

Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Collaborative Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, August 26th, 2026

12-2PM

Location: Virtual

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89364926042>

Meeting ID: 893 6492 6042

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
- Alex Lam, Health Agent (West Tisbury) - N
- Brice Boutot, Health Agent (Edgartown) - Y
- Drew Belsky, Health Agent (Tisbury) - Y
- Stewart Young, Selectboard & Board of Health Member (Gosnold) - N

Non-voting members present:

- Betsy Vanlandingham, Case Investigation/Contact Tracing Coordinator, Dukes County
- Caitlyn Winders, Shared Services Coordinator, BME Strategies
- Carrie Welch, Health Inspector, IIPHEC
- Fernando Lana, Assistant Health Agent, Edgartown
- Patrick Roden-Reynolds, Wildlife Biologist & Vector-Borne Disease Epidemiologist, IIPHEC
- Samantha Look, Executive Director, Vineyard Conservation Society
- Stephanie Barth, Epidemiologist, Visiting Nurses Association of Cape Cod
- Zada Clarke, Director of Advocacy & Community Organizing, Vineyard Conservation Society

Alexa Arieta called the meeting to order. Brice Boutot seconded.

6/8 voting communities present, quorum met.

Attendance Roll Call

Aquinnah: Y

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Chilmark: Y
Edgartown: Y
Gosnold: N
Nantucket: N (*Note that Jerico Mele joined at 12:10PM*)
Oak Bluffs: Y
Tisbury: Y
West Tisbury: N

The meeting was called to order at 12:06PM.

Administrative

Review & Approval of 8/18/26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

The Board determined that the minutes from the August 18th meeting could not be finalized in time for review; approval is postponed until the September meeting.

Communications Round-Up

The Board discussed ongoing public health outreach, with a primary focus on Alpha-gal Syndrome (AGS). Members emphasized the need for consistent public messaging to address misconceptions, specifically, that a positive alpha-gal test does not necessarily indicate a diagnosis of AGS, which requires a clinical assessment of symptoms. The Board agreed that the local hospital should lead this clinical messaging.

To improve public awareness, the Board is coordinating with stakeholders to disseminate updated educational materials. Strategies include placing informational flyers on the ferry, VTA buses, and at the airport. Additionally, the Board discussed the importance of engaging hospital providers, particularly per diem staff, to ensure they understand AGS diagnostic criteria. The Board also reviewed efforts to include Nantucket in all regional correspondence regarding these materials and noted an uptick in public inquiries regarding AGS.

FY27 Workplan Review

The Board discussed strategies for transmitting public health information directly to local clinics. There was further discussion regarding the integration of consulting staff into the Board's public health policy efforts to ensure that data and project work effectively support long-term policy goals.

PFAS Speaker Series

The Board reviewed the planning for the upcoming PFAS speaker series and discussed collaborating with the Vineyard Conservation Society. Discussions focused on providing clear, actionable guidance for homeowners regarding testing and mitigation. Members noted that existing resources, such as the Chilmark Board of Health

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website, are available for community members. The Board also touched upon the possibility of standardizing PFAS mitigation policies across jurisdictions, though it was noted that universal rules may not be feasible given the differences in water infrastructure across towns.

MAVEN MOU & Reporting Relationship

The SSC and Chair shared with the Board that the Board has been advised to consider three different options for granting Lea Hamner access to data within MAVEN, including the following:

1. Access granted on a municipal basis
2. Data requests via [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov)
3. MAVEN reports run through each municipality, then shared with Lea

The Board decided to allot more time to review the draft MOU and continue discussion at the next meeting.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair Within 48 Hours of Meeting Occurrence

Election of the IIPHEC FY27 Vice Chair

Drew Belsky made a motion to vote to confirm Alexa Arieta as IIPHEC Vice Chair for FY27. Brice seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Y

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Not present

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Not present

Alexa Arieta was elected as IIPHEC's FY27 Vice Chair.

IIPHEC MCFH Intern Final Presentation

The Board heard a presentation from the summer MCFH intern, Martha O'Donnell, on the work that she had done through the landscape assessment. She gave a detailed presentation on the data that was collected, the partners contacted, and the set of recommendations she developed. Martha will prepare suggestions to the board for how the Board could share the data and recommendations with the partners that participated at the next meeting in September.

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Adjournment

Brice motioned to adjourn the meeting. Marina 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 2:01PM.

Documents Referenced:

- 8.26.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Agenda
- 8.26.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Slide Deck
- 8.18.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
- IIPHEC FY27 Workplan
- MAVEN MOU_Draft
- Martha O'Donnell_Final Internship Summary Presentation