

Board of Health
Public Health Program Policy Committee

Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2020
Regular Meeting

The meeting was held via Zoom conference call/video.

Committee members present via Zoom

Megan Dunn
John Joplin
Jared Mead
Dan Rankin
Linda Redmon

Committee members absent

None

Staff present

Shawn Frederick, Chris Spitters, Heather Thomas, Pam Aguilar, Ragina Gray, Katie Curtis, Linda Carl

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Program Policy Committee was called to order by committee chair Ms. Linda Redmon at 3:01 p.m. via Zoom video conference.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken by Ms. Linda Carl who reported there was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Dan Rankin and seconded by Mr. John Joplin to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 15, 2020, with one correction. The motion passed with 5 yes votes, 0 no votes, 0 absent.

Briefing

Fees for public records requests (no staff report; S. Frederick)

Mr. Shawn Frederick noted that in 2017, an RCW was put in place that allows for recovering the cost of fulfilling public records requests. At this point the Health District hasn't taken the opportunity to recover these costs; however, with the number of public records requests are increasing, it's something staff is looking into. Neighboring agencies recover costs differently, such as a flat per-page fee, through a data calculation that determines the cost, or through a time analysis. Should we decide to begin charging a fee, we would allow 30 to 60 days for public feedback. Currently we receive 28 to 50 PRRs a month, which take on average four to eight days to fulfill. Last month's requests took 136 staff hours to complete, and it's possible staff will have to review 5K to 10K emails for just one PRR. Most large PRRs involve real property or litigation. The committee asked Mr. Frederick to research what the average charge would be for our current PRRs and if the RCW allows for exceptions (like for students).

Committee work plan (no staff report; L. Redmon, D. Rankin)

Ms. Redmon reviewed the proposed list of priorities for this committee (shown below in its entirety) and requested that the list be submitted to the Community Equity Advisory Board, the Public Health Advisory Committee, and the full Board for input and approval.

- 1) As much as possible, examine all SHD programs and policies in light of Resolution 20-17 and the data on race and ethnicity that were examined in relation to the effects of the nCoV-19 pandemic. [That report is available online](#). It has become clear that in any threat situation, there are disproportionate impacts on marginalized and vulnerable communities including disabled, BIPOC, and LGBTQ, and our policies and budgets need to acknowledge and address those impacts.
- 2) The Health District should educate the population, in their languages and modes of communication, about threats to their health and lives from climate change impacts. Issues that immediately come to mind are a) preexisting conditions exacerbated by excess heat, including medications that increase susceptibility, b) preexisting conditions exacerbated by decreased air quality from particulates (stemming from extended pollen seasons, increased dust, wildfires, and increased smog), c) water quality issues related to heat and flooding, and d) any vector-borne or infectious diseases that become a concern due to climate change and/or climate migration.
- 3) We need to know as an agency and Board what we might realistically expect to need to devote funds and resources to, such as cooling stations in urban areas, air quality in institutions such as schools and communal facilities, climate refugees/immigrants, and increased demand for water quality inspections.
- 4) Resources may become needed if food availability becomes impacted. We may need to work to solidify policies related to DFDOs to maximize food capture and disbursement.
- 5) Monitor impacts on community mental health from prolonged response to stressors, with a particular focus on marginalized communities.
- 6) Infants, children, adolescents and perinatal women are among the most vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change, due to factors such as biological sensitivity, exposure, and adaptive capacity related to perinatal or age-related stages of development. Similar impacts are seen in our elderly and disabled populations. We again need to ensure adequate consideration of these disproportionate impacts in our policy making and allocation of resources, and conduct assessment and mapping of the population we serve.
- 7) With the PHAC, determine how their sectors might be able to help spread educational messages and what resources they have available to help with physical needs such as cooling stations or water and food resources, and mental health needs.
- 8) Collaborate with agencies in other sectors such as schools, social services, healthcare, housing, public works, and parks to support policies and implement programs that reduce the risk of exposure to extreme heat, poor air quality, and infectious agents and vectors, and reduce climate pollution.

Ms. Heather Thomas suggested the committee determine the list in priority order, cognizant of resources available. The committee agreed to move the list to the Public Health Advisory Committee's next meeting.

Health Officer update (no staff report; C. Spitters)

Dr. Chris Spitters gave a situation summary of COVID-19 cases over the last several weeks. The number of positive cases continue to increase, as does the positivity rate. Caseload is now outstripping Health District case and contact investigation capacity. The top transmission venues are generally private gatherings, close-contact in home and work settings, and long-term care facilities. As of Nov. 7

Snohomish County's two week rate had risen to 186 per 100,000 population. Nine deaths were reported in the previous two-week period. The Governor has instituted a rollback on public activity; the Health District is expanding its public-education efforts and testing capacity, and is prioritizing investigations, reviewing school guidance, and working on vaccine planning. At Mr. Jared Mead's request, Dr. Spitters will look into why gyms are being closed under the Governor's rollback.

Informational Items

Ms. Redmon reviewed the upcoming meetings.

Next Meeting Date

Thursday, December 17, at 3 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.