

May 8, 2025 Meeting Minutes

11:00 am - 1:00 pm EST

Virtual: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87533291697>

Voting members in attendance:

Kristel Bennett, Billerica
Donna Greenwood, Chelmsford
Siobhan LaFreniere, Tewksbury
Kerri Oun, Tyngsborough

Non-voting members in attendance:

Haleigh Schultz, BME Strategies
Taryn Angel, Chelmsford
Darcy Beall, Chelmsford

I. Opening

4/4 voting members present, quorum was met.

Motion to start the meeting

Kerri Oun made a motion to start the meeting. Kristel Bennett seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

All in favor.

Haleigh Schultz called the meeting to order at 11:17 am.

Approval of outstanding NEPHA meeting minutes

Kristel Bennett motioned to approve the April Coalition Meeting minutes and the May 1st minutes, Siobhan LaFreniere seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

All in favor.

II. Announcements & Reminders

Haleigh Schultz provided an update on upcoming training opportunities. Coalition members and Health Department staff are encouraged to sign up for trainings that match their capacity and interests. Training opportunities include:

- **MAHB Certificate Program:** May 10th, 8AM - 4PM, in person in Marlborough
 - Topics include: legal authority of Boards of Health, governance, Open Meeting Law, liability, and more
- **MEHA Tick & Tick Borne Infections Seminar:** May 14th, 12PM - 1PM, virtual via Zoom
 - Topics include: human-biting ticks in New England, tick borne diseases, and strategies for risk reduction
- **YOWA Foundations in Soil course:** May 20th, 9AM - 3:30PM, in person in Southampton
 - Topics include: foundations in soil properties, hydrology and classifications for health, assessing onsite wastewater treatment systems, and field education
- **MHOA Quarterly Meeting:** May 22nd, 9AM - 1PM, in person in Needham
 - Topics include: Food Trucks
- **MEHA 2025 Annual Seminar:** May 28th, 8AM - 3:30PM, in person in Southbridge
 - Topics include: EEE, body art, noise meter training, HACCP/vibrio, education with legislatures, and more
- **Lynnfield Title 5 Plan Review Training:** May 27th or June 10th, 8AM - 4PM, in person in Lynnfield
 - Topics include: Title 5 Plan review

Haleigh provided information on the following additional training opportunities. If staff have specific interests or training goals, please reach out to Haleigh. Opportunities include:

- **BEAM Certificate Program:** Online, self-paced training in business skills for public health professionals
- **Crisis Prevention Institute Train the Trainer - Verbal and Nonviolent Intervention:** One-day online course, train-the-trainer style
- **John Guilfoil OnDemand Courses:** online course library providing municipal training opportunities in municipal grant writing, risk communication for public health, online safety for municipal employees, and more

Reminder that the coalition will meet to review the data and preliminary results of the FPHS Review on Thursday, May 29th, from 1PM - 2:30PM. A one-hour Workplan planning meeting will follow.

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III. FY25 Planning

A. Hiring Updates

Haleigh Schultz provided an update on ongoing hiring efforts. Following second-round interviews, the Health Directors voted to approve Elise Pierce's candidacy for the Regional Health Inspector position. An offer was extended, and Elise accepted the position. She will be starting on May 27th. The group discussed the logistics for Elise's onboarding and training, including which towns she'll work in, shadowing opportunities across the coalition, technology hardware and software needs, and a timeline for incorporating different inspection areas. Donna Greenwood mentioned that Chelmsford has strict technology requirements and restrictions for accessing their systems and software. She will check with the IT Department and follow up with Haleigh. Kristel Bennett volunteered the Billerica inspection team for shadowing opportunities. Haleigh will work on finalizing the Regional Inspector Onboarding Guide and circulate for the group's review.

Haleigh also provided an update on the Regional Public Health Specialist position. Following internal circulation of the position, the Health Directors voted to approve Bethany Slack's candidacy. Haleigh is working with Tyngsborough HR to finalize offer details and move forward with the role.

B. Spending Check-In

Haleigh provided an update on the group's spend-down progress. During the meeting with the Health Directors last week, the group voted to approve all forthcoming supply requests that fall within the PHE scope for the remainder of the fiscal year. For ordering ease and tracking purposes, the group agreed to submit all supply requests by EOD Thursday, May 15th. In addition to previous supply approvals, in that same meeting, the group voted to move forward with the improvement and redesign of the NEPHA regional coalition website. Haleigh reached out to three vendors for quotes and summarized the quotes for the group. Haleigh and Cynthia Baker recommended moving forward with Slocum Studios, who provided a competitive quote with a timeline and Scope of Work that aligns with NEPHA's needs.

The group took some time to review additional supply requests submitted by the Chelmsford team, some of which Haleigh is still awaiting approval from the Program Coordinator on. Towns had the opportunity to request additional quantities and propose additional items. The group discussed the need and functionality of Pocketalks for real-time translation services. Haleigh will follow up with the group's Program Coordinator for formal approval. The group opted out of a formal motion given the spend-down approvals granted to the Town of Tyngsborough team.

Based on current forecasting, NEPHA is tracking to spend approximately 90% of the total grant award. Additional requests and the hiring timeline may impact the final expenditure, but Haleigh invited folks to propose additional spending opportunities ahead of June 30th.

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IV. FY26 Planning

The group spent some time discussing the timeline and process of Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) planning. The timeline is as follows:

- **May 21st:** FY26 Workplan instructions and template officially launched at the PHE Grantee Monthly Meeting
- **May 29th:** FPHS Data to Action Meeting and initial coalition-wide Workplan planning session (virtual)
- **June 12th:** June coalition meeting, final collaborative session and Workplan & Budget approval (virtual)
- **June 18th:** FY26 Workplan and Budget due to OLRH

Haleigh Schultz summarized FY25 Workplan Objectives that are complete, in-progress, and not yet started. The group was tasked with reflecting on the performance standards and objectives that they would like to continue building out in FY26, as well as consider whether staff have any particular interest areas for FY26 programming. The FY25 Workplan includes the following performance standards and objectives:

- **Performance Standard 1:** Expand inspectional staff to enhance Food Protection capacity
- **Performance Standard 2:** Facilitate training opportunities in housing - source Hoarding training & Housing Court training
- **Performance Standards 3 & 4:** Improve Food Protection and Housing inspection processes and documents
- **Sustainability Objective 1:** Develop a coalition-wide Communications Plan
- **Elective Objective 1:** Explore opportunities in Maternal, Child & Family Health

Haleigh re-introduced additional topic areas that have come up in previous coalition discussions. If there is still interest, the FY26 Workplan can include or incorporate the following:

- Strategic planning
- Development of Regional Staff performance feedback systems
- Design a Hoarding Case Management SOP
- Continue building out an internal NEPHA Communications Plan
- Maternal & Child Health home visiting program

More time will be dedicated to FY26 Workplan planning and scoping at the May 29th meeting.

V. Community Updates

- **Chelmsford:** NACCHO and the Greater Lowell Community Health Collaborative reached out to request Darcy Beall and Taryn Angel participate in programming and educational campaigns. The NACCHO request builds on the CDC framework to leverage local public

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health as a learning and teaching opportunity. Darcy and Taryn will highlight the Fall Festival, Plant Positivity, Sober Karaoke, and the Walking Group.

VI. Adjournment

The next regular coalition meeting will be held **virtually** on **Thursday, June 12th**, from 11AM-1PM.

Motion to adjourn the meeting

Kerri Oun motioned to adjourn the meeting. Siobhan LaFreniere seconded the motion.

Billerica: Y

Chelmsford: Y

Tewksbury: Y

Tyngsborough: Y

All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 1:11 PM.

Documents used by the public body during the meeting:

NEPHA May Meeting Slides

NEPHA Supply & Spending list

NEPHA Coalition Meeting



NEPHA

NORTH EAST PUBLIC
HEALTH ALLIANCE

May 8th, 2025



BME STRATEGIES

Meeting Opening

Agenda

- I. Opening
- II. Announcements & Reminders
- III. FY25 Planning
 - A. Hiring Updates
 - B. Spending Check-In
- IV. FY26 Planning
- V. Community Updates
- VI. Adjournment

Meeting Minute Approval

April 10th Minutes

May 1st Minutes

Announcements & Reminders

Announcements & Reminders

MAHB Certificate Program

The final MAHB Certificate Program takes place this weekend. The session will take place 8:30 am - 4:00 pm in Marlborough.

- May 10th – Courtyard Hotel, Marlborough, MA

Session topics include Legal Authority of Boards of Health, Hearings, Orders, and Enforcement, Governance, Case Studies in Tobacco, Cannabis, and Synthetics, Opioid Settlement Updates, Environmental Case Studies, and more!

This training covers important material for Board of Health members. PHE funds cover all registrations - register [here!](#)

Announcements & Reminders

MEHA Tick & Tick Borne Infections in New England Webinar

- May 14th, 12PM - 1PM via Zoom.
- Register [here!](#)

YOWA Foundations in Soil

The Yankee Onsite Water Association is hosting a soil training on May 20th, from 9AM - 3:30PM at Twin Orchard Farm in Southampton.

- Register [here!](#)

Announcements & Reminders

MHOA Quarterly Meeting

Registration now [open](#)! The MHOA Quarterly Meeting will take place on May 22nd from 9:00am - 1:00pm in Needham. The meeting will serve as a Food Truck training.

MEHA 2025 Annual Seminar

Save the date! MEHA's annual seminar will take place from 8:00am - 3:30pm on Wednesday, May 28th, at the Wellsworth Hotel in Southbridge. Contact hours available!

- Topics include EEE presentation and panel, body art, noise meter training, HACCP/Vibrio, educate with legislature, and more!
- Register [here](#)!

Announcements & Reminders

In-Person Title 5 Plan Review Training

The Lynnfield Health Department is offering two in-person Title 5 Plan Review training opportunities. Two identical sessions will take place on :

- May 27th - register [here!](#)
- June 10th - register [here!](#)

The training will take place from 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM in Lynnfield.

Additional Training Opportunities

BEAM Certificate Program - business skills for public health professionals.

- Self-led online course

Crisis Prevention Institute - Verbal Intervention Training and Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training options

- Virtual course
- “Train the Trainer” → Participants will then be able to host trainings of their own

John Guilfoil OnDemand Courses - Municipal Grant Writing 101, Risk Communications for Public Health, Online Safety for Municipal Employees, etc.

- Self-directed online course
- Fee-per-course & membership options

Remaining FY25 Meeting Schedule

FPHS Data to Action and Workplan Planning Meeting:

Thursday, May 29th: 1:00 - 3:30 PM

- FPHS Review: 1:00 - 2:30 PM
- Workplan Planning: 2:30 - 3:30 PM

June Coalition Meeting:

Thursday, June 12th*: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

FY25 Planning

Hiring Updates

Regional Inspector

Last week, the Health Directors voted to approve the candidacy of Elise Pierce. Elise accepted the position and is starting on May 27th!

- Group discussion: planning for onboarding and training

In addition to Elise's final interview, the Hiring Subcommittee conducted a second in-person interview but decided not to move forward.

- Group discussion: Regional Inspector hiring moving forward

Hiring Updates

Regional Public Health Specialist

After receiving an internal application, the Health Directors voted to approve Bethany Slack's candidacy for the part-time RPHS role. As a reminder:

- The role is designed to provide additional regional support in ongoing community health initiatives up to 10 hours/week
- The scope of work reflects Siobhan's previous role, with the ability for Bethany to customize her focus based on assessment of the communities and regional public health efforts
- Questions about the role?

FY25 Planning: Spending Check-In

Spending Updates

During a quick check-in meeting with the Health Directors last week, the group voted to approve additional spending in an effort to spend-down remaining FY25 programmatic funds. Proposed spending includes:

- NEPHA Website Improvement with Slocum Studios
- Technology and supplies for incoming Regional Staff
- Additional supply requests

We are still waiting on some approvals from our Program Coordinator regarding the additional supply requests.

Supply Request Walkthrough

Spending Updates

Based on current spending forecasting, we're tracking to spend-down around 90% of our total grant award.

- Given the staffing changes and moving priorities throughout the fiscal year, this is a huge accomplishment!

We're looking at an additional \$35,000 in programmatic spending available.

- If you would like to propose additional spending (supply requests, trainings, memberships, etc.), please do so **as soon as possible**.

FY26 Planning



FY26 Planning Timeline

1

May 21st

FY26 Workplan instructions and template launch at the PHE Grantee meeting



2

May 29th

FPHS Data to Action meeting and initial coalition-wide Workplan planning session



3

June 12th

June coalition meeting, final collaborative session and Workplan & Budget approval



4

June 18th

FY26 Workplan and Budget due to OLRH

FY25 Workplan Objectives

PS1: Expand inspectional staff to enhance Food Protection capacity

PS2: Facilitate training opportunities in housing - source Hoarding training & Housing Court training

PS3&4: Improve Food Protection and Housing inspection processes and documents

S1: Develop a coalition-wide Communications Plan

E1: Explore opportunities in Maternal, Child & Family Health

FY26 Scoping

In addition to continuing in-progress FY25 workplan and hiring activities (if the group chooses to do so), previous discussions have included:

- Strategic planning
- Developing Regional Staff performance feedback systems
- Design a Hoarding Case Management SOP
- Continue building out an internal NEPHA Communications Plan
- Maternal & Child Health home visiting program

Additional projects or programmatic areas that folks are interested in?

Community Updates



Meeting Adjournment

Next Meeting

Thursday, June 12th

11AM-1PM

Volunteer to host?