

Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Collaborative Meeting Minutes



Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2026

Time: 12-2PM

Location: Virtual

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) - Y
- Brice Boutot, Health Agent (Edgartown) - N
- 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
- Jo Watson, Director of Health & Human Services, Nantucket
- Lea Hamner, Epidemiologist, Dukes County
- Martha O'Donnell, Former Intern, IIPHEC
- Martina Thornton, County Manager, Dukes County
- Patrick Roden-Reynolds, Wildlife Biologist & Vector-Borne Disease Epidemiologist, IIPHEC
- Stephanie Barth, Epidemiologist, Visiting Nurses Association of Cape Cod

Jerico Mele called the meeting to order. Alexa Arieta seconded.

5/8 voting communities present, quorum met.

Attendance Roll Call

Aquinnah: N

Chilmark: Y

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

The meeting was called to order at 12:09PM.

Note: Marina Lent joined at 12:10PM.

Administrative

Review & Approval of 9/9/26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Marina Lent motioned to approve the 9/9/26 IIPHEC Advisory Board meeting minutes, pending the addition of language indicating the conversation about the MV Tick Program needs to be ongoing. Jerico seconded.

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

Communications Round-Up

The Advisory Board engaged in a discussion regarding recent tick exposure incidents at the high school level and underscored the critical need for proactive, island-wide prevention and public education strategies. The Board highlighted a recent incident involving students exposed to nymph ticks during a school field trip, pointing out that students and parents were unprepared for tick prevention and calling for immediate, standardized messaging across all schools. Members discussed establishing a health and safety coordination meeting with the school superintendent, leveraging existing resources such as the Martha's Vineyard Hospital Tick Communications Work Group, and utilizing standardized tick bite documentation and home care instructions for families. Additionally, Lea Hamner offered to host recurring technical office hours to provide guidance and training for key community messengers and partners, including local school administration.

Municipal MSA Completion for COMMBUYS

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DPH is asking all municipalities and SSAs to complete the MSA so that they are automatically eligible for funding opportunities when they become available on COMMBUYS. Aquinnah and Gosnold had not yet completed their MSAs and will be issued copies from OLRH. The SSC will check with Edgartown to see if they have completed their MSA. Chilmark indicated that they will complete their MSA by the end of the week.

MCFH Landscape Assessment Partner Results Sharing

Martha presented a comprehensive overview of her proposal for disseminating the findings of the Maternal, Child, and Family Health landscape assessment conducted over the summer. In addition to her prior presentation to the Advisory Board, she developed a summary document to engage key community stakeholders and facilitate collaborative support networks. Board members discussed potential avenues for outreach, emphasizing the importance of multi-agency collaboration, centralized resource guides, and web-based public access. Recommendations included presenting before the Dukes County Health Council, coordinating with local health officials, and leveraging existing regional programs such as the Perinatal Pathways program in collaboration with the VNA. The Advisory Board also discussed the possibility of hosting a Community Baby Shower, an initiative executed by a number of other SSAs. The SSC will gather information about hosting the baby shower and report back to the Advisory Board at the next meeting.

Travel & Purchase SOP Review

Drew motioned to approve the SOP following the addition of a clause indicating that shared staff members will need to cover their own out-of-state expenses. Jerico seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Not present

Gosnold: Not present

Nantucket: Y

Oak Bluffs: Not present

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Y

FY27 Workplan Objectives Review

Housing (Performance Standards #1)

The housing objective working group met for the first time last week. The group will meet on October 19 to review existing municipal housing forms that have been shared by participating IIPHEC municipalities.

Strategic Planning (Elective #2)

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The Advisory Board briefly discussed engaging in a strategic planning workshop last fiscal year, but decided to postpone any strategic planning until this fiscal year. Now that it has been incorporated into the workplan, it is an appropriate time to revisit strategic planning. The Advisory Board will mirror the working group structure for the Housing objective, and create a working group dedicated to the Strategic Planning Elective. The members are as follows:

- Drew Belsky
- Jerico Mele
- Anna McCaffrey

MAVEN MOU Discussion

The Advisory Board conducted a detailed review of the draft MAVEN MOU, which proposes granting Lea Hamner access to MAVEN data for participating municipalities, contingent upon Board of Health approvals. Discussions focused on refining the scope of access to emphasize vector-borne disease surveillance and data analysis rather than public education. Members highlighted key administrative safeguards, including a 30-day termination notice clause, explicit references to a SOP, clear IIPHEC branding, and dedicated signature lines for participating entities.

Marina Lent motioned to present the finalized draft of the MAVEN MOU to respective local Boards of Health and town counsels for formal review. Jerico seconded.

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

NEWVEC Grant & BOH Letter of Support

The Advisory Board received an update regarding federal grant funding recently awarded to UMass to support tick research through NEWVEC (Northeastern Regional Center for Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases). NEWVEC intends to allocate funds to support Patrick Roden-Reynolds' work through a contractual agreement with Dukes County. To facilitate this, NEWVEC and Dukes County are developing a county-compliant job description for review by the Dukes County Personnel Board. The Advisory Board

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discussed issuing a letter of support to the Personnel Board to articulate the necessity and regional benefit of the position.

Members discussed the administrative structure of the proposed Public Health department within Dukes County, noting that establishing a dedicated regional extension branch could provide long-term stability and flexibility for vector-borne disease research and other shared public health initiatives across the islands. Board members emphasized the importance of ensuring the role remains adaptable to future grant opportunities while maintaining focus on vector-borne disease surveillance and research.

The Advisory Board decided to continue discussion of this letter at a one-topic meeting, to be scheduled via email. The Board will take a final vote on the letter at that meeting.

Adjournment

Marina motioned to adjourn the meeting. Drew seconded.

Aquinnah: Y

Chilmark: Y

Edgartown: Not present

Gosnold: Not present

Oak Bluffs: Y

Nantucket: Y

Tisbury: Y

West Tisbury: Y

The meeting was adjourned at 2:33PM.

Documents Referenced:

- 9.23.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Agenda
- 9.9.26 IIPHEC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
- MCFH Landscape Assessment One-Pager
- MAVEN Access MOU_DRAFT
- NEWVEC Biologist Role Letter of Support_DRAFT