeting*

### **Attendance**

Tim McDonald (Needham); Melissa Ranieri (Walpole); Vivian Zeng (Sudbury); Taylor West (Southborough); Michele Schuckel (Wayland); Terri Clover (MRPC/HMCC); Garrett Simonsen, Steven Mauzy (Regional Planners); Eric Olsen (4AB MRC)

### **Meeting Minutes**

- Tim McDonald (Needham) opened the meeting at 3:32 pm.

#### **I. Approval of the May 25th PHEP EC Meeting Minutes**

- Michele (Wayland) made a motion, seconded by Vivian (Sudbury), to accept the September EC meeting minutes— motion approved.

#### **II. HMCC Updates**

- Garrett (PHEP) provided an update on the BP1 closeout process, stating that payments are being finalized to contractors and staff, and that staff are preparing to transition to BP2.
- Teri (HMCC) reported on a successful HVA scoring workshop; the top 5 hazards identified were blister agent, ice storm, pandemic flu, cyber attack, and tornado. Garrett shared that CDC will host webinars on potential changes to the Strategic National Stockpile, with a focus on shifting to state and local stockpiles.

#### **III. MDPH Updates**

- Steven (PHEP) provided updates on MDPH activities. BP2 RST and budget submissions have been through a preliminary review. The Q4 WebEOC drill was on May 22nd. As of June 3rd, the federal program for COVID test kits has ended.

#### **IV. Planner Updates**

- Steven reported on a successful Hurricane Training day held a few weeks ago. Including presenters and staff, 79 people attended. Speakers included Cyrena Arnold, a local meteorologist, and one of the biggest hits. Mike Marino from Emerson Hospital and Mary Mayhew from the Florida Hospital Association spoke, as well as representatives from MEMA, Eversource, and the American Red Cross. Melissa Charles from MDPH gave a talk on equity in public health. JSI presented community profiles and a best practices compendium for hurricane preparedness, similar to the materials made last year on extreme temperatures. Feedback included requests for more resources on pre-event planning in the days leading up to a storm, as well as comments about the difficulty in getting other partners, such as fire and emergency management, to include public health in conversations about emergencies.



- Garrett discussed feedback received from DPH on the public health preparedness and response framework deliverable, which was issued without specific guidelines for completion. Garrett explained that staff had chosen an approach that would integrate our framework into a local plan through a discussion-based exercise and would be implemented using a multi-year integrated preparedness plan. DPH now expects each of 4AB's 60 cities and towns to have a different framework, of their specification, built into municipal plans. The team is seeking clearer guidelines and feedback from MDPH earlier in the fiscal year moving forward.
- Garrett presented a strategic plan for a discussion-based exercise to be completed by October 31st, involving multidisciplinary teams from public health, emergency management, and public safety across all 60 cities and towns. The exercise aims to identify gaps in the framework and submit an after-action report to DPH by December 31st. Garrett and Steven have already started building exercise documents, including a survey and recruitment tools, while addressing challenges such as varying levels of community readiness, limited funding, and the need for incentives. They plan to form an exercise planning team, conduct informational webinars, and submit requests for initial approvals in early July.
- Garrett outlined a four-step plan for public safety initiatives, including HSEEP planning and technical assistance to communities, with deliverables due by December 31st. He discussed a second priority area focusing on crisis and emergency risk communication from January to June. Garrett proposed readiness tiers for communities, predicting most would fall into Tier 1 or 2 (low or no readiness), and suggested appropriate exercises and technical assistance based on these tiers.
- Garrett and the team discussed challenges and strategies for conducting a tabletop exercise with 60 communities, noting the difficulty of achieving 100% participation. They considered clustering communities by readiness levels and other factors to improve efficiency. Garrett emphasized the importance of forming a planning team that includes coalition representatives to address these challenges. The group explored the possibility of having one or two regional exercises instead of 60 individual ones, acknowledging the need for a simplified approach.
- Garrett discussed leveraging AI to assist with information gathering and planning, highlighting its role in gaining new perspectives. The committee was informed that the BP2 budget is fully funded, pending final MDPH review and approval of deliverables and subcontractor packages. Tim announced his departure as chair, and Michele and Shaun were confirmed as the new co-chairs.
- Garrett and Teri discussed challenges with the deliverables process, noting that the way they are written does not account for potential barriers to implementation. They agreed to front-load requests for feedback and approvals within the first three weeks to expedite the process. Teri mentioned that staff are tracking the turnaround times for submissions, which typically take about a month, and Garrett suggested reviewing past records to identify patterns. They also discussed the need to understand DPH's review and approval process better, as it seems inconsistent and inefficient.



**V. New Business**

- No new business.

**VI. Vote/Adjourn**

- Vivian (Sudbury) made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Shaun (Hopkinton)- motion approved.