

Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Collaborative Meeting Minutes



Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Time: 2-4PM

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) - N (joined late)
- Anna McCaffrey, Health Agent (Chilmark) - Y
- Sarah Toste, Assistant Health Agent (West Tisbury) - N
- Brice Boutot, Health Agent (Edgartown) - Y
- Drew Belsky, Health Agent (Tisbury) - Y
- Stewart Young, Finance Committee Chairman (Gosnold) - N

Non-voting members present:

- Caitlyn Winders, Shared Services Coordinator, BME Strategies
- Cynthia Baker, Managing Consultant, BME Strategies
- Terry Hayes, SME, DPH Performance Standards Unit
- Melanie Mackin, Consultant, DPH Performance Standards Unit
- Lissie Elorza, Associate Consultant, BME Strategies
- Lea Hamner, Epidemiologist, Martha's Vineyard & Nantucket
- Patrick Roden-Reynolds, Tick Biologist, IIPHEC
- Carrie Welch, Shared Health Inspector, IIPHEC
- Betsy Vanlandingham, Case Investigation/Contact Tracing Coordinator, Dukes County
- Stephanie Barth, Epidemiologist, Visiting Nurses Association of Cape Cod

Brice Boutot called the meeting to order. Marina Lent seconded.

5/8 voting communities present, quorum met.

Attendance Roll Call

Aquinnah: Y

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

The meeting was called to order at 2:08PM.

Note: Jerico Mele joined at 2:09PM.

Administrative

Approval of 3/11/26 Minutes

Jerico 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: Not present

Announcements

Lea Hamner and Patrick Roden-Reynolds informed the IIPHEC Advisory Board that their abstract for the NACCHO conference was accepted. They requested IIPHEC support for the virtual attendance fees of \$595 per person. The Board was cautioned that approving this expense would likely limit IIPHEC's ability to fund MHOA and MEHA Early Bird Conference Registrations at the end of the fiscal year, as the current budget may not support the same number of registrations as the previous year.

Lea and Patrick explained that the NACCHO virtual option is cheaper than in-person and offers a substantial 50-minute presentation time to discuss the MV Tick Program. While Patrick noted that it might be possible to share one registration, the general consensus was that supporting both individuals' separate attendance would be preferable. Funding options beyond IIPHEC's main budget, such as the Tick Program funding, were discussed as a potential safety net, although CT/CI funding was ruled out as it is already allocated for hours.

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The general sentiment leaned toward prioritizing this NACCHO opportunity over the typical spend down for other end-of-year conferences.

Anna McCaffrey requested guidance on whether or not PHE funds can be used to support Lea's NACCHO attendance as she is a contractor and not a full-time employee under the PHE grant.

Alexa Arieta motioned to approve the spend of funds on the NACCHO conference registrations. Marina seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

Communications Round-Up

Summer Inspectional Visit to Gosnold

The group discussed the upcoming summer inspection visits for operators in Gosnold, specifically targeting a June 23rd visit date to be completed in one day on Cuttyhunk. To increase efficiency and ensure adequate preparation, it was agreed that a flyer containing all necessary information should be circulated to operators ahead of time.

A key focus of the discussion was the need for inspectors to review relevant paperwork prior to the visit, rather than on-site. This includes basic establishment information for food inspections, details on secondary prep locations, well quality test results, and for recreational camps, a condensed application form, facility details, staff information, and supervisor qualifications. The board agreed that it is a good practice to request the full camp and food establishment applications be sent to inspectors ahead of time. This proactive approach will help avoid surprises, ensure all necessary documentation is correct, and prioritize safety, particularly for recreational camps. While acknowledging that some operators may be new to this process, the consensus was that implementing a full documentation review prior to inspection is essential for efficient and thorough oversight.

AGS & Reportability

The discussion focused on policy initiatives from the State and an urgent need to address a reporting requirement starting on April 1. A key point of action proposed by Lea was to request the reactivation of Betsy

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Vanlandingham's EPIC access, potentially including monetary support, and to send a drafted memo with IIPHEC's sign-off and approval. Betsy noted that her current allotted hours for EPIC access may be insufficient, underscoring the urgency of the proposal. Lea called for a special session to be held in the coming days for further discussion on this topic, which was accepted by the board.

Restaurant Grading

The Board then discussed proposals to enhance public accessibility and accountability regarding restaurant health inspections.

A primary suggestion involved requiring restaurants to display their most recent inspection rating with an easily accessible QR code linking to a dedicated section of the IIPHEC website. This link would provide context and nuance to the grade, rather than just linking to the last report. Board members generally agreed that this approach would increase consumer awareness and hold establishments to a higher standard.

The discussion also addressed the scope of this public accountability, suggesting that if implemented, it should apply universally to all food-handling businesses, including wholesalers, those operating out of commercial kitchens, and private chefs, to ensure consistency. The board considered the unique situation of shared/commissary kitchens, noting that individual operators within these spaces remain accountable for their own adherence to the food code.

The Board acknowledged the current difficulty in receiving a grade lower than an 'A' because of how the point system is set up in the inspectional software, FoodCodePro, and noted that the current system does not account for restaurant size.

Regarding implementation, the Board agreed that consistency in inspections is paramount if a public-facing accountability system is adopted. They discussed the feasibility of rolling out letter grades before the summer, proposing a practice round this year by posting inspection results internally (or to a restricted section of the website) with the intention of making them public next year. The long-term vision involves linking inspection results to a centralized SSA website.

Kratom & Potential Regulations

Frederick Hehre, the Assistant Health Agent in Tisbury, shared a presentation with the Advisory Board on Kratom and current regulations. Following the presentation, the board engaged in a discussion, the summary of which follows.

The Board discussed concerns raised regarding towns considering bans on synthetic cannabinoids and related psychoactive products. It was noted that certain municipalities, such as Northampton, have implemented strict bans on synthetic cannabinoids, mushroom chocolate, and any products intended to alter brain chemistry. The consensus was that a fragmented ban (e.g., in Tisbury but not elsewhere) would only shift the problem. Board

members highlighted the ease of availability, with products often displayed near the counter in locations like gas stations.

The initial proposed action is to bring forward a recommendation for an island-wide synthetics ban, initially focusing on kratom. This approach has been successful in other areas at removing most of these products from gas stations. It was emphasized that the synthetic or 7-OH form of these substances is the most dangerous. The Board agreed that a blanket synthetic ban would be the most effective approach and stressed the need for clear language to avoid any loopholes. The Board confirmed that the Substance Use Coalition and Task Force were consulted and do not favor this form of use.

Marina motioned to move the SAPHE 2.0 item up. Brice seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Not present

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

SAPHE 2.0 & the Performance Standards Survey

A discussion was held regarding the completion of the Performance Standards Survey, with subject matter experts Terry Hayes and Melanie Mackin from the Performance Standards Unit available to answer questions. It was noted that the survey's Admin section allows for respondents to provide additional context regarding the shared nature of services provided using PHE funds.

Key takeaways from the discussion included:

- Respondents who receive public health services through a Shared Service Arrangement (SSA) should closely review the survey items and consider resources received through these shared services.
- Regarding question 30 on Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees, regional staff paid for through PHE funds managed by Dukes County should not be included in individual town surveys; only staff paid for directly by the respondent should be reported.
- For questions concerning roles like animal inspector or animal control officer, respondents should determine if the position is handled by the whole municipality or only the Department of Public Health (DPH). The survey includes "Not Applicable" options where appropriate to indicate who

handles a service.

A reminder was issued that the Workforce Standards survey is due by April 10.

FY27 SSC Procurement

The Board initiated a discussion regarding the procurement of Shared Service Contractor (SSC) services for Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27), as the current contract lacks a renewal clause and the fiscal year concludes in approximately three months. The proposed process requires a three-part action from the Board: a formal vote to approve the procurement of contractor services for FY27; review and approval of the scope of work; and a vote to authorize Drew and Alexa to engage in the procurement process with Martina, bringing proposal recommendations back to the Board for final review. During the discussion, Alexa suggested adding a renewal clause for future cycles to avoid repeating this extensive process, as it is currently too late to amend the current contract to include this clause.

Alexa motioned to approve the procurement of contractor services for the Shared Services Coordinator role for FY27. Brice seconded.

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

Alexa motioned to approve the FY27 SOW for the IIPHEC SSC. Brice seconded.

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

Brice motioned to designate Drew and Alexa to engage in procurement with Dukes County. Marina seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket:

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

Adjournment

Alexa motioned to adjourn the meeting. Brice seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket:

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15PM.

Documents Referenced:

- 3.11.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
- 3.25.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Deck
- 3.25.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
- AGS Reportability MVH Memo
- FY27 IIPHEC SSC Scope of Work
- Kratom Regulations Presentation