



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE
BOSTON PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 8th, 2018**

A meeting of the Board of the Boston Public Health Commission (“Commission”) was held on Wednesday, March 8th, 2018 in the Hayes Conference Room, 2nd floor, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02118.

Board Members Present

Manny Lopes, Chair, Kate Walsh, Myechia Minter-Jordan, Jennifer Childs-Roshak, John Fernandes (remotely)

Also Present

Monica Valdes Lupi, Susan Belvis, Tim Harrington, PJ McCann, Heather Gasper, Dan Dooley, Grace Connolly, Jenifer Jaeger, Aunnakalia Boyce, Makeila Layne, Jazmine Jones, Brad Cohen, Margaret Reid, Jen Lo, Julie Ng, Courtney Pires, Evelyn Okafor, Gerald James, Krista Preston, Heather Gasper, Gerry Thomas, Johnna Murphy, Debra Paul, Shekeima Dockery, Osagie, Ebekoziem, Fritz Gustave, Regine Charlot, Neelesh Batra, Helen Ayanian, Leon Bethune, Nestor Rijo-Figueroa, Kadian Bennett, Luc Figueiredo Miller, Rob Goldstein, Katie Donovan

Proceedings

Chairperson’s Comments

At 4:10pm, Chairperson Lopes welcomed Board members, staff, and attendees. He made remarks honoring the memory of Robert Restuccia and dedicated the meeting to Mr. Restuccia.

Executive Office Report: Monica Valdes Lupi, JD, MPH

Ms. Valdes Lupi made the following remarks:

I’m pleased to share that Mayor Walsh has reappointed Dr. Minter-Jordan to the Board, and appointed Phillomin Laptiste as a new member of the Board. We look forward to welcoming her as soon as the City Council has approved her appointment. As many of you know, Ms. Laptiste is the Executive Director of Bowdoin Street Health Center. She will bring a wealth of energy and experience to the Board.

Thank you for your continued support as we finalize our strategic plan. I’m excited to share that we completed our year 1 action planning to operationalize the plan and anticipate releasing the final plan later this month.

The plan reinforces our commitment to equity and identifies innovative ways we can become a public health department of the future. I look forward to presenting the final plan at an upcoming Board meeting.

January 2019 was a busy month for announcements from the Boston Public Health Commission. Boston EMS graduated 19 recruits in a ceremony on January 14. The story was covered both in an article and op-ed in the Boston Herald, Mission Hill Gazette, and others. The graduation class had the highest ratio of female to male candidates to-date.

Also in January 2019, I spoke at the State House during the launch of Helpsteps.com and its app. The tool was created through a partnership with Mass 211, Boston Children's Hospital and the Greater Boston Food Bank. HelpSteps.com and app provide anyone free and easy access to information for the citizens of the Commonwealth on over 11,000 social services related to food insecurity, housing issues, mental health, domestic violence and other human services. This free, multilingual web and mobile app can be used as a screening tool, referral database and constituent services resource. Coverage included WBUR and NECN.

It is still flu season in Boston and we continue to be proactive in providing education about prevention, including an interview on BNN this February.

Also, in February, Mayor Walsh announced the latest addition to the Neighborhood Trauma Team: Grove Hall. The Boston Globe covered the story. This additional investment further strengthened the citywide network of neighborhood trauma teams in Dorchester, Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, East Boston, and Mattapan, that offer immediate support to residents and ongoing access to evidence-based trauma treatment.

Intergovernmental Relations Report:
Heather Gasper, Director of Intergovernmental Relations

On Friday, February 15, 2019, President Trump signed the deal struck by the House and Senate and another federal shutdown was avoided. The agreement comes after the longest government shutdown in U.S. history lasting 35 days. Thankfully, during that time BPHC never experienced loss of funding or service interruptions based on the shutdown, but IGR and many of our programs remained vigilant and communicative with information.

2019 has been a busy year already for BPHC at the Massachusetts State House. Staff members from various departments have gone to the State House to talk about our work, and advocate for continued state support as we work to improve health equity across the city. We recently participated in events for the Statewide HelpSteps Launch in January, Sexual Health Lobby Day, Oral Health Day, Lobby Day for the Coalition of Homeless Individuals (CHI)

The state budget process is already underway for fiscal year 2020. Governor Baker released his Fiscal Year 2020 Budget proposal (referred to as House 1 or H1), totaling \$42.7 billion in late January. The budget is modeled on a projected tax revenue forecast of \$29.9 billion, representing 2.7% growth and assuming that the state income tax will drop to 5.0%, effective January 1, 2020, from its current rate of 5.05%. The budget would increase spending by 1.5% over the current

fiscal year, and includes \$133 million in new revenue from anticipated recreational marijuana sales, \$28 million from taxes on short-term housing rentals, and \$6 million from an expansion of tobacco excises taxes to e-cigarettes and vapor products.

The FY House 1 budget includes the following highlights:

Funding Bureau of Substance Addiction Services at \$148,671,349. This is a decrease of nearly \$7 million from projected final FY19 spending. This decrease is largely due to the exclusion of earmarks in line-item 4512-0205 which are typically added by the Legislature.

Baker's budget includes \$266 million for treatment and other services, a \$48 million increase over this year that includes almost \$50 million to expand MassHealth addiction treatment services through a federal Medicaid waiver.

MassHealth is funded at \$16.539 billion. MassHealth covers 1.9 million Massachusetts residents, and the Administration projects that caseload growth will slow in FY20 to .6% over FY19 due to eligibility system improvements. House 1 proposes maintaining program benefits and eligibility in FY20.

\$20.5 million in funding in the Chapter 257 rate reserve for rates adjusted in the upcoming year.

A new line item (1599-0105) for costs associated with the delivery of medication assisted treatment in County Correctional facilities. This new account is funded at \$10 million in FY20.

A new tax on e-cigarettes and vapor products is included.

The Governor is also proposing to tax opioid manufacturers, however drugs used for medication assisted treatment would be exempt.

Homeless Individuals Assistance (7004-0102): Essentially level funding – the proposed funding level is \$175,000 more than the funding level in the FY19 General Appropriations Act (this amounts to \$144,125 more than actual FY19 spending). This line has been slowly increasing and thanks to a coalition of shelter providers we join with in advocacy, that number keeps increasing, even if it is slowly.

Home & Healthy for Good (7004-0104): Level funding

For the rapid transition of homeless individuals into sustainable permanent housing (7004-0202): Level funding

SSYI (4000-0005) -increased by almost \$2M

On the policy front, this budget proposes to ban hand-held cell phone use.

As a reminder, the Governor's budget is the first in a lengthy process. Typically, it is the most conservative in terms of funding and often times cuts programming across the administration to get to certain targets. We will be watching decreases and programs that were cut in this budget quite closely as we wait for the House to release their bill in April. The Senate releases theirs in May. In the meantime, we will continue to advocate for our priorities with the help of City Hall and the many advocacy coalitions we belong to.

As Mayor Walsh recently stated during the State of the City Address, when it comes to 2020 Census it is crucial that we "make sure every resident of Boston is counted, because every resident of Boston counts." City departments, including BPHC, have begun to meet in anticipation of implementing the City's task of counting every resident. In partnership with the US Census Bureau, and the Massachusetts Secretary of Commonwealth's office, the City is organizing its agenda, goals, and timeline for this process. More updates will emerge as this continues to develop.

At the conclusion of Ms. Gasper's remarks, Chairperson Lopes announced that John Fernandez has joined the meeting remotely, via telephone. He stated that in compliance with the Attorney General's Office Open Meeting Law Remote Participation Procedures, that all votes taken during the meeting will be taken by roll call.

Ms. Valdes Lupi introduced the first presentation, giving an overview of the history of the Health of Boston report, and efforts to respond to feedback from members of the Board and public.

Presentation and Discussion: Boston Health Data Update

Presenter: Dan Dooley, Director, Research and Evaluation Office, BPHC

Mr. Dooley presented the attached presentation and opened by thanking staff who have worked to develop the data and analysis that will be presented. He highlighted the Boston Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, which is modeled after the CDC BRFSS survey, and generates much of our public health data. It was noted that the survey generates direct population estimates, as opposed to using national data and modeling.

Chairperson Lopes asked about whether the model as had to change to reflect the shift away from using landline phones. Mr. Dooley noted that cell surveying was introduced into our survey in or around 2010 and has been increased with each survey since. Now the next survey will be 75% cell phone, which is expensive but helps us get valuable and accurate information.

Mr. Dooley also highlighted the ongoing work of his office to support and inform a city-wide Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan, working with our community, hospitals and community health centers.

Mr. Dooley gave an overview of the rebrand of the Health of Boston Report utilizing an online data dashboard, periodic reports, and issue briefs as well as customized data and analysis requests. Our goal moving forward is to make this information more accessible, useful, and timely. Version 1.0 of the dashboard is live now. He then gave an overview of data for various outcomes by neighborhood.

Chairperson Lopes asked how Boston data compares with national data and other cities in childbirth and infant mortality. Mr. Dooley said that we would look into it and follow up.

Dr. Childs-Roshak asked a clarifying question about whether the Health of Boston report will be online-only moving forward. Mr. Dooley confirmed that current plans are that the data will be available online only. Our office is always available to do additional analysis and explain what

the data means. Ms. Valdes Lupi also highlighted the potential for using different media to make the data useful to our community members and partners.

Chairperson asked if there were any further comments and thanked Mr. Dooley for the presentation and ongoing work.

Acceptance and Approval of January 2019 Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously by roll call to approve the minutes for the January 2019 meetings.

Presentation and Vote: BPHC FY2020 Budget

Presenter:

- Grace Connolly, Director of Administration and Finance, BPHC

Ms. Connolly presented the attached presentation.

She noted that tonight we will need a vote to submit the budget to the Mayor's Office. She highlighted strengths going into the budget process, including the City's favorable bond rating and progress toward meeting pension liabilities. She also highlighted increases in fixed costs and lack of state aid.

The maintenance request reflects FY19 operations in terms of FY20 costs and included a review possible realignments during this period, including staff transfers and consolidations, streamlining business processes, shared service models, reducing fragmentation and duplication of effort; and enhancing managerial controls

We presented 34 new initiatives/investments and one revenue proposal. Our new initiative proposals include analysis to show measurable progress toward specific goals. Priority is given for projects where data show investment will have a significant positive impact relative to the investment; support Mayor Walsh's vision of a thriving, healthy and innovative city; support the implementation of the Imagine Boston 2030 master plan and leverage other spending and resources.

Ms. Connolly highlighted new capital project requests, which include: HVAC System and Efficiency Upgrades, Woods Mullen Window Replacement and Exterior Study, Contract & Grant Management Software, Miranda-Creamer and Wellness Center Roof Replacement & Corridor; Contract & Grant Management Software, EMS & Public Safety Radio Replacement.

Ms. Connolly gave an overview of the timeline and next steps.

Chairperson Lopes asked if there were any questions and hearing none entertained a motion and unanimous vote by roll call to submit the budget to the Mayor's Office.

Adjournment

At or around 5:00pm, a motion and vote to adjourn were taken and approved.

Attest

// Susan Belvis

Board Secretary, Boston Public Health Commission

DRAFT