

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
Special Meeting  
June 19, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Mayor Rob Putaansuu at 9:02 a.m.

**REVIEW AND APPROVE AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Charlotte Garrido moved and Commissioner Rob Gelder seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the May 22 and May 27, 2020, special meetings. The motion was approved unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The June 19, 2020 consent agenda included the following contracts:

- 1749 Amendment 15 (2076), *Washington State Department of Health, Consolidated Contract*
- 2081, *Hood Canal Coordinating Council, Hood Canal Regional PIC*
- 2083, *Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Summer Food Inspections*

Commissioner Ed Wolfe moved and Commissioner Garrido 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**

Mayor Putaansuu said he appreciates the hard work and sacrifice of Kitsap Residents during this time. He said he is thrilled to potentially welcome back more businesses and community gatherings. He noted that, as we move to Phase 3, he is concerned about an increase in COVID-19 cases in Kitsap County and said we all know our work to stop the spread of the virus is far from over.

**HEALTH OFFICER/ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Health Officer Update:

Dr. Susan Turner, Health Officer, explained that she is wearing a mask because she is in a room with two other people for this meeting, and it is strongly recommended by the Department of Labor and Industries that individuals wear a mask in a shared work space.

Dr. Turner reminded the Board that COVID-19, a novel coronavirus, appeared a few months ago and much is still unknown about this new virus. There is still no vaccine or treatment for

COVID-19. She urged everyone to pay close attention to public health experts. She noted that there is a lot of research occurring around COVID-19 but warned of research that has not yet been peer reviewed.

Infection rates in Kitsap remain low but have been increasing. Dr. Turner noted that some cases are associated with travel, however most cases have no identified source. Positive cases were found when testing symptomatic individuals.

Dr. Turner said an increase in services and gatherings in Phase 3 will bring an increase in infection rates, hospitalizations and possibly death. She said the Kitsap community and healthcare feel prepared to handle this.

After moving to Phase 2, she said, Kitsap has seen an increase of two to four cases per day. She said Kitsap residents and businesses appear to be taking COVID-19 seriously.

She said that more than 3 weeks are needed in each phase to collect and analyze data and see changes. Dr. Turner noted the Health District may request longer than 3 weeks before applying for Phase 4 to have time to analyze data.

At this time, Dr. Turner said she and Kitsap Public Health District support moving to Phase 3.

There was no further comment.

#### Administrator Update:

Mr. Keith Grellner, Administrator, said he agrees with Dr. Turner's comments. As she noted, there has been an increase in cases. He said that while the increase is not troubling in volume, there is an increase in work. He noted that this application was time consuming and challenging. He applauds the Kitsap Public Health District Staff for the heavy lifting, getting this application ready for submittal. He recognized Dr. Turner, Siri Kushner, Yolanda Fong, John Kiess, Eric Evans, Kari Hunter and the epidemiology staff, Angie Berger and Melissa Laird.

He said the Health District accepted public comment about support moving to Phase 3 through an online collection site and has received over 2,300 responses with the following results: 60% in favor, 30% opposed, 10% unsure. He said it is clear the public is tracking this issue and remains aware of the situation.

There was no further comment.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Monica Wood, a local physician and surgeon provided comment. Ms. Wood said she has done a lot of research and review of data. She says masks do not work. She insists, moving forward, that we don't make masks mandatory. She says, in her opinion, masks cause people to touch their faces more, create overconfidence, and masks are a waste of resources. Instead of masks, she said there should be an emphasis on handwashing. Of all the information being shared about

COVID-19, she doesn't see as much information about severity of illness. She said a lot of people have very mild symptoms similar to a cold. For the rest of the population to be subjected to strict regulation has been damaging to the economy and has caused other problems to the population. She said she is in favor of moving to Phase 3.

Shannon Beddo, resident of Kingston, said the entire purpose of the lockdown was to flatten the curve so that hospitals are not overrun. She said our hospitals are not overrun and there is no reason to delay moving forward to Phase 3 or 4. She said she agrees with Dr. Wood; she is opposed to wearing masks in public. Research she has read shows they don't work and are damaging to the wearer's health. She said she is in favor of moving forward to the next phase with no masks. She said good government is government that governs the least and allows the most freedom for its citizens.

Harvey Wolff, thanked the Board for their hard work, research on COVID-19 and communication to the public. Mr. Wolff said he is a small restaurant owner in Bainbridge Island. He said his restaurant has patrons that come directly from airports and out of state travel. He said he is highly concerned moving to Phase 3 with new contradictory information for masks. He said he would like a reassessment for restaurants and supply change models such as dine in versus takeout. He noted that models can be changed and amended, but we need to be certain about the rules and regulations for restaurants, small spaces and for businesses that are destination travel locations. He said, as a small business, he wishes to thrive and grow and support the community as much as possible.

Mike Sharp, resident of Bainbridge Island, provided comment. Mr. Sharp said there is always a risk, without a vaccine, that cases are going to rise. He also noted that we are testing more people and is curious how that may skew the statistics. He said he worries about all the struggling businesses and the people who might not be able to feed their children, etc. He said another week of lock down might put someone out of business. He said it is important to balance the risk. He said he support moving to Phase 3.

Kelsey Hammon is a resident of Silverdale. She said her major concern moving to Phase 3 is that people are not taking this seriously. She noted, as other commenters have stated, many people don't believe in masks or the severity of the virus. She says this is selfish. She said she is type 1 diabetic and worries about her own health and the health of loved ones. Ms. Hammon said she does not support moving to Phase 3.

Helen Owens said she would like to echo Ms. Hammon's comments. She is concerned people are not taking this seriously. She knows everyone is sick and tired of people being stuck at home. However, she advised everyone look at public health officials who are all very in favor of masks. She suggested a slow opening to Phase 3 to support businesses while also keeping people safe.

There were no further comments.

**RESOLUTION 2020-05, APPROVING THE RECOMMENDATION OF KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER TO REQUEST STATE SECRETARY OF HEALTH APPROVAL TO MOVE KITSAP COUNTY FROM PHASE 2 TO ALL PHASE 3 COMMUNITY MITIGATION STRATEGIES OF THE GOVERNOR'S "SAFE START" PLAN**

Mayor Putaansuu introduced this resolution.

Commissioner Gelder asked if current contact tracing is showing community spread, whereas previously the cause of illness spread seemed to be from sources outside Kitsap County. Dr. Turner said has seen a move away from identified out of county links, and many more cases cannot identify a source. She said travel is still a risk and a significant portion of cases have traveled out of state. However, the majority of cases do not have an identified source or travel history and therefore shows community spread.

Commissioner Gelder other counties are looking at what works best for them. In the potential to move to Phase 3, businesses are not forced to open. He said business owners will have greater flexibility to do what the feel is best and safest for their business and their employees.

Mayor Greg Wheeler said the data supports moving forward into Phase 3. He said he is concerned that some methods have been flawed and some research has arisen that do not support personal protective equipment (PPE) protocols. As mayor of a diverse city with the highest percentage of people of color, lower income workers, service industry jobs, and those who don't have access to health care, who are the statistically shown as the demographic most affected by this virus, he feels it is cavalier to pick studies that support moving forward while dismissing the disparities. He is only supporting moving forward because he believes his citizens are ready to step up and help these neighbors. He noted that many businesses have opened safely and some have not opened at all. He said he agrees that we need to move forward or backward as an entire county because our jurisdictions are too intertwined.

Commissioner Wolfe said he supports moving to Phase 3 and is optimistic that Kitsap County is on track to be approved for Phase 3 where small businesses will be able to further open up. He thanked the community and the Health District for keeping us on course. He noted, as he said at a previous Board meeting, one size does not fit all in regard to the counties in Washington state. He said Kitsap is a good example of this.

Mayor Becky Erickson thanked the Health District for putting this application together. She said there is conflicting data in scientific literature about masks. She asked Dr. Turner what her current guidance is on masks.

Dr. Turner explained one of the basic tenets of scientific research is that it requires scientific validation and peer review. She said this is not happening now and a few research articles do not meet these criteria and cannot invalidate the peer reviewed articles. She urged people to listen to public health officials. She said national and local public health agencies are researching and working together to review all the research and provide peer reviewed information. The Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Washington State Department of Health (DOH) recommend wearing masks when 6-feet of distance cannot be maintained. She emphasized there is strong scientific confidence in maintaining 6-foot distance for prevention of droplet spread. She said masks can be an additional layer of protection along with distance. She reminded the Board that some people cannot wear masks for health reasons and asks that people be compassionate of others if they are not wearing masks and focus on their own actions.

Mayor Erickson said she read in another article that the vaccine is still a long way out. She said we must structure our community to move forward in uncertain times. She said that is not to be dismissive of people who have or will die from COVID-19. She said she believes in taking the “middle pathway” by moving forward with conservative measures but being aware of adaptability and changes that need to occur along the way.

Mr. Grellner said Governor Inslee issued several proclamations which include wearing masks in certain situations. Labor and Industries (L&I) has a matrix that shows where and when masks should be worn in the workplace. He said Health District staff spoke with L&I last week and were informed that L&I plans to enforce mask rules for businesses.

Commissioner Garrido agreed that there is a need to talk about behaviors and approaches needed moving to Phase 3. She said the Board should take the responsibility of putting out additional information about how to remain safe during Phase 3. People should hear it repeatedly – this is a community responsibility.

Councilmember Kol Medina said he anticipates he will be the only one voting against this today. He said he agrees that it is the right move for the county, but not for his jurisdiction, Bainbridge Island, for many of the same concerns he mentioned during the move to Phase 2. He agreed with Mr. Sharp’s comment that balance will be important moving forward. Councilmember Medina said he is concerned that will enter a situation where the virus is a steady constant of our county. He said this could cause many people to fear going out in public or shopping at business, and in return, a slow decline in our economy. He said the move to Phase 3 is a shift away from government carrying this burden to individuals carrying the burden to lessen the spread. He said it is important to remember that Phase 3 does not mean the virus is gone and that moving to Phase 3 increases personal responsibility and also increases risk to infrastructure, service, and essential workers. Travel outside of Kitsap creates ongoing risk. He pleaded with Kitsap residents to do their part to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Mayor Putaansuu said he wholeheartedly agrees with Councilmember Medina about personal responsibility. He said it is imperative that we all practice proper hygiene and social distancing to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Commissioner Wolfe moved and Mayor Erickson seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2020-05, Approving the Recommendation of Kitsap Public Health Officer to Request State Secretary of Health Approval to Move Kitsap County from Phase 2 to All Phase 3 Mitigation Strategies of the Governor’s “Safe Start” Plan.

Mayors Erickson, Putaansuu and Wheeler, and Commissioners Garrido and Gelder and Wolfe, voted yea. Councilmember Medina voted nay. There were no abstentions. The motion was approved 6 to 1.

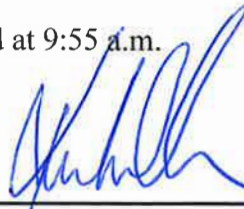
There was no further comment.

## ADJOURN

There was no further business; the meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.



**Robert Putaansuu**  
**Kitsap Public Health Board**



**Keith Grellner**  
**Administrator**

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

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

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

**Staff Present:** *Nancy Acosta, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, Parent Child Health; Amy Anderson, Public Health Educator, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response; Gus Bell, Public Health Nurse, Communicable Disease; Angie Berger, Administrative Assistant, Administration; Windie Borja, Secretary Clerk 2, Support Services; Deanna Eakes, Secretary Clerk 3, Support Services; Eric Evans, Program Manager, Drinking Water and Onsite Sewage; Yolanda Fong, Director, Community Health Division; Anna Gonzalez, Public Health Nurse, Communicable Disease; Keith Grellner, Administrator, Administration; Jessica Guidry; Program Manager, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response; Damarys Guzman, Permit Technician 1, Support Services; Rachel Hughes, Senior Secretary Clerk, Support Services; Kari Hunter, Manager, Assessment and Epidemiology; Krista Johanson, Secretary Clerk 2, Support Services; Dayna Katula, Manager, Food and Living Environment; Lyndsey Kellum, Community Liaison; Chronic Disease Prevention; Melissa Laird, Manager, Accounting and Finance; Anne Moen, Public Health Educator, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response; Kaela Moontree, Social Worker 1, HIV Case Management; Gregoria Noble, Environmental Health Technician 2, Drinking Water and Onsite Sewage Systems; Carin Onarheim, Disease Intervention Specialist, Communicable Disease; Linda Pandino, Accounting Assistant 2, Accounts Receivable; Beth Phipps, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, Communicable Disease; Debbie Rassa, Public Health Nurse, Communicable Disease; Sue Rhea, Senior Secretary Clerk, Support Services; Betti Ridge, Social Worker 3, Communicable Disease; Kelsey Stedman, Public Health Nurse, Kitsap Connect; Barbara Steusloff, Environmental Health Specialist, Solid and Hazardous Waste; Layken Winchester; Environmental Health Specialist, Food & Living Environment.*