

**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 27, 2021**  
**Regular Meeting**

The meeting was held via Zoom conference call.

**Committee members present**

Scott Bader  
John Joplin  
Sam Low  
Nate Nehring

**Committee members absent**

Christine Frizzell

**Staff present**

Chris Spitters, Shawn Frederick, Nicole Thomsen, Heather Thomas, Carrie Parker, Katie Curtis, Ragina Gray, Sara Centanni, Sarah de Jong

**Guests present**

Lisa George, chairperson for the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC);  
Jean Doerge, member of the PHAC and representative of the senior sector

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**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Administration Committee was called to order by Mr. Scott Bader at 3:33 p.m. via Zoom video conference.

**Roll Call**

Roll call was taken by Ms. Sarah de Jong who reported there was a quorum present.

**Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Mr. Sam Low and seconded by Mr. John Joplin to approve the minutes for the regular meeting of September 22, 2021. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

**Action**

*Approve Finance Manager's report for August 2021, and forward to the full Board as a written report (SR 21-108; S. Centanni)*

It was moved by Mr. Joplin and seconded by Mr. Sam Low to approve Finance Manager's report for August 2021, and forward to the full Board as a written report. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Approve vouchers and Res. 21-22 authorizing Health District expenditures from September 16, 2021, to October 15, 2021, and forward to the full Board on consent (no staff report; S. Centanni)*

It was moved by Mr. Low and seconded by Mr. Joplin to approve vouchers and Res. 21-22 authorizing Health District expenditures from September 16, 2021, to October 15, 2021, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Approve the amendments to the employee handbook, effective Nov. 10, 2021, and forward to the full Board on consent (SR 21-088; P. Aguilar)*

The Committee was briefed on this item at its last meeting in September. The only change to the employee handbook since then was the addition of Affordable Care Act language. The handbook is currently being reviewed by legal. If any changes are made based on suggestions by legal, the handbook will move forward to the full Board as an action item instead of on consent.

It was moved by Mr. Joplin and seconded by Mr. Low to approve the amendments to the employee handbook, effective Nov. 10, 2021, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Approve Res. 21-21 approving the proposed Environmental Health fee schedule as shown in Exhibit A, effective November 10, 2021, and forward to the full Board of action (SR 21-101; R. Gray)*

Ms. Ragina Gray reviewed the proposed changes to the Environmental Health fee schedule, which included a 2% increase across the board. The Committee was briefed on the food safety fee schedule at its last meeting and the only change since then is an update to the definition of a farmers market. The changes to the other fee schedules included:

- Land Use – Eliminated references to a no cost resubmittal following disapproval
- Safe Environments – Eliminated reference to safe medicine return
- Vital Records – Increased the identity verification and records retention fee to \$15 and added the data sharing fee for the weekly distributed list of recently deceased.

Staff request one minor change be proposed for both the Resolution and motion – for the food safety fee schedule to be effective November 10, 2021, and the rest of the fee schedules effective January 1, 2022.

It was moved by Mr. Low and seconded by Mr. Joplin to approve Res. 21-21 approving the proposed Environmental Health fee schedule as shown in Exhibit A, effective November 10, 2021, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Approve the 2022 Snohomish Health District legislative priorities, and forward to the full Board on consent (SR 21-092; N. Thomsen, H. Thomas)*

Two adjustments have been made to the legislative agenda that are not included in the packet. The first is to increase the priority level of isolation and quarantine protections and expand the wording to include childcare assistance, as many people who are having to isolate or quarantine still have to pay for their daycare, creating a financial burden. The second adjustment is a modification of the Coronavirus paragraph at the top, due to the Health District receiving notification yesterday by the Department of Health that approximately \$2.3 million of its response funding has been withdrawn effective July 1. Mr. Sam Low shared that he supports the addition of marijuana tax revenue to the funding priorities.

It was moved by Mr. Low and seconded by Mr. Joplin to approve the 2022 Snohomish Health District legislative priorities, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Authorize the Administrative Officer to enter into an interlocal agreement with Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department for administration of online food worker cards, and forward to the full Board on consent (SR 21-095; R. Gray)*

The Health District has partnered with Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) for several years for this service. The contract will be expiring soon and this allows it to be renewed. It's for an online system where people can get their food worker cards and the Health District receives a portion of the fees.

It was moved by Mr. Low and seconded by Mr. Joplin to authorize the Administrative Officer to enter into an interlocal agreement with Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department for administration of online food worker cards, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Authorize the Administrative Officer to sign an amendment to the ABCD program with the Health Care Authority, and forward to the full Board on consent (SR 21-102; K. Curtis)*

This program matches lower-income families with dentists that accept Apple Health and helps encourage dental providers to enroll in the program, resulting in more dental capacity on the county. This amendment adds more funds for performing outreach work. The rest of the agreement remains the same from the previous contract.

It was moved by Mr. Joplin and seconded by Mr. Low to authorize the Administrative Officer to sign an amendment to the ABCD program with the Health Care Authority, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Authorize the Administrative Officer to sign the local solid waste financial assistance agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology, and forward to the full Board on consent (SR 21-104; R. Gray)*

The Board approved applying for the grant a few months ago and staff are now seeking approval to enter into the agreement.

It was moved by Mr. Low and seconded by Mr. Joplin to authorize the Administrative Officer to sign the local solid waste financial assistance agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

*Authorize the Administrative Officer to sign professional services agreements with Providence Health & Services and Swedish Medical Center to provide surveillance activities for non-fatal overdose emergency room visits, and forward to the full Board on consent (SR 21-105; C. Parker)*

The Health District has current agreements with Providence and Swedish for this service. These agreements are needed to meet the deliverables of the Health District's Overdose to Action (OD2A) grant. The work is carried out by the Health District's Health Communities team with the goal of improving surveillance of non-fatal opioid events in Snohomish County. Staff have spoken with all four emergency rooms in the county and while all are interested, only Swedish and Providence currently have the capacity and staffing to implement these systems.

It was moved by Mr. Joplin and seconded by Mr. Low to authorize the Administrative Officer to sign professional services agreements with Providence Health & Services and Swedish Medical Center to provide surveillance activities for non-fatal overdose emergency room visits, and forward to the full Board on consent. The motion passed with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 absent (Frizzell).

## **Briefings**

*2022 Budget (no staff report; S. Frederick, S. Centanni)*

Mr. Frederick shared a presentation regarding the preliminary budget document with Committee members. The preliminary budget includes several assumptions:

- The Health District is expecting to receive a little over \$3 million for Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) in 2022. It's also expected there will be around \$6.3 million over the next biennium to the Health District to be allocated for specific foundational public health programs.
- The Health District expects the fund balance to grow by over \$3 million, with a preliminary funds balance of a little over \$15 million, revenues of \$32 million, and expenditures of \$29 million.
- 2% salary increase for all staff per collective bargaining agreements; non-represented staff typically follow the bargaining agreements.
- 5.28% estimated increases for medical and dental.
- Filled vacant positions have been updated with incumbents and terminated staff have been removed.
- New staffing positions including:
  - Safe Environments Lead
  - Food Safety Environmental Health Specialist
  - Two Land Use Permit Technicians

- Vital Records Program Specialist II
- Deputy Administrative Officer
- A second Prevention Services Assistant Director
- Accounts Payable Coordinator
- Accounting Supervisor (approved in 2021)
- A drop in the indirect rate from 47% to 11%, making more funds available by dropping operating costs.
- Funds have also been allocated for new financial software implementation in the finance program.
- The reserve is being increased from 45 to 60 days working capital.

The preliminary budget will be brought to the full Board with an initial public hearing in November and is currently scheduled for a second public hearing and potential adoption at the Board of Health meeting in December.

With the rise in STD cases in the county lately, Mr. Low asked if the numbers were high enough to warrant hiring of additional disease investigation specialists (DIS). Ms. Katie Curtis said that the Health District currently has five STD investigators and we were recently notified by the Department of Health that we will be receiving additional funding to hire two more to deal specifically with syphilis.

*Policy POL 120.003 concerning telecommuting (SR 21-089; P. Aguilar)*

Mr. Frederick shared the changes to the policy since it was presented to the Committee at its September meeting. These proposed changes include the differentiation between field staff and non-field staff; field staff may be provided permanent telecommuting, as a condition of employment, with no permanent space in the Health District offices. Other changes included acceptable distancing limits for staff that want to telecommute, and requiring 24-hours notice for in-person meetings. The agreement will be shared with collective bargaining units to review. Board members and staff discussed in-office workspaces in case telecommuting doesn't work out for certain staff members. Current discussions around space planning keep scalability in mind.

*STD/HIV treatment partnership RFP (SR 21-098; K. Curtis)*

The Health District will be releasing a request for proposal soon to find a vendor to provide STD testing and treatment services for the Health District. This work is currently being done by Western Washington Medical Group at its Lake Serene Clinic. Ideally, staff are looking for a vendor with multiple locations in the county and evening or weekend availability. Once vendors are identified, staff will bring this back to the Board and brief on the potential candidates.

*House Bill 1152 implementation (SR 21-106; N. Thomsen, L. George, J. Doerge, K. Hilt, J. Biermann, P. Love)*

Ms. Nicole Thomsen briefed on House Bill 1152 implementation process and requirements. Ms. Lisa George, Chair for the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC), and Jean Doerge, a member of the PHAC representing the senior sector, also gave an update on the work the PHAC HB 1152 ad hoc committee has done to date. Ms. Thomsen requested feedback regarding how the Board would like to see the revised laws implemented, in regard to the role the PHAC plays in reviewing and revising. Mr. Low recommended keeping the sector restructure simple by limiting the number of the positions to 15, the same number of current PHAC members, to provide more flexibility on who can be recruited or appointed to the board.

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

COVID-19 – Cumulatively, Snohomish County has about 65,000 cases reported with 750 deaths. The last peak, about 2,200 cases, was in late August/early September, and there has been a decline in cases since then. The weekly number of cases for the week before last is roughly 1,300. Last week



saw a small uptick of about 300 cases, bringing the number for that week to 1,600. Hospitals' COVID census is about two-thirds of what it was a few weeks ago.

Most of this increase in cases is driven by school-aged children. All age groups, except 0 to 14, are still headed down but cases in younger kids are increasing, due largely to the return to in-person learning. Contact tracing for school cases is a tremendous amount of work and is shared between Health District DIS and school employees. Overall, there have been about 200 different school buildings with one or more cases, about seventy bona fide outbreaks of three or more cases (most of the cases aren't students), and about 2,000 kids that are out on quarantine. While cases in school-aged children have gone up, they seem to be milder than in adults with only one hospitalized case under age 19. One thing that will help efforts is if vaccination of school-age kids was authorized by FDA and recommended by CDC. There were 600 cases that occurred in the last two weeks amongst school-aged kids. If they were all vaccinated, it's estimated that number could be reduced by 80 to 90%, also dramatically reducing the number of children in quarantine. Last week the FDA authorized use of the Pfizer product for school-aged children. The dose is slightly lower than for adolescents and adults, but clinical trial results on safety and efficacy are good. CDC's advisory Committee on immunization practices will take up that authorization from the FDA next week when they meet to discuss for whom in the five to eleven year old age group the vaccination would be recommended.

Last month the Governor of California signaled that, once approved by the FDA and recommended by CDC, that he would mandate vaccinations for school-aged kids in California. Seeing that, the Washington State local health officers included this on their agenda over the past several weeks and just sent a letter to the State Board of Health to remind them that there is an existing framework for considering those types of requirements.

Booster shots are now available for recipients ages 18 and up of any of the vaccine products that received their shot at least two months ago, for the Johnson & Johnson, or over six months ago, for the Moderna and Pfizer. Additional criteria must be met, such as being over the age of 65, have an underlying medical condition that could make COVID more severe, or live or work in a high-risk setting. Hospitals' COVID census peaked around 115 in early September and then have declined to about 68 yesterday. Currently, about 10% of beds are designated for COVID but the stress on the hospital systems is compounded also by staffing shortages. Around 20% of the COVID hospitalizations are among fully vaccinated people with 80% not vaccinated at all. Between good masking compliance in indoor spaces and vaccinations, the challenge we are facing is the relatively large number of unvaccinated people. While we are experiencing more breakthrough cases, it's unusual for them to have severe disease, so while transmission and the burden on the hospitals are continuing, we have seen a fewer severe cases and deaths than in prior waves.

Mr. Frederick shared that the capacity at the Ash Way site, which is where we are currently offering boosters, are booking about 800 appointments per day and slots are filling very quickly, showing demand for this service. Staff will continue to monitor that demand and react accordingly by possibly opening up additional mass-vaccination sites if sustained.

#### *Assuming responsibility for the Savvy Septic program (SR 21-100; R. Gray)*

Snohomish County runs a program called Savvy Septic. It was originally initiated in 2016 with a grant from the Department of Ecology and has since been funded with Puget Sound Partnership. The program has been well funded and very popular with funding agencies. The County approached Health District staff about a month ago asking if there was any interest in taking the program over. Other counties have similar projects that are typically run by their local health jurisdictions and this program dovetails nicely with the Health District's monitoring and maintenance program. There are two pieces to the program. The first, is financial assistance to help people directly with repairs to the septic systems, and the second is an education outreach program with workshops to help homeowners on how to maintain their septic system. The general consensus from Committee members present was that this seems like it could potentially be a good opportunity and fit for the Health District.

**Information Items**

Next Board of Health meeting date: Tuesday, November 9, 3 p.m.

Next committee meeting date: Monday, November 22, 9:30 a.m.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

DRAFT