

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
March 5, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tara Sell at 10:30 a.m.

Board members each provided a brief introduction.

UPDATE 2024 BOARD COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Chair Sell said Bainbridge Island Councilperson Ashley Mathews joined the board after committee assignments were approved and noted she would like to join the board Personnel Committee. Member Stephen Kutz moved and Member Drayton Jackson seconded the motion to approve the Updated 2023 Board Committee Assignments. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Kutz moved and Member Michael Watson seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the February 6, 2024, regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The March consent agenda included the following contracts:

- 2377, *Washington State Department of Health, Acting Health Officer Coverage*
- 2392, *Summit Law Group, Labor and Employment Legal Services*

Member Jackson moved and Mayor Becky Erickson seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Rosie Apalisok, representing Virginia Mason Franciscan Health (VMFH) and Chief Nurse at St. Michael Medical Center (SMMC), provided several comments regarding the healthcare assessment report on today's agenda. She thanked the Health District and board for partnering with SMMC on this work, agreed with the report that there is a staffing shortage in the healthcare field, and reminded the board of SMMC's residency programs and partnership with Olympic College to increase capacity for training qualified healthcare workers in the area.
2. Melissa Lo, representing SMMC and OBGYN at The Doctors Clinic, made some comments and clarifications on the healthcare assessment report:
 - Any medically necessary care for women is provided with no religious exemptions.
 - Elective sterilizations have always and continue to be done routinely.

- Elective abortions were never done at SMMC or its predecessor Harrison Hospital.
3. Doug Baxter-Jenkins, representing SMMC and Community Health Director at VMFH, noted a long-standing partnership with the Health District on community assessments. He also defined “Community Benefit” and said the healthcare assessment report underreported SMMC’s community benefit contributions. He said SMMC wants to talk about what community investments look like and how SMMC can continue to partner with the community to serve everyone who needs it.
 4. Chad Melton, representing VMFH and President of SMMC, made several comments to the board regarding the healthcare assessment report. He said the report contains misinformation and misperceptions about the care SMMC provides to the community. He said healthcare is an absolute priority and noted his staff and leadership have worked hard to make healthcare accessible to the community.
 5. Jennifer Korjus, citizen, noted she has no affiliation with SMMC. She said the healthcare assessment report shocked her and she encouraged the board to reject this report in its entirety and stated several concerns about it.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Administrator Update:

Yolanda Fong, Administrator, shared two updates:

- On February 17, 2024, the Health District posted a request for proposals (RFP) to find a consultant to research and provide recommendations for the District’s classification design and salary schedule. The RFP closes March 15, 2024.
- Written public comment received for this board meeting was forwarded to the full board via email prior to this meeting.

There was no further comment.

Health Officer Update:

Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer, provided the board with several updates.

Respiratory Illness in Kitsap County

- Both influenza and RSV are tapering off for this season
- Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) now says anyone over 65 should get a second 2023-2024 COVID vaccination this spring.

- CDC updated isolation guidance for COVID for the first time since 2021 to bring it into alignment with flu and RSV guidance.

Measles

- Measles is a severe illness that results in hospitalization rates of 25-40% of people infected and occurs overwhelmingly in those who are unvaccinated.
- At least 16 states, including Washington, have seen cases of measles this year.
- The Health District sent out a provider advisory last week reminding local physicians to remain vigilant in vaccinating, testing for and reporting cases to the District's communicable diseases team.

Child Fatality Review (CFR)

- CFR team convened last week to review pediatric suicide and firearm injury
- Kitsap County's firearm death rate is slightly lower than the state
- Deaths due to firearms are primarily suicides, in all ages, and preventable by appropriate locking and storage of firearms.
- Seattle Children's Hospital and Seattle King County Public Health have a toolkit for planning events for safe storage that communities can use to host related events.

Overdose in Kitsap County

- EMS responses to overdose events in Kitsap has nearly tripled in three years.
- Synthetic opioid (fentanyl) overdose deaths in Kitsap are below the state rate but on a steep upward trajectory.
- The highest numbers of overdose deaths in the county occurred in Bremerton and South Kitsap. The per capita death rate is highest in North Kitsap.
- The Health District doing a variety of work to address opioid overdoses in the county.

State Legislature

- E2SHB 1956 – State legislature is putting major funding into opioid prevention, treatment and response work.
- SB 5983 – Bipartisan passage of the bill redefining vaccine to include monoclonal antibodies and all other immunizations approved by the FDA.
- SHB 2295 – Adopting rules that will add hospital at home services for licensed acute care hospitals

Recent Community Health Assessments

- Kitsap Public Health District – Community Health Assessment (Dec 2023)
- Kitsap County Division of Aging and Long-Term Care – Area Plan 2024-2027
- Kitsap Community Resources – Community Needs Assessment (Apr 2023)
- Kitsap Mental Health Services – Community Needs Assessment (Mar 2023)
- St. Michael Medical Center
 - Community Health Needs Assessment (May 2023)
 - Community Health Implementation Strategy (Oct 2023)

- Healthcare System Challenges and Opportunities in Kitsap County (Mar 2024)
- All these assessments inform the 2024-2028 Kitsap Community Health Priorities. Next work group meeting is in the spring.

Member Kutz reminded the board that syphilis is spreading rapidly and noted the highest rates are in Alaska. He also said there is a lot of travel of individuals between Alaska and Washington and that he is advising his providers to consider screening those individuals. He said the healthcare assessment report touches on this topic and encouraged further conversation with the board.

There was no further comment.

CORRECTED ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FEE SCHEDULE

John Kiess, Environmental Health Director, reviewed the change to the Environmental Health Fee Schedule and noted it was a clerical oversight.

Commissioner Christine Rolfes moved and Councilperson Mathews seconded the motion to approve the Corrected Environmental Health Fee Schedule.

Councilperson Mathews suggested making the fees easier to decipher by color coding or creating separate documents for each sector of fees.

The motion was approved unanimously by the elected members of the board. Non-elected members cannot vote on fees.

There was no further comment.

HEALTHCARE SYSTEM CHALLENGES AND OPPORUNITITES IN KITSAP REPORT

Commissioner Rolfes introduced the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security (CHS) team to give a presentation of their healthcare assessment report, Healthcare System Challenges and Opportunities in Kitsap.

Dr. Tener Veenema, Senior Scholar at CHS and Senior Scientist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health introduced herself and her team: Dr. Diane Meyer, Senior Scholar at CHS and Assistant Scientist in the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering, and Dr. Sanjana Ravi, Senior Scholar at CHS, as well as other team members not present at the meeting.

Dr. Veenema provided the board with some background information on CHS and said their goal is to help health systems grow stronger and meet the needs of all the people in their communities.

Dr. Meyer gave an overview of the project and methodology. She explained that COVID-19 exposed weaknesses within local healthcare system infrastructure. These challenges are not unique to any one county, but systemic and tailored assessments are critical to understanding where failures are occurring and how to address gaps. The goal of CHS was to conduct a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of Kitsap County's healthcare system and workforce.

Kitsap County Healthcare Analysis Methodology:

- Historical and policy analyses
- Key informant interviews and focus groups
- Modified Delphi study
- Final Recommendations

Advisory Panel

- Members of Kitsap Public Health Board
- Representative from Kitsap County Board of Commissioners' office
- Kitsap Public Health District representatives

Dr. Ravi gave an overview of the Delphi study. The purpose was to identify actionable policy recommendations for solving the healthcare system challenges identified during prior arms of data collection. The study, which occurred in three rounds, included representatives from local public health and healthcare organizations, members of the community and members of the Kitsap Public Health Board.

Dr. Veenema shared key findings, which were informed by the policy analysis, historical analysis, interviews, focus groups and the Delphi study. Kitsap County findings are in line with several intersecting trends in the United States:

- Hospital and health system consolidation
- Growing prevalence of private equity
- Healthcare monopolies
- Catholic healthcare expansion

Additionally, Dr. Veenema noted Kitsap County's healthcare crisis has been compounded by the county's unique geography, lack of affordable housing, limited public transportation options, and rapid population changes caused by the entry and departure of naval base workers and families.

A full list of findings and additional information can be found in the report on the Health District's website.

Dr. Ravi provided a list of goals identified by the Delphi study for the county to achieve by 2035 in the following areas:

- Mental and behavioral health
- Primary healthcare
- Health equity
- Housing

- Reproductive health

Dr. Ravi shared findings and recommendations for SMMC's charity care and community benefit spending.

Dr. Veenema shared the CHS team's 13 recommendations to improve the healthcare system in Kitsap County and suggested next steps.

Commissioner Rolfes thanked the CHS team for their report, quality of work and time spent working with community members.

Dr. Morrow shared appreciation for the response this process and report have spurred within the community and noted that change is difficult.

Ms. Fong said this report is an additional tool in the community's toolbox. She said the community health improvement process has also identified healthcare as an issue in the county. She said this work is broader than any one agency can do alone and we need to come together as a community to work on solutions.

Commissioner Rolfes suggested the board spend some more time reviewing the report and that the policy committee and chair work with Health District leadership on next steps for the April board meeting.

There was no further comment.

ADJOURN

There was no further business; the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.



Dr. Tara Sell
Kitsap Public Health Board



Yolanda Fong
Administrator

Board Members Present: *Mayor* Becky Erickson; *Member* Drayton Jackson; *Member* Stephen Kutz; *Councilperson* Ashley Mathews; *Councilperson* Scott Diener (*alternate for Rob Putaansuu*); *Commissioner* Christine Rolfes; *Member* Dr. Tara Sell; *Member* Jolene Sullivan; *Member* Dr. Michael Watson; *Mayor* Greg Wheeler.

Board Members Absent: None.

Community Members Present: Rosie Apalisok, *VMFH/SMMC*; Doug Baxter-Jenkins, *SMMC*; Monica Bernhard, *Kitsap Mental Health Services*; Stephanie Christensen, *VMFH/SMMC*;

Caylee Coulter, *Olympic College*; Carolyn Ellison, *Naval Hospital Bremerton*; Willa Fisher, *Self*; L. Greene, *Self*; Lukas Harlow, *Olympic College*; Jennifer Korjus, *Self*; Melissa Lo, *SMMC*; Chad Melton, *SMMC*; Badriya Mohammad, *Olympic College Student Nursing*; Anne Presson, *Board of County Commissioners*; Pat Rae, *Self*; Jeff Riggins, *Suquamish Tribe*; Jessica Walker, *Olympic College*; Katie Walters, *Kitsap County*; David Weiss, *VMFH/SMMC*; and Carollynn Zimmers, *Self*.

Scribe: Angie Berger, *Management Analyst, Kitsap Public Health District*.

Staff Present: Nancy Acosta, *Program Manager, Parent Child Health/Nurse Family Partnership*; Amy Anderson, *Community Liaison, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response*; Nathan Anderson, *Community Liaison, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response*; Katie Baker, *Outreach Specialist, Communications*; Leslie Banigan, *Senior Environmental Health Specialist, Pollution Identification and Correction*; Margo Chang, *Administrative Assistant, Administration*; Yolanda Fong, *Administrator, Administration*; Adrienne Hampton, *Policy, Planning, and Innovation Analyst, Administration*; Isabella Hansen, *Disease Intervention Specialist, Sexually Transmitted Infections*; Anne Howard, *Disease Intervention Specialist, COVID-19*; John Kiess, *Director, Environmental Health Division*; Siri Kushner, *Director, Public Health Infrastructure Division*; Melissa Laird, *Program Manager, Accounting and Finance*; Emily Main, *Program Coordinator 1, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention*; Martitha May, *Bilingual Community Health Worker, Parent Child Health*; Kaela Moontree, *Public Health Educator, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention*; Dr. Gib Morrow, *Health Officer, Administration*; Leah Neff Warner, *Epidemiologist 1, Assessment and Epidemiology*; Yolanda Noriega, *Bilingual Secretary/Clerk 2, Support Services*; Sydney Perales, *Community Liaison, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention*; Quynh Sample, *Community Liaison, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response*; Khushnum Sauna, *Public Health Educator, Parent Child Health*; Justin Shoriz, *Disease Intervention Specialist, Communicable Disease*; Nathan Sidell, *Community Liaison, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention*; Tad Sooter, *Public Information Officer, Program Manager, Communications*; Gabreiel Outlaw-Spencer, *Public Health Educator/Community Liaison, Parent Child Health*; Kelsey Stedman, *Program Manager, Communicable Disease*; Laura Westervelt, *Environmental Health Specialist 1, Pollution Identification and Correction*; and Erica Whares, *Community Liaison, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention*.