

**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.



Charlotte Garrido
Kitsap Public Health Board



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

First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name
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		