

## KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING AGENDA

April 6, 2021  
10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

**\*\* Please note that this is a virtual / online meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Electronic connection and viewing information for the meeting is provided at the end of the Agenda. \*\***

10:30 a.m. 1. Call to Order  
*Commissioner Charlotte Garrido, Chair*

### REGULAR BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS

10:31 a.m. 2. Approval of March 2, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes  
*Commissioner Charlotte Garrido, Chair* *Page 4*

10:32 a.m. 3. Approval of March 31, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes  
*Commissioner Charlotte Garrido, Chair* *Page 11*

10:33 a.m. 4. Approval of Consent Items and Contract Updates  
*Commissioner Charlotte Garrido, Chair* *External Document*

### INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

10:34 a.m. 5. Chair Comments  
*Commissioner Charlotte Garrido, Chair*

10:36 a.m. 6. Public Comment – PLEASE SEE NOTES AT END OF AGENDA  
*Commissioner Charlotte Garrido, Chair*

10:46 a.m. 7. Health Officer and Administrator Reports  
*Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer & Keith Grellner, Administrator*

10:51 a.m. 8. COVID-19 Update  
*Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer*

11:06 a.m. 9. COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Work Status Update  
*Siri Kushner, Community Health Assistant Director*  
*Holly Bolstad, COVID Community Outreach Specialist*

11:16 a.m. 10. Draft Resolution 2021-01: Racism is a Public Health Crisis Page 13  
*Siri Kushner, Community Health Assistant Director*  
*Holly Bolstad, COVID Community Outreach Specialist*

11:45 a.m. 11. Adjourn

*All times are approximate. Board meeting materials are available online at*  
[www.kitsappublichealth.org/about/board-meetings.php](http://www.kitsappublichealth.org/about/board-meetings.php)

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## Instructions for virtual attendance at Kitsap Public Health Board meetings\*\*

### Health Board Meetings Via Zoom

The Kitsap Public Health Board will be held via Zoom webinar, broadcast live on Comcast channel 12, WAVE channel 3, the [BKAT website](#) and Facebook (please note: there is no physical location for this meeting. Board members and staff will all participate remotely). The Health Board and presenters are **panelists**, members of the public are **attendees**.

Webinar **attendees** do not interact with one another; they join in listen-only mode, and the host will unmute one or more attendees as needed.

### How to Provide Public Comment

We apologize, but verbal public comment *during* the meeting may only be made through a Zoom connection. The public may make verbal comments during the Public Comment agenda item if they are attending the meeting via Zoom. To sign up for public comment in advance (recommended, not required), email: [angie.berger@kitsappublichealth.org](mailto:angie.berger@kitsappublichealth.org).

Written comments may be submitted *prior* to the meeting via regular mail or email to:

Regular Mail:

Kitsap Public Health Board  
Attention: Executive Secretary  
345 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300  
Bremerton, WA 98337

Email:

[keith.grellner@kitsappublichealth.org](mailto:keith.grellner@kitsappublichealth.org)

Written comments must be received by midnight, Monday, April 5, 2021, to be included during the April 6, 2021, meeting.

## Instructions for virtual attendance at Kitsap Public Health Board meetings\*\*

### How to Join the Zoom Meeting

To join the meeting online, please click the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86186052497?pwd=TXcrQU1PRWVvVHgyWERXRFluTWloQT09>

**Password:** 109118

**Or join by telephone:**

Dial: +1 (253) 215-8782

**Webinar ID:** 861 8605 2497

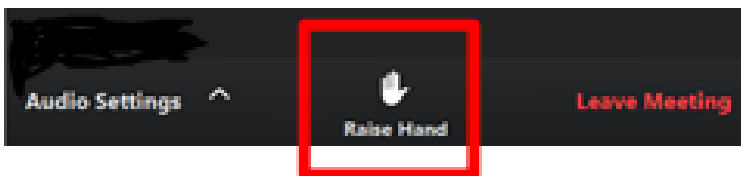
\*Zoom meeting is limited to the first 500 participants. A recording of the meeting will be made available on our website within 48 hours of the meeting.

### Public Participation Guidelines

Below are recommendations for use by members of the public in meetings conducted via Zoom Webinar.

**Identification:** Upon entering the webinar, please enter your name, number or other chosen identifier, so that the host can call upon you during the public comment period.

**Raise Hand (pictured below):** You have the ability to virtually raise your hand for the duration of the meeting but you will not be acknowledged until you are called on during the public comment period. NOTE: If you have used your telephone to access the Zoom meeting, **you may press \*9** to “raise your hand”. The host will unmute you when it is your turn to speak.



**Public Comment Period:** Use “Raise Hand” to be called upon by the host. The host will announce your name when it is your turn.

**Mute/Unmute:** Attendees will be muted and not audible to the Board except during times they are designated to speak. When you are announced, you will be able to unmute yourself.

**Time Limit:** Each speaker testifying or providing public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes.

**Use Headphones/Mic** for better sound quality and less background noise, if possible.

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
Regular Meeting  
March 2, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Commissioner Charlotte Garrido at 10:31 a.m.

**REVIEW AND APPROVE AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Rob Gelder moved and Mayor Rob Putaansuu seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the February 2, 2021, regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The March consent agenda included the following contracts:

- 2116 Amendment 1 (2140), *Kitsap County, CARES Relief Funding*
- 2143, *Spectra Labs, Kitsap LLC, PIC Lab Analysis*

Mayor Putaansuu moved and Mayor Becky Erickson seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda, including the Contracts Update and Warrant and Electronic Funds Transfer Registers. The motion was approved unanimously.

**CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Garrido said we are living in extraordinary times, have learned a lot and have more to learn ahead of us.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Cynthia Bellas works with Dr. Michael Mina's rapid test group. She has been working to get rapid tests more available to our community, especially as in-person education has begun again. She said the Washington State Department of Health issued a news release that noted high frequency diagnostic screening of asymptomatic students, teachers and staff can reduce the introduction rate by up to 50% for COVID-19 infection. She said she is aware of the CARES act funding deadline extension and said she is pleading with the Health Board to introduce these rapid tests into this community. She said she is working on structures to help distribute these tests and is also fundraising for tests through GoFundMe. Ms. Bellas said she looks forward to partnering with the Health District to keep our community safe.

Nancy Langwith commended the Health District on its vaccine data dashboard online. Next, she noted that the Health District reposted a DOH Facebook post, the contents of which she found concerning. She quoted the post: "Remember! You are still vulnerable to COVID-19 even after getting your vaccination. The first dose gives you some immunity but the second dose boosts

immunity to 95%. That means there is still some risk of getting COVID-19. That is why it is important to keep wearing a mask, keep a distance of 6-feet and avoid gathering.” She said she understands that there is a message to be delivered. She feels this message could be better communicated in a way that doesn’t generate fear and confusion.

An additional comment was received via email from Mark Libby regarding the need for increased vaccination availability in north Kitsap.

There were no further comments.

## **HEALTH OFFICER/ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT**

### Health Officer Update:

Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer, introduced Kari Hunter, Assessment and Epidemiology program manager. Ms. Hunter provided a virtual tour of the COVID-19 data dashboard on the Health District website. She focused on the daily surveillance report and school metrics, which are updated daily.

### Administrator Update:

Mr. Keith Grellner, Administrator, thanked partners and the community for helping us get through this pandemic over the last year. He said that, for the first time since October, COVID-19 case rates are decreasing in Kitsap County. He said the community vaccine clinic in Bremerton is open this week despite vaccine shortages. The community vaccination clinic was allocated about 2,700 first doses this week.

Additionally, he provided a brief update on the bill Gov. Inslee signed in February passing \$2.2 billion in federal COVID-19 aid targeted toward schools, rental assistance and primarily vaccine aid. Of the \$2.2 billion, \$714 million is dedicated for K-12 schools; \$618 million is dedicated for public health programs to continue case investigations, epidemiology, case tracking work, and vaccine work; \$365 million is for rental assistance; \$240 million is for small business assistance; \$65 million is for immigrant assistance for loss of jobs; \$50 million is for childcare assistance; and \$26 million is for assistance to local food banks. He noted that most of these funds have not been contracted yet. The District is expecting it’s contract this month. Kitsap Public Health is expecting \$4.4 million for vaccine work. If the contract arrives in the middle of the month, Keith will reach out to chair and vice chair for emergency approval.

Mr. Grellner the District plans to use those funds to stand up additional vaccination sites around Kitsap County. Health District staff are working with the Kitsap County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to visit numerous sites in north and south Kitsap to find sites for additional high throughput community vaccination sites. The District is working on agreements for sites in north and south Kitsap. The District also plans to share some of these vaccine funds with the EOC and county emergency medical services (EMS). EMS help operate the monitoring room at the Bremerton community vaccination site. EMS are also working with the City of Poulsbo and pharmacies on vaccine distribution in Poulsbo.

Mr. Grellner said the demand for vaccine is currently higher than supply and DOH has indicated that local agencies will receive less vaccine than requested for the next several weeks.

Mr. Grellner said additional funds will go to vaccine equity work. Will identify gaps in vaccine administration to the community. Additionally, he said the Health District plans to use some of the funding to help local healthcare providers with pop up vaccine clinics.

Next, Mr. Grellner provided a legislative update:

- **HB 1152**, Gov. Inslee's proposal to dismantle the current local health structure and begin work to create regionalized models. Kitsap Public Health, the Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPH)) and Association of Washington Counties (AWC) all have concerns and are opposed to the bill. The bill is heading to house floor but there is no date yet for consideration. Mr. Grellner urged board members to talk to lobbyists and oppose the bill. He said the Health District is especially concerned about the restructuring of local health jurisdictions.
- **Substitute SB 5149 and SB 5371**, relating to foundational public health services are both still alive and heading to the senate and house floors soon. Kitsap Public Health supports these bills.
- **HB 1258**, calling for the state Department of Health to begin a pilot program to allow for microenterprise home kitchen operations. Kitsap Public Health remains opposed.

There were no further comments.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Dr. Morrow reviewed some events and trends of COVID-19 over the past year. This month marks the one-year anniversary of the first COVID-19 case in Kitsap County. He reminded the Board of the high transmissibility of COVID-19 and the lasting effects it can have on those who become infected with it.

Since the introduction of COVID-19 to Kitsap County last year, there have been 5,720 confirmed cases (the actual number is likely significantly higher, because not everyone got tested). Hospitalizations peaked in mid-January but are now declining. Last week, the 7-day average of COVID-19 hospitalizations in Kitsap was 14 people each day. Sadly, 84 Kitsap County residents have died from COVID-19. Deaths occurred in people in all decades of life above age thirty, though most were in their 80s.

Dr. Morrow said COVID-19 has hit some communities and individuals harder than others. In Kitsap, Black people are 1.5 times more likely to get COVID-19 than white people. Latinx and Pacific Islanders are 4 times more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19, and 5 times more likely to be hospitalized than white people. Native Americans and Pacific Islanders have increased rates of fatality from COVID-19. Early data shows minority groups may also endure more of the collateral damage such as loss of jobs, housing, health insurance and education. Early data also shows that COVID-19 immunizations of Black and Hispanic people in Kitsap are falling behind other groups. Kitsap Public Health aims to ensure that access to vaccination is equitable across geographic, socioeconomic, and racial groups.

Lastly, Dr. Morrow noted that the UK variant has been detected in Washington and said variants are more likely to show up in areas of increased case rates.

Commissioner Ed Wolfe said this has been a textbook example of how communities come together in times of need. He hasn't heard from a single COVID-19 volunteer who hasn't thanked the Health District or Department of Emergency Management for allowing them to participate and help.

Deputy Mayor Kirsten Hytopoulos asked Dr. Morrow to address the public comment regarding vaccine messaging. Dr. Morrow said he appreciates Ms. Langwith's comment and explained that it is still possible to carry and spread COVID-19 once vaccinated. He is confident that when a higher percentage of our population are immunized, we can begin to loosen some of the precautions. The vaccine works best when more people are immunized. He said regardless of vaccination status, please do your part to keep our community transmission down.

Commissioner Garrido thanked Dr. Morrow for his remarks.

There were no further comments.

### **COVID-19 HEALTH EQUITY PRESENTATION**

Dr. Morrow introduced Siri Kushner, Assistant Community Health Director, who shared a presentation on Health Equity and COVID-19.

Ms. Kushner said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines health equity as: when everyone has the opportunity to be as healthy as possible. She said long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put many groups at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19.

Individuals in Kitsap County have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Ms. Kushner said Bremerton, central and south Kitsap have experienced the highest rates of positive cases in the county. Individuals between the ages of 20 and 59 have experienced the highest rates, which tends to align with the age of the working population. Additionally, she said our American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black, Hispanic/Latino and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander populations have experienced disproportionate cases of COVID-19.

Kitsap Public Health District has convened a Kitsap Vaccine Equity Collaborative to address these inequities and ensure equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccine. This group is a collaborative of community organizations, residents, and health care providers that have an understanding of communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to help inform and improve equity in local vaccination efforts. The collaborative is chaired by Tracy Flood of the Bremerton NAACP. Kitsap Public Health's community liaison, Holly Bolstad, provides staff support to the collaborative.

The goal of the collaborative is to ensure vaccine distribution is prioritized in the communities most impacted by COVID-19: people at higher risk of exposure at work; people at higher risk for severe illness due to age, people more impacted due to access barriers, people at risk due to their living situation; and people more impacted due to systemic inequities and racism.

Vaccine providers are asked to use the following vaccine delivery models to address inequities:

- Focus on highest risk and most impacted
- Work with community for input on planning and communication
- Make registration easy
- Provide diversity in appointment days/hours
- Address transportation and mobility barriers
- Ensure language access

Ms. Kushner shared actions the Health District is taking to reach these goals as well as challenges for these individuals to access vaccines.

Commissioner Gelder asked what the delay for data on doses from the state system is. Ms. Kushner explained that the state requirement is for providers to input into the state reporting system within 24 hours. We get databases from the state once per week. She said the Navy and Tribes receive some of their vaccines from federal distributions, and those doses are not included in our data, as they are reported into federal systems.

Ms. Kushner said Kitsap County has done a phenomenal job of coming together to get through this pandemic.

Mr. Grellner gave an update on the vaccine plans in Kitsap County. He explained that this is incredibly complex. Kitsap Public Health is working to support enrolled vaccine providers; bridge the state plan with local plans established over the last 20 years; provide community-based high throughput clinic to assist enrolled vaccine providers with high demand and help get large numbers vaccinated in a short period of time with sporadic vaccine allocations; establish expansion plans for when vaccine allocations increase and become consistent; and track and analyze vaccination of Kitsap's "phases", identify gaps, and plan to address the gaps.

With the addition of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, Kitsap is expecting a larger flow of vaccine to the county by the end of March.

Deputy Mayor Hytopoulos said she received a question from an essential employee requesting an update for the plan to vaccinate grocery workers and if public health plans to work with unions for vaccine distribution and outreach to these groups. Dr. Morrow said grocery workers are in the next tier, Tier B2. He said the new federal pharmacy partnership program will send vaccine to local pharmacy chains. Many of these pharmacies are located inside grocery stores and may be willing to vaccinate their own employees, but there are still a lot of unknowns. He thanked Deputy Mayor Hytopoulos for her suggestion to work with unions for outreach.



Mayor Erickson thanked the Health District for their help with Poulsbo's pop up clinics. She said she would like to have a conversation about where the mass vaccination site in north Kitsap will be. She asked if the numbers Ms. Kushner shared, include private sector pharmacies, like Costco. Ms. Kushner said the data she shared includes any vaccine allocated through the state. Dr. Morrow said the Health District doesn't have data on the federal partnership programs like the program that delivered vaccine to pharmacies for skilled nursing facilities. However, he said at the end of the day, any place providing vaccine in Kitsap county, is ending up in the state database, even if it is delayed by its route of reporting.

There were no further comments.

## **ADJOURN**

There was no further business; the meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

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**Charlotte Garrido**  
**Kitsap Public Health Board**

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**Keith Grellner**  
**Administrator**

**Board Members Present:** *Deputy Mayor Kirsten Hytopoulos; Mayor Becky Erickson; Commissioner Charlotte Garrido; Commissioner Robert Gelder; Mayor Robert Putaansuu; Mayor Greg Wheeler; Commissioner Ed Wolfe.*

**Board Members Absent:** *None.*

**Community Members Present:** *See Attached.*

**Staff Present:** *Leslie Banigan, Senior Environmental Health Specialist, Water Pollution Identification and Correction; Angie Berger, Administrative Assistant, Administration; April Fisk, Program Coordinator, Contracts Manager, Public Records & Safety Officer, MAC, Administration; Keith Grellner, Administrator; Jill Guerrero, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Grant Holdcroft, Program Manager, Pollution Identification and Correction; Karen Holt, Program Manager, Human Resources; Kari Hunter, Manager, Assessment and Epidemiology; Siri Kushner, Assistant Director, Community Health Division; Melissa Laird, Manager, Accounting and Finance; Megan Moore, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer.*

## Kitsap Public Health Board Meeting (Virtual Attendance)

**Webinar ID**      **Actual Start Time**  
861 8605 2497      2/2/2021 11:43

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Leslie	Banigan	Gib	Morrow
Cynthia	Bellas	Irene	Moyer
Alexa	Clark	Lisa	Neal
John	Clauson	Abby	Phenix
Judi	Edwards	Katharine	Shaffer
Keith	Grellner	Stacey	Smith
Jill	Guerrero	Angie	Smith
Merrioy	Hance	Michael	Spencer
Fredric	Hoffer	Helen	Stoll
Grand	Holdcroft	Kathy	VanYe
Karen	Holt	Susan	Wilmot
Kari	Hunter	Kiro Radio	
Debra	Hyre		
Richard	Kirton		
Siri	Kushner		
Melissa	Laird		
Nancy	Langwith		
Lesley	Leahy		
Monte	Levine		
Mark	Libby		
Austen	Macalus		
Franklyn	MacKenzie		
Fran	Miller		
Ruth	Miller		
Michelle	Moen		
Megan	Moore		

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
Special Meeting  
March 31, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Commissioner Garrido at 1:05 p.m.

**ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

Mr. Keith Grellner, Administrator, provided the Board with two brief updates on COVID-19 in Kitsap:

1. Washington State has entered Phase 3 of the Governor's Roadmap to Recovery The next evaluation report for our county is due on April 12. The state's target metric for case rate per 100,000 is < 200 cases. As of right now, our case rate has increased from 62 to 85 cases per 100 thousand residents. A majority of the cases reported to Kitsap Public Health are related to gatherings. Mr. Grellner reminded the public to stay vigilant, stay home if ill, wear a mask in public especially when inside structure other than your own home, and social distancing and avoid large gatherings, especially now that at least one of the variants has been confirmed in Kitsap.
2. At the regular Health Board meeting next week, Health District staff will bring a draft resolution to the Board regarding racism as a public health crisis. The Health District issued an open letter to the public on this topic last summer following the murder of George Floyd. Health District staff are working with the Kitsap County Vaccine Equity Collaborative and our tribal neighbors to develop the resolution. The collaborative has emphasized the need for a resolution like this to assist with their efforts in vaccinating disparate communities.

Commissioner Garrido asked how much feedback the Health District is receiving from its outreach about racism. Mr. Grellner said the Health District is receiving a lot of good feedback. He said the draft resolution has been shared with the Vaccine Equity Collaborative and Kitsap tribes. Lastly, he noted the importance of giving Kitsap's communities of color ample time to provide input on and inform this resolution.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO RCW 42.30.110 (1)(G): DISCUSSION TO REVIEW THE PERFORMANCE OF A PUBLIC EMPLOYEE**

At 1:14 p.m., Commissioner Garrido announced that the Board would exit for Executive Session for the remainder of the meeting and would not return. No decisions were made.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO RCW 42.30.110 (1)(I): DISCUSSION RELATED TO POTENTIAL LITIGATION**

At 1:30 p.m., Commissioner Garrido began the second Executive Session. No decisions were made.

**ADJOURN**

There was no further business; the meeting adjourned at 1:41 p.m.

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**Charlotte Garrido**  
**Kitsap Public Health Board**

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**Keith Grellner**  
**Administrator**

**Board Members Present:** *Mayor* Becky Erickson; *Commissioner* Charlotte Garrido; *Commissioner* Robert Gelder; *Mayor* Robert Putaansuu; *Mayor* Greg Wheeler; *Commissioner* Ed Wolfe.

**Board Members Absent:** *Deputy Mayor* Kirsten Hytopoulos.

**Community Members Present:** Michelle Fossum, *Sayre Sayre & Fossum*; Stacey Smith, *Self*.

**Staff Present:** Angie Berger, *Administrative Assistant, Administration*; Keith Grellner, *Administrator*; Karen Holt, *Program Manager, Human Resources*.

DRAFT

# MEMO

**To:** Kitsap Public Health Board

**From:** Keith Grellner, Administrator

**Date:** April 6, 2021

**Re:** Racism is a Public Health Crisis

The purpose of today's presentation is to review and discuss a draft resolution for the Health Board's consideration: *Racism is a Public Health Crisis*. Attached, please find a draft of this resolution for your review and comment.

With the beginning of the [murder trial](#) for George Floyd's killer, and the recent [Atlanta area killings](#) that resulted in the deaths of six Asian-American women, America's issues with racism have been raised to the forefront yet again.

After the murder of George Floyd in mid-2020, the executive leadership team of the Health District wrote an open letter to our community. Following that letter, several local organizations issued calls-to-action to decry racism as a public health crisis, including but not limited to the YWCA, YMCA, Kitsap ERACE Coalition, Kitsap Strong, etc. Since that time, many governmental organizations throughout the United States have [adopted resolutions](#) to declare racism as a public health crisis.

The YWCA and members of the Health District's "COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Collaborative" have recently renewed their call-to-action for the Health District and Kitsap Public Health Board to formally declare racism as a public health crisis. The Health District has heard the call, and strongly recommends the Health Board to consider formally adopting a resolution to declare racism a public health crisis.

An initial draft of the resolution was shared with the COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Collaborative and the Suquamish and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes on March 26. Community input was reviewed and discussed at the Health Board Policy Committee meeting on March 31. The draft resolution to be discussed today includes revisions based on community and Policy Committee input.

Memo re: Racism is a Public Health Crisis

April 6, 2021

Page 2

A resource for review and potential tools for the District to adopt and implement is noted in the draft resolution, The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)

<https://www.racialequityalliance.org/>.

During today's meeting, we will have our employee leads for this effort, Siri Kushner and Holly Bolstad, present the draft resolution.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact Dr. Morrow at

[gib.morrow@kitsappublichealth.org](mailto:gib.morrow@kitsappublichealth.org) , or (360) 728-2260 or me at

[keith.grellner@kitsappublichealth.org](mailto:keith.grellner@kitsappublichealth.org) or (360) 728-2284.

## Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis

**WHEREAS**, modern day discrimination harms all individuals and communities including but not limited to social categories defined by class, gender, ability and race; and

**WHEREAS**, these social categories do not stand alone but instead are overlapping and interconnected amplifying discrimination or disadvantage; and

**WHEREAS**, racism divides humans into distinct groups based on inherent physical traits --- primarily, but not limited to, skin color and/or geographical origins among people of a shared ancestry; and

**WHEREAS**, racism creates or provides unfair disadvantages to some individuals and communities and conversely unfair advantages to other individuals or communities; and

**WHEREAS**, People of Color (“POC”) in the United States of America have disproportionately suffered and continue to experience disadvantages and acts of hostility because of their race, or how they look, as compared to white people; and

**WHEREAS**, the mission statement of the Kitsap Public Health District is to prevent disease and promote the health of all persons in Kitsap County. One of our guiding principles is we believe all Kitsap residents should have an equal opportunity to live healthy and safe lives and this includes addressing issues and health outcomes due to race; and

**WHEREAS**, by maintaining the status quo and existing systems of power and white privilege based on our country’s long history of and continued persistence of inequities, institutional policies and practices do not need to be explicitly racist in order to have racist impacts on residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on our POC communities and the continued violence against POC individuals and communities (recent attacks on Asian Americans and Asian immigrants, in particular) are present-day demonstration of the systemic racism in institutions that have not valued and supported human life equitably; and

**WHEREAS**, Kitsap County public health data demonstrate persistent differences across multiple key indicators, including:

- Socioeconomic status – median household income for American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx and Multi-racial households is at least \$10,000 below that of White, Non-Hispanics;
- Education – high school graduation rates are at least 5 percentage points lower for Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students compared to White, Non-Hispanics; the percentage of students entering kindergarten ready to learn is at least 10 percentage points lower for Non-White and Hispanic/Latinx children compared to White, Non-Hispanics; and
- Health care access – approximately 7 of 10 Hispanic/Latina and Black/African American pregnant women access prenatal care in the first trimester compared to about 8 out of 10 White-Non-Hispanics; and
- Health outcomes – infant mortality is 1.8 times higher amongst non-white babies compared to White, Non-Hispanic babies and life expectancy for Black Non-Hispanics is 5 years lower than White Non-Hispanics; and

**WHEREAS**, the current COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated racial disparities within Kitsap County's communities of color. COVID-19 infections have been more prevalent amongst communities of color, 36% of cases, and more severe, 40% of hospitalizations, while communities of color make up 25% of the total Kitsap population. Compared to Whites, COVID-19 vaccination initiation rates are lower amongst Asians, Black/African Americans, and Hispanic/Latinx; and

**WHEREAS**, Kitsap Public Health District has expressed a commitment to developing stronger and better resourced partnerships with community organizations and leaders to disrupt and dismantle racism and protect the health and well-being of our residents of color, using quantitative data about racial inequities, along with voices and knowledge of community leaders and residents to get to solutions that work and that are sustainable; and

**WHEREAS**, Kitsap Public Health District recognizes the historical perpetuation of structural racism and as an institution the Board of Health stands in support of dismantling oppressive systems that contribute to racial inequities:

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Kitsap Public Health Board-declares racism a public health crisis and commits to a course of action that reduces, and ultimately eliminates, health disparities so that optimal health for all is possible and race no longer predicts health outcomes. The Board supports the Kitsap Public Health District immediately in the work



to advance a public health approach in addressing institutional and systemic racism; including but not limited to:

- Ongoing review of existing policies and procedures to address and reform structures and processes that contribute to race based decisions and actions.
- Ongoing review of programs and services through a racial justice and equity lens, using tools such as those developed by the Government Alliance for Race and Equity, to identify and implement changes to ensure equity within programs regardless of race. Programs will be encouraged to include activities that address equity into their yearly workplans.
- A continued commitment to apply strategies for recruiting and hiring a workforce that reflects the demographic, cultural and linguistic characteristics of the populations it serves.
- An all-staff professional development program that includes training on core competencies in health equity, cultural competency, and anti-racism.
- Establishing an internal equity committee, consisting of staff from all Kitsap Public Health District divisions, whose primary purpose will be to make recommendations regarding and help facilitate implementation of equity plans and activities.
- Sustaining a Community Liaison staff position with a focus on equity, who will be dedicated to conducting outreach to, and receiving feedback from, POC and other communities facing health inequities.
- Partnering with community to co-create solutions to address structural inequities.
- Promoting policy and system level changes within Kitsap County to move beyond equity only and undo racist structures.

**APPROVED:** April XX, 2021

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Commissioner Charlotte Garrido, Chair  
Kitsap Public Health Board

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD  
MEETING SUMMARY  
Policy Committee  
March 31, 2021**

**Board Members Attended:** *Mayor* Becky Erickson, *Commissioner* Robert Gelder,  
*Mayor* Robert Putaansuu

**Staff Attended:** Dr. Gib Morrow, Keith Grellner, Siri Kushner, Holly Bolstad, Angie Berger

**SUMMARY**

The meeting began at 2:03 p.m.

Mr. Grellner explained the purpose of this meeting is to discuss a draft resolution entitled “Racism is a Public Health Crisis.”

Kitsap Public Health has been working with the YWCA on a racism resolution since summer of 2020. On June 6, 2020, the Health District released an open letter to the community in response to the death of George Floyd and systemic racism. The Health District wants to be inclusive of our communities of color and especially our tribal communities.

Siri Kushner and Holly Bolstad, Health District staff participating in the Kitsap County Vaccine Equity Collaborative, presented the resolution and led discussion.

This resolution was introduced to the collaborative last week to collect feedback. Ms. Bolstad shared some of the feedback received and noted that community members requested more time to provide feedback, so the Board may want to wait to take action on this until more feedback has been received.

KPHD has also initiated working with staff at the Suquamish and Port Gamble S’Klallam tribes, and Commissioner Gelder has initiated work with tribal leadership for the development of the resolution.

The Policy Committee recommended:

- The community have more time to provide feedback.
- Some changes be made to the current draft, which staff will complete prior to the April 6, 2021 Board meeting.
- The Health District consider compiling an annual report on disparities in Kitsap County at baseline and looking for trends over time as this work continues.

Board members noted that they can commit to this individually but not on behalf of their jurisdictions, if their jurisdictions have not formally adopted similar policies.

Ms. Bolstad thanked the Board for their time and considering this resolution. She said this is important for our community.

Kitsap Public Health Board – Policy Committee

March 31, 2021

Page 2

The Health District will use the Policy Committee’s feedback to create an updated draft for the full Board meeting on Tuesday, April 6.

The meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.