



**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Thursday, February 2, 2012**

The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors ("Board") of the Boston Public Health Commission ("Commission") was held on Thursday, February 2, 2012 in the Hayes Conference Room at the Commission's offices at 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Boston, MA 02118

**Board Members Present:**

Paula Johnson, MD, MPH, Chair  
Ruth Ellen Fitch, JD  
Celia Wcislo  
Harold Cox  
Joseph Betancourt, MD, MPH

**Board Members Absent:**

Kathleen Walsh  
Jack Cradock

**Also Present Were:**

Barbara Ferrer, Dr. Huy Nguyen, John Townsend, Nakisha Skinner, Chuck Gagnon, Brendan Kearney, Gerry Thomas, Pam Jones, PJ McCann, Lisa Conley, Aliza Wasserman, Anne McHugh, Debbie Allen, Liam Day, Katinka Podmaniczky, Damon Chaplin, Leon Bethune, Bill McLaughlin, Kyle Washburn, Jim Greene, Fred Brack, Margaret Reid, Karlene Griffiths, Diana Santiago, John Shea, Sharyn Imonti, Becky Franckle, Bernard Killarney, Jim Montgomery, Cindy Engler, Michelle Urbano

**Visitors:**

Scott Mason, Mass. League of Community Health Centers; Patrick Lee, Eva Erlich, Hank Keating, Marzuq Muhammad, Trinity Financial; Jill Carter, Boston Public Schools

**Proceedings:**

***Chairwoman's Comments***

*Paula Johnson, MD, MPH*

- The meeting was called to order at 4:06 P.M. The minutes of the board meetings held December 1, 2011 and January 5, 2012 were approved.

## ***Executive Director's Report***

Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd

- Lisa Conley, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, updated the board on Governor Patrick's proposed FY13 budget. The proposal includes additional taxes on cigarettes and a removal of tax exempt status from soft beverages and candy in an effort to close the existing revenue gap. As a whole, the proposed budget is positive for public health, with most current funding sources either maintained or increased. Areas where funds were lost include school based health and transportation. Board Member Cox asked if there was a loss in HIV funding. Ms. Conley responded that this funding has remained level; however, since it has been so for many years, popular opinion holds that an increase should have been proposed.
- Dr. Ferrer thanked the board members who attended the State of the City Address on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012. It was at this event that the Mayor announced a city-wide initiative to prevent increased rates of obesity known as the Boston Moves for Health Initiative. This initiative is broken up in to four components: (1) healthy child care; (2) healthy neighborhoods; (3) healthy workplaces; and (4) healthy weight. The 4<sup>th</sup> component includes a goal for City of Boston residents to collectively lose 1 million pounds over the next year. Board Member Wcislo asked if only Boston residents were able to take part in this initiative or if participation is open to non-residents as well. Dr. Ferrer responded that everyone is invited to participate; however Boston residents will be the focus.
- Board Member Betancourt suggested working to improve calorie literacy in the city through comparing calories consumed to the amount of physical activity needed to burn those calories off. Jill Carter, Executive Director of the Department of Health and Wellness at Boston Public Schools, agreed this would be a good approach and noted the importance of remembering that methods used to encourage adults to live a healthy lifestyle are not necessarily always appropriate for children.
- Board Member Wcislo noted that the Service Employees International Union is working with many smaller childcare providers, and that it might be good to get in touch with them to assist in the initiative. Ms. Anne McHugh, Director of the Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Division, stated that she would do so.

## ***Communities Putting Prevention to Work ("CPPW"): Update on Obesity Initiatives (continued)***

Anne McHugh, Director, Chronic Disease Prevention & Control Division

- Ms. McHugh acknowledged the hard work of the Commission's Communications Department in creating two television advertisements in the sugar sweetened beverage (SSB) initiative, one aimed at adults and the other aimed at youth. The advertisement aimed at adults was approved by the Center for Disease Control for national use.
- One CPPW objective is to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables in the city. Ms. McHugh discussed the Dudley Greenhouse, where youth are responsible for maintaining and selling produce to high end restaurants in the city. Board Member Cox asked how many community beds exist in the greenhouse. Ms. McHugh stated that after the first season the greenhouse was no longer utilized individually, but rather for teaching purposes. Residents are encouraged to start their own garden beds or to utilize community gardens. Board Member Wcislo suggested building garden beds in elderly housing communities. Ms. McHugh stated that CPPW has funded "build-a-bed" through The Food Project ("TFP"), a garden bed starter kit for residents' back yards, and acknowledged that building in

elderly developments would be good for the Commission to get involved in, adding that TFP has already partnered with the Boston Housing Authority to do this.

- CPPW has also increased adult access to fitness through subsidized memberships to fitness centers and to Hubway. Due to high popularity, referrals for subsidized fitness center memberships are no longer available; however the commission was able to reach its target population of Black and Latino residents. Board Member Cox asked how long people continue with their participation in this program. Ms. McHugh responded that they are still evaluating the program and will come back to the board with a more thorough analysis.
- Ms. McHugh discussed the CPPW partnership and objectives with Boston Public Schools. These objectives include increasing student physical activity throughout the day and limiting access to unhealthy foods that compete with school lunches. Ms. McHugh outlined plans for sustainability, including continued educational outreach and partnerships with other city agencies such as the Boston Natural Areas Network and TFP.

***Update: Northampton Square (“NHS”) Project***

Patrick Lee, Principal & Executive Vice President, Trinity Financial

Eva Erlich, Assistant Project Manager, Trinity Financial

Hank Keating, Vice President, Design and Construction

- Trinity Financial has engaged current residents of NHS to ensure that they are aware and comfortable with proposed renovation plans. Mr. Lee assured the board members that the process is in its beginning stages, noting that a public review process will soon begin, and that Trinity will come back before the board after this process has been completed.
- Ms. Erlich outlined the goals for the NHS Project, including addressing the capital needs of the existing facilities, preserving the mixed-income status of residents, and the preservation of 50 affordable units for Commission programs. Proposed renovations to the NHS building were detailed, including a new residential tower, a new corridor connecting 35 Northampton Street with 860 Harrison Avenue, a single entrance for security purposes, and a new fitness center. Chairwoman Johnson asked about plans for the existing basketball court and pool. Mr. Lee stated that they will discuss priorities with residents and members of the community, as Trinity will most likely be unable to re-build both the pool and basketball court to their existing standards.
- In response to Board Member Wcislo’s inquiry regarding parking, Ms. Erlich stated that the addition of a new residential tower should not have a negative effect on parking availability, as a survey has shown the parking garage located at NHS is under-utilized.
- Mr. Keating presented poster boards depicting the planned renovations to NHS. Mr. Keating stressed that residents will be kept in place during the renovations. Board Member Cox asked how this is possible. Mr. Keating stated renovations will occur during the day when most residents are already out of the unit due to work, school, etc.
- Chairwoman Johnson asked what percentage of the new units would be affordable. Mr. Lee responded that the existing units will remain below market rate, while the new units will be at market rate. In response to Board Member Cox’s inquiry of the cost-effectiveness of the proposed renovations, Mr. Lee stated that each building will generate revenues to pay for itself. Board Member Fitch asked about Trinity’s timeline for more renovations to begin. Mr. Lee stated that they hope to start construction towards the end of 2012.

### ***Boston Public Schools (“BPS”) Partnership***

Deborah Allen, ScD, Director, Bureau of Child, Adolescent, and Family Health

Jill Carter, Executive Director, Department of Health and Wellness, Boston Public Schools

Leon Bethune, Director, Office of Environmental Health

Damon Chaplin, Health Inspector, Office of Environmental Health

- Dr. Allen discussed upcoming goals for the Commission’s partnership with BPS. The Commission hopes to educate children and child care providers to facilitate a safe environment, and promote healthy lifestyles, healthy attitudes, and relationships. Dr. Allen stated that education is a predictor of the health of a population and a marker for risk, adding that kids who do poorly in school are more likely to drop out and engage in destructive behavior. Dr. Allen also provided an overview of school based programs, such as health centers, focusing on environmental health, tobacco, and healthy foods and activity levels, as well as assisting families when they have questions about insurance options.
- The Department of Health and Wellness is a 17-person department funded by grants, at least 3 of which come from the Commission. Dr. Carol Johnson, BPS Superintendent, recently proposed a new budget which will allow for an additional 5 to 6 positions in this department.
- Ms. Carter discussed the 4 main BPS goals: (1) to improve student fitness; (2) to promote healthy student behavior and engagement; (3) to improve school-based health care; and (4) to create healthy school environments that support healthy behaviors. Ms. Carter stated that BPS goals are aligned with Dr. Johnson’s efforts to close achievement gaps by addressing social, physical, and emotional aspects of a student’s life. This process is part of Dr. Johnson’s Acceleration Agenda. Ms. Carter discussed the Coordinated School Health plan, a Center for Disease Control model used at BPS to form cross-functional teams to work together on various issues in the school.
- Every school in Massachusetts has a Wellness Council (“WC”), as mandated by the federal Wellness Policy. Annually, the WC completes a program inventory around health and wellness and creates an action plan. BPS has created a “tool kit” that is delivered to every wellness council and contains tools to help transform each school into a healthy environment and to reach health goals. Board Member Wcislo agreed with the afore-mentioned suggestion of Board Member Betancourt regarding the comparison of calories to physical activity and improving the understanding of calories. Ms. Carter stated that health education is now integrated into every curriculum to help students understand all aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including calories.
- Ms. Carter also noted that every school in the City of Boston now has a 50 ft. buffer zone where smoking is not permitted. BPS is working to bring tobacco education into schools and will have at least three new signs in every school building in the district by the end of June, 2012.
- Mr. Bethune and Mr. Chaplin will come before the board on March 8, 2012 to complete their portion of this presentation.

### ***Adjournment***

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

**Submitted By:**

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**Jamie L. Martin, Secretary**