

Shutesbury Board of Health

March 1, 2023, 7 pm

Virtual meeting

Present: Catherine Hilton, chair; Wm Levine, Norene Pease, Garrett Simonsen, board members; Miriam DeFant, Chris Footit, guests.

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

56 Wendell Road condemnation: board voted to take no action for a month.

Norene reported on actions and discussions of the Valley Health Collaborative, the group of six towns working together to build public health capacity with the aid of Public Health Excellence grant funds. Funding is approximately \$300,000 for this fiscal year. This year spending is primarily for startup costs such as equipment, software, and program manager but other staff will be hired in future. Shutesbury has already been assigned a public health nurse to monitor MAVEN; another public health nurse will be assigned primarily to Shutesbury and Leverett.

The next step is for our town – BOH and SB – to sign an intermunicipal agreement. The board voted unanimously to approve our signoff and to recommend that the SB sign as well, both after review by town counsel and town administrator.

In addition, opioid settlement funds have also been assigned directly to individual towns; in Shutesbury this amounts to about \$5,00 annually for 15 years. The Collaborative is considering pooling the settlements for all 6 towns – roughly \$87,000 per year – in order to be able to take meaningful action regionwide. The thought is to identify and address some gap in existing addiction services. The board voted unanimously to endorse in principle the pooling of opioid settlement funds and to recommend that the Select Board implement this after review by and discussion with town counsel. Garrett will discuss this with Becky.

Also the Collaborative is considering the possibility of transferring emergency preparedness planning funds due to the six towns and mounting our own preparedness efforts. Norene estimates that the Collaborative's share of the state and federal funds would be \$65,000-\$75,000. This discussion is motivated by the absence of any meaningful action by FRCOG for over a year, including its failure to search for an emergency preparedness planner. The board agreed that the idea is worthy of consideration but no action was taken.

Norene also reported on a message from Lake Wyola Association treasurer Bob Blanchette informing her that Whitewater, Inc., will no longer be providing their beach testing services. He is having trouble identifying a lab that will take the samples. Cat will follow up.

Adjourn 8:20 pm