

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
September 7, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair, Mayor Greg Wheeler, at 12:30 p.m.

REVIEW AND APPROVE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Ed Wolfe moved and Commissioner Robert Gelder seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the July 6, 2021, regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The September consent agenda included the following contracts:

- 1749 Amendment 23 (2198), *Washington Department of Health, Consolidated Contract*
- 2170 Amendment 1 (2199), *Peninsula Community Health Services, Covid-19 Mass Vaccination Plan*
- 2178 Amendment 1 (2200), *Kitsap County (KCDEM), Covid-19 Mass Vaccination Plan*
- 2197, *Washington State Department of Ecology, Solid Waste Management Local Solid Waste Financial Assistance Agreement*
- 2201, *Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Food Worker Cards*
- 1749 Amendment 22 (2188), *Washington Department of Health, Consolidated Contract*
- 2185, *Jefferson County Public Health, Nurse Family Partnership Supervisor*
- 2190, *Washington State Department of Ecology, Local Source Control*
- 2191, *State of Washington Department of Ecology, Interagency Agreement*

Commissioner Gelder moved, and Deputy Mayor Kristen Hytopoulos 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 COMMENT

Vice Chair Wheeler commented that we had a good Labor Day with lots of safety precautions in place. He noted that everyone will continue to monitor the data closely to know where we are in the future.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Nate Murphy from the Admiral Theater spoke and thanked Dr. Morrow and Kitsap Public Health District for the invite to participate in this discussion. The Admiral Theater Board of Directors made the decision to require either proof of a Covid-19 vaccination or a negative Covid-19 test to be admitted to all events at the theater. Masks are required for all patrons except

when actively eating or drinking. This policy is in affect through December, the theater will continue to monitor the situation, in coordination with local and state health officials, and re-assess their policy in October. Their top priority is the health and safety of the theater's staff, volunteers, patrons and the community. This decision was made to help the theater doors stay open after a 15-month closure. The closure resulted in the Admiral Theater laying off most of their staff and a significant revenue loss. The theater has continued to engage with patrons and are happy to report that most people understand and appreciate these precautions are in place to protect everyone. Policy details are available on their website:

<https://www.admiraltheatre.org/covid>

Mike Szymansky spoke regarding the Health District's resolution Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis (Resolution 2021-1). Following the Kitsap Public Health District's resolution Mr. Szymansky put in a Freedom of Information Act request to Kitsap County to find objective documentation of racism and bigotry by county staff and residents within our county. He said Kitsap County's answer was that there were no instances identified on record. After explaining the critical race theory to the board, he said he objects to the institutionalization of racism anywhere within our county government, which includes labeling entire groups as oppressor or oppressed. Mr. Szymansky asked the Health District what proof it had to support their resolution. He quoted data about disparities among people of color in Kitsap by median household income, graduation rates, kindergarten enrollment and said none of these things are related to health. He asked that the Health District either consider a revision or revoke the resolution and focus on health issues, saying "if it doesn't require an injection, prescription, or medical issue the Health Department should leave this alone".

Mr. Matt Murphy commented on the Jefferson and Clallam County mandates regarding proof of vaccination to enter restaurants and bars. Mr. Murphy hopes that a lot of thought would go into the same decision before it's made in Kitsap County and if that decision was made, he would like to see the science that is behind the decision. Mr. Murphy said Washington State Department of Health stats did not support this type of move on the counties' part and he was concerned that it could create a hostile work environment for those checking for vaccination and negative COVID-19 tests. He would like to see the daily COVID-19 updates come back and be accessible.

Mr. Keith Grellner, Administrator, commented on the daily numbers from the Public Health District for Mr. Murphy. He said the Emergency Operations Center sends out COVID-19 update emails and text once or twice a week. He also noted that the Kitsap Public Health District website is updated with data daily or weekly depending on the chart. Case counts are updated daily.

HEALTH OFFICER/ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Health Officer Update:

Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer, provided the Board with information regarding an event that occurred last week. August 31st of each year is Overdose Awareness Day. Last week Health District staff member Ms. Kayla Moontree and community member Monte Levine hosted an

event at Evergreen Park to destigmatize overdose. Recently the news reports that six casual drug users died from drugs laced with fentanyl. Dr. Morrow let the health board know that Ms. Moontree would be speaking at a board meeting in the future with more updates.

There was no further comment.

Administrator Update:

Mr. Keith Grellner, Administrator reiterated appreciation for all the agencies and individuals who are doing all they can by getting vaccinated, wearing face masks, staying distanced, staying home, and getting tested when ill. Thank you to the Kitsap Emergency Operations Center and Bainbridge Prepares for their support through this response.

Mr. Grellner noted that in the board packet there is a note of gratitude for Resolution 2021-1 Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis from Ellen Newberg thanking the Kitsap Public Health District for recognizing responsibility in this arena and continuing to do what is possible to make Kitsap County an oasis of civil rights, humanity, and equality for everyone. Mr. Grellner took this opportunity to let the board know that Ms. Jessica Guidry has accepted the roll of Equity Program Manager. She will attend the October board meeting to update everyone on how Kitsap Public Health is carrying out Resolution 2021-1.

Also in the packet, is an email from Heather Budd expressing concerns about school reopening and hospital capacity being stretched due to the current surge of COVID-19

Mr. Grellner informed the board that the Kitsap Public Health District will be participating in a volunteer cyber security audit by the Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO) checking for cyber security weaknesses in our information technology systems. This is at no cost to state and local governments. The audit will include penetration testing (real time security assessments) and IT security controls (reviewing policies, procedures, and implementation). The Health District's tentative start date for this audit is in November 2021 and the estimated delivery date of the final report will be mid-2022. There is a public hearing that must take place within 30 days of the release of the final report, details on this will be worked out later.

Mr. Grellner announced that the State Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) Committee came to an agreement on a funding plan. The legislature approved a total of 63 million in this plan, this was portioned out as follows: Local Jurisdictions (35) \$44.8 million (71%), State DOH \$12.6 million (18%), Tribes \$4.2 million (6.7%), State Board of Health \$620k (1%). Based on those allocations Kitsap Public Health District is earmarked \$1.3 million of the allocation that is earmarked for local health jurisdictions. These funds won't be released until the state Office of Financial Management approves the allocation plan by the Foundation of Public Health Steering Committee. Hopefully this will happen in the next several weeks. Mr. Grellner is hoping to have an update at the September 30 finance committee meeting along with an initial glimpse of the 2022 budget at the Health District's October 5th regular meeting.

The governor's office has begun the process of appointment members to the Washington State Public Health Advisory board that was established under E2SHB 1152. If you are interested in

applying for this advisory board, please let Mr. Grellner know, and he can connect you with the application.

Mr. Grellner reminded the board that at 1:30 today there is a closed session to discuss bargaining with the union.

There was no further comment.

POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATE ON E2SHB 1152, SUPPORTING MEASURES TO CREATE COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICTS

Mr. Grellner reminded the Board that E2SHB 1152 was signed into law in May of 2021. The Health Board assigned the board's Policy Committee with the task of reviewing the terms and conditions of the bill and to make recommendations to the full board for coming into compliance with the bill by July 1, 2022. The Policy Committee met on August 3, 2021, and developed a set of recommendations which include the following for the board composition and membership:

- Total Health Board members will equal ten (10), so that there is an equal number of elected and non-elected/tribal appointed positions.
- The Board will reduce elected officials from seven (7) to five (5) including one (1) county commissioner, four (4) city representatives; and five (5) non-elected members including one (1) tribal representative appointed by American Indian Health Commission, three (3) community members (one (1) from each commissioner district), one (1) "at large" community member appointed by commissioners.
- Six (6) members of the Health Board shall constitute a quorum for conducting board business.
- The Policy Committee also recommended the following for Non-Elected Board Member Terms: In general, non-elected/non-tribal board members terms will be for four (4) years. The Non-elected/non-tribal members terms will be staggered in two (2) groups of two (2). Two of the commissioner appointees will serve and initial term of two (2) years and the other two will serve a term of four (4) years. All Non-elected/non-tribal members board members will be limited to two 4-year terms, but after a one year "break" they may be reappointed by the commissioners for another 4-year term.
- Non-elected board members will be offered compensation for their time at Health Board meetings. Details on compensation are yet to be determined.
- A diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) lens will be used by the commissioners to appoint non-elected/non-tribal members to the Health Board.
- Non-elected/non-tribal members may be removed from the Health Board by the commissioners if they have unexcused absences from three consecutive regular Health Board meetings.
- The chair and vice chair will be elected by a vote of the full board and serve for one year. This could potentially be done during the last Board Meeting of the year. The chair and vice chair will alternate between elected and non-elected/non-tribal members. The policy

committee recommended that the Vice Chair is intended to move into the chair position the following year.

Lastly, Mr. Grellner said the Policy Committee also highlighted areas for further discussion.

Deputy Mayor Hytopoulos asked if there were any requirements or preferences for community members to have medical background. Mr. Grellner confirmed that people with medical background are required and noted the bill has guidelines for these members.

Commissioner Gelder noted he brought up the idea at the Policy Committee meeting of the reduction of county commissioners on this board.

Commissioner Wolfe reminded the group of when the KRCC bylaws were changed which was controversial. He suggests that there is a lot more information needed to continue this path.

Commissioner Gelder Noted the motivation for these suggested changes came from looking at the requirements of the legislation and the fact that we need to change the board composition. He said this could be an opportunity to potentially look at the board and committees and reduce the burden on all the commissioners and also to keep the board at a reasonable number. Mayor Putaansuu added that if we didn't reduce the number of electeds we would end up with an unmanageable board. Part of that conversation was that the appointed individuals would be by districts to have fair representation around the county.

Mayor Becky Erickson acknowledged that the county commissioners work hard and have multiple board commitments. She said a board of fourteen people would be very hard to deal with.

Deputy Mayor Hytopoulos cautioned the board that they may have difficulty finding enough community volunteers to work with that have a medical background if selection is divided by district.

Commissioner Gelder summarized that the legislation changes the composition and budgetary issues. There is limitation in terms on the actions that a non-elected individual can take when it comes to budgetary actions.

There was no further comment.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Dr. Morrow approached the Board regarding Covid-19. He stressed that he is fortunate to work with the professionals at the Public Health District. He also announced that Mr. Grellner has stepped into the position of President of the Washington State Association of Local Health Officials (WSALPHO) along with being the Chair of the State Board of Health. All of Kitsap Public Health Staff is a top-notch group of individuals that are performing well when times are tough.

Dr. Morrow spoke about COVID-19 case rates, hospitalizations, and deaths in Kitsap County. Case rates in Kitsap are at their highest levels during the entire pandemic. There is a fourteen-fold increase in cases since July, from seven to over a hundred cases a day. Our county rate is at the same levels as Utah and Arizona. Young adults have the highest case rate, 65 years plus has the lowest infection rate due to their high vaccination levels. There were 37 new outbreaks in August alone, which includes the military and shipyard. Six outbreaks involved more than 10 cases. These often begin with unvaccinated staff members infecting coworkers. This translates to more hospitalizations and deaths. COVID-19 patients are comprising over half of ICU patients. August saw the most hospitalizations of the pandemic, creating the local hospitals to be at critical capacity levels. Hospital leaders feel conditions are continuing to escalate.

Dr. Morrow explained that people are often surprised, shocked and resentful when they are diagnosed with COVID-19 because they didn't think it could happen to them. Many of these people, he said, are victims of the politicization of vaccines. The number of individuals receiving vaccination haven't changed a lot, but are going up gradually. He said the highest rate of vaccination is in Bainbridge Island, and the lowest is in Bremerton.

Dr. Morrow discussed why mandates are an important public health tool and why these are important. He explained that mandates are never plan A in Public Health. He said the goal of public health is to create ease of access and reduce barriers to vaccines so that individuals can make the healthy choice to get vaccinated. He gave examples of other public health issues that have become laws over time, including wearing seat belts, not smoking in restaurants, and not driving drunk. With half of the nation unvaccinated, he said it's time for it to be required in high risk, high contact situations such as nursing homes, schools and congregational settings. Mandates require a large enough Public Health threat to the community. As more employers require mandatory vaccines the controversy may diminish as this vaccine become more normalized. All major sports in Seattle are considering requiring proof of vaccination for attendance. He encouraged all jurisdictions and local businesses to consider implementing vaccine mandates voluntarily. He said the grassroots movement will be most effective for normalizing vaccination and keeping people safe. Dr. Morrow said Public Health resides at the intersection of science, health, policy, politics, education, economics, and government. He said science tells you the truth and deserves respect and attention. Denial of and attacks on science, as well as the personal attacks on the scientists, undermine our national security and is one of the root causes of our failed national efforts for this pandemic. This includes masking, physical separation, vaccination, keep the windows open and ventilation.

Ms. Lindsey Camarena, Vaccine Outreach and Educational Specialist at Kitsap Public Health and a COVID-19 intensive care nurse at a local hospital, spoke to the board about her personal and professional experiences regarding COVID-19. Ms. Camarena said the recent wave of COVID cases and a stalling interest in vaccinations has increased hospital admissions. Hospital staff are overwhelmed daily and have never seen COVID-19 numbers like this. In the month of August, 81% of COVID-19 ICU admissions were unvaccinated, yet the front-line workers at our local hospital continue to provide compassionate and nonjudgmental care to everyone who comes through the doors.

Ms. Camarena said many of the people in her personal life have made the decision to not get vaccinated, and unfortunately two of those people are family members who are now hospitalized. She said one of those family members was placed on a ventilator and was fighting for his life at 44 years old. Not being able to visit or be at their bedside while knowing the potential downward spiral they are on is terrifying for Mrs. Camarena and other family members of those infected. COVID-19 does not discriminate, and vaccination is our best layer to decrease infection and death. There is a very scary and uncertain side of this virus, Ms. Camarena urged the public to get vaccinated and make this potentially lifesaving choice. She urged Kitsap County to stay safe and healthy.

Mayor Hytopoulos asked Dr. Morrow if he would consider a mandate such as Jefferson and Clallam County have imposed on restaurants and bars. She asked if the board should work with business owners and the Chamber of Commerce to make this happen. Dr. Morrow let Mayor Hytopoulos know that he is considering it along with other counties, such as King County. He would be happy to take direction from the board on that, he reiterated that schools need to be first to open and last to close. Dr. Morrow felt that the way to keep businesses open is for them to require the vaccinations. He is aware of the complexities of the burden this mandate would put on businesses.

Mayor Wheeler asked at what threshold this needs to be an immediate discussion from the board. He would like to have another meeting to anticipate and interpret the trend lines of Kitsap County. This meeting would also help the Health Board understand what to expect if a mandate were to happen. Dr. Morrow and Mr. Grellner will get this meeting scheduled.

Dr. Morrow reminded the board that he can make the decision to impose a mandate on restaurants and bars independent of the board if needed. He stressed that all the Kitsap Public Health board members need to take this very seriously.

Mayor Erickson believes that we will see an uptick of cases at the end of September, as children are just going back to school now. She would like to see another meeting of the health board two weeks from now to have that conversation and get serious about this issue. Mayor Erickson also reminded the board that the Mu variant is seemingly resistant to the vaccine and will continue to mutate if the virus finds a host. She feels the mandates are necessary and stated that it is almost unpatriotic and unprofessional to not be vaccinated right now.

Mayor Erickson also asked if Dr. Morrow had any information on boosters and when they might be available. Dr. Morrow let the board know that the advisory committee is meeting on September 17th, and this will all depend on how the analysis plays out. Dr. Morrow thinks booster vaccinations could take place in late September at the earliest. The limiting factor will be how the FDA evaluates things in the upcoming weeks.

Commissioner Wolfe said he would like to see an immediate meeting of the board for input from the health professionals. He asked what the age ranges of people in the ICU are and if any are children. Dr. Morrow didn't have that information; however, he did know that nobody under 34

who has been vaccinated has been hospitalized. Children are typically referred to Mary Beth Children's Hospital in Tacoma or Seattle Children's so that information is not readily available.

Mayor Wheeler would like to protect the vulnerable population out there who is unable to get vaccinated. He stated that these people aren't vaccinated because they don't believe in Covid-19, it's a matter of life being hard already. Mayor Wheeler wants to be very thorough on discussing the next step that has been suggested by Dr. Morrow. It's serious and needs to be addressed. Commissioner Garrido will work with Dr. Morrow and Mr. Grellner to get a meeting on the books.

CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO RCW 42.30.140(4)(B), DISCUSSION RELATED TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

At 1:47 p.m., Mayor Wheeler announced that the Board would exit for executive session for approximately 10 minutes and would not return. No decisions were made.

ADJOURN

There was no further business; the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.



Charlotte Garrido
Kitsap Public Health Board



Keith Grellner
Administrator

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

Community Members Present: *See Attached*

Staff Present: Amy Anderson, *Public Health Educator, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response*; Kandice Atismé-Bevins, *Program Manager, Case and Contact Investigation, COVID-19*; Leslie Banigan, *Senior Environmental Health Specialist, Water Pollution Identification and Correction*; Angie Berger, *Administrative Assistant, Administration*; Stephanie Byrd, *Confidential Secretary, COVID-19*; Lindsey Camarena, *Public Health Nurse, COVID-19*; April Fisk, *Program Coordinator, Contracts Manager, Public Records & Safety Officer, MAC, Administration*; Yolanda Fong, *Director, Community Health Division*; Keith Grellner, *Administrator, Administration*; Jill Guerrero, *Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention*; Sarah Henley, *COVID Emergency Operations Coordinator, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response*; Jakob Hughes, *Environmental Health Specialist 1, Solid and Hazardous Waste*; Renee Johnson, *Environmental Health Specialist, Pollution*

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Identification & Correction; Siri Kushner, Assistant Director, Community Health Division; Melissa Laird, Manager, Accounting and Finance; Nicole McNamara, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Megan Moore, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer, Administration; Debbie Rassa, Public Health Nurse, Communicable Disease; Stephanie Schreiber, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Mindy Tonti, Community Health Worker, HIV Case Management.

Kitsap Public Health Board Meeting (Virtual Attendance)

Webinar ID

861 8605 2497

Actual Start Time

9/7/2021 12:17

First Name

Amy

Ron

Kandice

Kris

jessica

Eric

Leslie

Angie

Anne

Heather

marci

Stephanie

Lindsey

John

Kitsap

Taura

Ed

Teresa

Bittina

April

Yolanda

Madelyn

Keith

Jill

Sarah

Jakob

Renee

Brandon

Siri

Melissa

Dedra

Nicole

Megan

Last Name

Anderson

Anderson

Atismé-Bevins

Avery

Baker

Baker - Kitsap County

Banigan

Berger

Braudis

Budd

burkel

Byrd

Camarena

Clauson

County Commissioners Office

Deford

Detmer

E

Erickson

Fisk

Fong

Fox

Grellner

Guerrero

Henley

Hughes

Johnson

Johnston

Kushner

Laird

Miller

McNamara

Moore (she/her)

First Name

Gib

Matt

Nate

Rebecca

Debbie

Stephanie

Earl

Stacey

Michael

Mike

mindy

Doug

Susan

Paul

Monte

Barb

Robbie

JH

Michele

Jon

BD

Andrea

donna

Last Name

Morrow

Murphy

Murphy

Pirtle

Rassa

Schreiber

Smith

Smith

Spencer (BKAT)

Szymanski

tonti

Washburn

Young