

## **BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM**

Thursday, March 4, 2021

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **1. Call to Order:**

A meeting of the Bucks County Consortium was held at 9:00 a.m. at via GoToMeetings, on March 4, 2021, and called to order by Consortium President Kyle Seckinger

#### **Roll Call, Introductions and Community Updates:**

The following Bucks County communities were represented at the meeting:

Randee Elton, Bristol Township  
Shawn Curran, Chalfont Borough  
Caroline Brinker, Doylestown Borough  
Aaron Walizer, Doylestown Township  
Stephanie Mason, Doylestown Township  
Matthew Takita, Falls Township  
Nick Valla, Middletown Township  
Stephanie Teoli Kuhls, Middletown Township  
Devan Ambron, Milford Borough  
Andrea Dewhurst, New Township Borough  
Matt West, New Britain Township  
Michael Walsh, New Britain Township  
Christina Szabo, New Hope Borough  
Linda Reid, Perkasie Borough  
Angela Benner, Plumstead Township  
Eileen Bradley, New Britain Township  
Jason Wager, Springfield Township  
Pat Marks, Tullytown Borough  
John Ramey, Warminster Township  
Katherine McGovern, Warminster Township  
Daulton George, Warminster Municipal Authority  
Barry Lubber, Warrington Township  
Christian Jones, Warrington Township  
Ashley Casey, Warwick Township  
Kyle Seckinger, Warwick Township  
Skye Sorresso, Warwick Township  
Paula Johnson, Yardley Borough

#### **Sponsors:**

Sal Urbano, Civics Plus  
Ryan J. Cassidy, Eckert Seamans  
Scott Blissman, Eckert Seamans  
Brian Lake, Equitable Advisors  
Beth Kaufmann, Equitable Advisors  
Aaron Nelson, Hough Associates  
Kathy Thomas, High Swartz  
Tom Panzer, High Swartz  
Steve Noll, TMA  
Patty Barthel, Waste Management

Dan Fagan, Senator Steve Santarsiero's office  
Shannon Sticker, Senator Steve Santarsiero's office

**2. Presentation by Ryan J. Cassidy of Eckert Seamans:** Update on Covid-19 Vaccine Programs in the Workplace • Ryan J. Cassidy is the firm-wide Chair of the Labor and Employment Group of Eckert Seamans and a member of the Firm's Board

of Directors. Ryan practices exclusively management-side labor and employment law and has represented over one hundred counties, municipalities, regional police departments and state-wide agencies in collective bargaining negotiations, civil service proceedings, unfair labor practice proceedings, interest and grievance arbitration hearings and employment litigation matters.

Mr. Cassidy provided an overview of a similar presentation that he presented to PSATs. Mr. Cassidy and Mr. Blissman provided detailed information on the following:

EEOC Guidance on COVID-19 – paves way for employer mandates with two exceptions:

- American with Disabilities Act medical exception
- Title VII Religious accommodation exception

Reasonable Accommodations Under the ADA – employers must make “reasonable accommodations” for disabled individuals who are otherwise qualified to work. Disability may include allergies or sensitivities to an ingredient in a COVID-19 vaccine, other medical condition, or mental health issues. Request is made by employee to be exempted from vaccine requirement. Both employee and employer must engage in an “interactive process.” Considerations should be made based on individual assessment.

Can you exclude from work an employee unable to receive a vaccination because of a disability? Must show that an unvaccinated employee would pose a direct threat due to a “significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.” 29 C.F.R.1630.2(r)

- “Direct Threat” – high standard, individual assessment of four factors (the duration of the risk, the nature and severity of the potential harm, likelihood that the potential harm will occur, and the imminence of the potential harm), self, and others.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion
- Requires employers to provide accommodations due to an employee’s sincerely held religious belief
- EEOC Definition of Religion

Union Issues Under Act 111 & Act 195

- Mandatory vaccinations – bargaining
- Distinction between “decision bargaining, impact bargaining & meet and discuss”

Mr. Cassidy & Mr. Blissman took various questions from the members. Mr. Cassidy thanked the membership for allowing him to present at today’s meeting.

Mr. Seckinger thanked Mr. Cassidy and Mr. Blissman for their presentation and time today.

### **3. Treasurer’s Report and Payment of Bills:**

Upon motion by Angela Benner, seconded by Eileen Bradley, the Treasurer’s Report for February 2021, was unanimously approved.

### **4. Approval of Minutes:**

Upon motion by Eileen Bradley, seconded by Caroline Brinker, the February 4, 2021 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

### **5. Open discussion:**

Shannon Sticker, Senator Steve Santarsiero’s office shared that the PA Department of Community & Economic Development has opened up the window to apply for Greenway and Multimodal Grants as of this past Monday and offer our assistance to any municipality that might want to apply or would like a letter of support. Ms. Sticker provided her contact information in the chat box.

Nick Valla (Middletown Township) made an announcement that the 2021 Salary Survey was sent out by Ashley Casey, Consortium Coordinator. Mr. Valla noted that 30 municipalities have responded. Submission deadline is Friday, March 5, 2021.

Angela Benner (Plumstead Township) provided an update to the membership on the Verizon Contract. Ms. Benner noted that any municipality that has participated should have received the finalized contract to be executed from Dan Cohen. Ms. Benner stated that if any municipality has not, to contact Dan Cohen directly.

**6. Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Ashley Casey*

Ashley Casey  
Consortium Coordinator