

# Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Collaborative Meeting Minutes



Date: Friday, January 30, 2026

Time: 1-3PM

Location: Virtual

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82562814239?jst=2>

Meeting ID: 825 6281 4239

### Voting members present:

- Alexa Arieta, Health Agent (Oak Bluffs) - Y
- Marina Lent, Health Agent (Aquinnah) - Y
- Jerico Mele, Human Services Director (Nantucket) - Y
- Anna McCaffrey, Health Agent (Chilmark) - Y
- Sarah Toste, Assistant Health Agent (West Tisbury) - Y
- Fernando Lana, Assistant Health Agent (Edgartown) - Y
- Drew Belsky, Health Agent (Tisbury) - Y
- Stewart Young, Finance Committee Chairman (Gosnold) - N

### Non-voting members present:

- Dr. Victoria Beltran, Senior Consultant, BME Strategies
- Betsy Vanlandingham, Public Health Nurse, Dukes County
- Lea Hamner, Epidemiologist, Barnstable & Dukes County
- Stephanie Barth, Epidemiologist, Visiting Nurses Association of Cape Code

Marina Lent called the meeting to order. Fernando Lana seconded.

7/8 voting communities present, quorum met.

### Attendance Roll Call

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: N

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Y

The meeting was called to order at 1:11PM.

***Administrative***

*Approval of 1/14/26 Minutes*

Jerico Mele motioned to approve the minutes. Marina seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Y

*IMA Status*

The SSC shared with the group that all relevant signatures had been collected from all participating municipalities and that the final document has been shared with OLRH. The SSC will share the final document with all agents once it has been validated by MAHB.

*Communications Round-Up*

Marina reported on the creation of a bilingual flyer by Fernando concerning cold-weather home safety.

Fernando highlighted the Boards of Health Facebook page, which he co-moderates with Patrick Roden-Reynolds, as an effective communication channel for public health information, such as vaccination clinics, with a following of over 500 individuals.

Sarah Toste announced the successful kick-off of public health nursing services, noting that promotional flyers have been distributed to hospitals and community partners, including Harbor Homes. She strongly encouraged broad dissemination of this announcement across all towns. Sarah also engaged with the Youth Task Force, which concentrates on education, prevention, and intervention strategies for youth substance use and mental health, and advocated for attendance at their meetings. A small-scale influenza vaccination clinic is scheduled for Thursday, February 5th at Health Imperatives, with 96 vaccines available and current registration at only six individuals. Fernando is providing support for grassroots outreach, as the Brazilian community continues to

express reluctance regarding attendance due to the presence of ICE, suggesting that a mobile clinic at places of worship might be a necessary alternative.

Given that the current flu vaccine expires on June 20, it is important that these doses are used during this flu season. Fernando is connecting with Brazilian community leaders and plans to include Lea Hamner, who is fluent in Portuguese, for better engagement. He spoke at a Tisbury congregation and received a warm welcome. Marina stressed the importance of these connections for alpha-gal and landscaping community outreach. Fernando learned of an alpha-gal case in northwest Brazil and aims to inform travelers from Brazil before they arrive on Martha's Vineyard. He gave the new group vaccine clinic info and winter safety tips and will follow up in two weeks.

#### *Remaining Travel & Conferences for Municipal Staff for FY26*

Alexa Arieta is investigating a potential spring Soil Evaluator course with DEP, which she hopes to attend along with Fernando. She confirmed the fall course was free for municipal employees and will update everyone.

#### *Shared Staff Report Out*

Patrick shared that he has been finalizing a hunting legislation letter supporting specific bills and will be submitting it to Mass Wildlife next week. His Annual Report is also being finalized, which includes the 104 tick surveys that he conducted on individual properties last year. Due to the regular presence of Lone Star larvae in August and September, surveys will continue through August, aligning with the early August Ag Fair. This remains valuable for tracking Lone Star larvae, as nymph ticks were historically less prevalent earlier in the survey season.

Patrick also gave an update on his work with the deer cooler and indicated that the two-month hunting season extension doubled work activities. Island-wide, the donation program has received 85 donations (20-23 through IGI), a major increase from last year's 17, largely due to the hunt club acting as a processor. This totals 100 whole carcass deer donated.

#### *Final Review & Signatures on Deer Legislation Support Letter*

The letter, initially drafted for Senate Bills, was changed to summarize the deer management initiative, focusing on the tick/alpha-gal problem and how expanding hunting opportunities helps. The letter is neutral on Sunday hunting, but individual board members can submit pro or con comments to MassWildlife's online form, which requires a name and an organization.

Marina moved to approve submission of the letter. Sarah seconded.

Aquinnah: Y  
Chilmark: Y  
Edgartown: Y  
Gosnold: N  
Oak Bluffs: Y  
Nantucket: Y  
Tisbury: Y  
West Tisbury: Y

### ***Local Health Summer Internship Program***

#### *Maternal & Child Health Intern*

Lila Fisher, the newly contracted MCH nurse with the Visiting Nurse Association of Cape Cod, was identified as a suitable candidate for internship supervision; however, her limited availability may present challenges to providing adequate support. Jerico proposed seeking potential oversight from Colleen at the Community School in Nantucket. Anna McCaffrey suggested establishing a system for triaging intern inquiries directed to Lila. Lea stressed the importance of offering interns shadowing and substantive learning opportunities, rather than solely simple assignments, to enhance motivation and the quality of their contributions, underscoring the necessity of high-quality engagement and feedback. Sarah noted the difficulties inherent in remote versus in-person supervision, expressing a preference for in-person interaction to foster a stronger connection, while Marina recommended a hybrid model. Sarah mentioned Lila's previous employment with VNA as a factor in evaluating her supervisory capacity.

#### *Comms & Grant Writing Intern*

Drew favored the Communications/Grants proposal, viewing it as the best use of time to sustain the PHE group and secure diversified funding, which would then support the MCH internship next year. Lea noted that the finite budget might force a choice between the two proposals. Sarah, while acknowledging the Comms/Grants importance, leaned toward MCH for greater community and equity impact, specifically for Brazilian, Jamaican, and tribal populations. Marina stressed that the Comms/Grants proposal directly addresses a long-identified need and is a more straightforward internship without the need for extensive location connections, but its success depends on the quality of the intern. Fernando asked if the MCH intern could be fluent in Portuguese. Lea confirmed interns are not exclusive to any group and encouraged MV residents with housing to apply. The SSC shared that they will inquire with the internship program management to see if it is possible for the group to submit more than one application.

Marina motioned to approve an application. Jerico seconded.

Aquinnah: Y  
Chilmark: Y  
Edgartown: Y  
Gosnold:  
Oak Bluffs: Y  
Nantucket: Y  
Tisbury: Y  
West Tisbury: Y

Anna motioned to approve MCH as the priority application. Sarah seconded.

Aquinnah: N  
Chilmark: Y  
Edgartown: Y  
Gosnold: Not present  
Oak Bluffs: N  
Nantucket: Y  
Tisbury: N  
West Tisbury: Y

Sarah Toste volunteered to be the secondary preceptor, while the SSC will serve as the primary preceptor.

### ***Training & Credentialing Survey Results***

Sarah motioned to move the discussion of the training and credentialing survey results to the end of the meeting. Alexa seconded.

Aquinnah: Y  
Chilmark: Y  
Edgartown: Y  
Gosnold: Not present  
Oak Bluffs: Y  
Nantucket: Y  
Tisbury: Y  
West Tisbury: Y

### ***Proposed Spenddown Activities***

*Public Health Nursing Support for Nantucket*

Historically, PHN services on Nantucket have been funded by PHE funds. The island's Professional Services Budget does not allow for the support of these services and Nantucket has been unable to secure alternative funding for this calendar year. Jerico inherited the VNA funding program from Roberto and is now actively seeking a larger, local tax-based funding source to sustain services on Nantucket. Previous attempts to augment the budget were unsuccessful, partly attributable to the conclusion of a rural health equity/vaccine grant two years prior. The current contract for the in-community PHN is exclusively supported by public health funds. Historically, the program operated on an invoicing basis, a mechanism established prior to Jerico's involvement in response to emergent or pre-pandemic Maternal and Child Health (MCH) concerns. Following this calendar year, the financial support of these services will be moved to a grant mechanism and will not need additional PHE support.

Alexa motioned to approve the spending proposal for Nantucket PHN support. Marina seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Abstain

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

*Accessibility on IIPHEC Website*

Drew motioned to approve the IIPHEC website accessibility proposal. Anna seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

*Strategic Alignment & Team Building*

Marina expressed concerns regarding the funding for a potential retreat and questioned whether it would necessitate the exclusion of other programmatic initiatives, while also noting the inherent difficulties of scheduling. Drew agreed that a retreat should not take precedence over programmatic requirements, but indicated support for the initiative as a whole. Sarah emphasized the critical need for a meeting with Jerico to integrate the "two islands." Marina then proposed a half-day, in-person meeting to eliminate the need for an overnight stay for Jerico on the Vineyard; Victoria Beltran concurred that half-day retreats are typically productive. Drew proposed revisiting the matter later, suggesting the use of a spend down allocation to facilitate planning the retreat for the late fall. The SSC will plan to add the continued discussion of this retreat to an agenda in April.

*Hardware for Shared Staff*

Anna motioned to approve the purchase of hardware for shared staff. Marina seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

*Q2 Expenditure Review*

Marina motioned to table the review of the Training & Credentialing survey data and the Q2 Expenditure Review to the February 11th meeting. Drew seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

***Adjournment***

Fernando motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jerico seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20PM.

Documents Referenced

- 1.30.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Agenda\_FINAL
- 1.30.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Deck
- 1.14.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
- IIPHEC IMA
- IIPHEC Deer Legislation Support Letter
- IIPHEC Training & Credentialing Survey Results
- Public Health Nursing Support for Nantucket Proposal
- IIPHEC Website Accessibility Proposal
- Strategic Alignment & Team Building Proposal