

DRAFT Meeting Notes

Public Health Advisory Council of Snohomish County

January 26, 2022 | 7:45-9:15 a.m. | Snohomish Health District | Zoom Meeting

Members present:

Jason Biermann, Snohomish County DEM
Jeff Clarke, Commissioner, Mukilteo Water & Wastewater District (Chair-Elect)
Jean Doerge, Community Member
Lisa George, PRMCE (Chair)
Robert Goetz, Everett Police Department
Kurt Hilt, International Association of Fire Fighters 1828
Shaughn Maxwell, South County Fire and Rescue
Naisha Williams, Community Member

Staff Present:

Shawn Frederick
Dr. Chris Spitters
Nicole Thomsen
Heather Thomas
Sarah de Jong

Members not present:

Patricia Love, City of Stanwood; **Korey MacKenzie**, Diamond Knot Alehouse;
Karri Matau, Community Foundation of Snohomish County

Recording Secretary: Sarah de Jong, Executive Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:46 a.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. Jeff Clarke and seconded by Ms. Jean Doerge to approve the minutes of November 17, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Special Business

Officer transition & election of vice-chair

Ms. Lisa George turned the rest of the meeting over to Mr. Jeff Clarke who is now the Chair after being the Chair-Elect for 2021. Mr. Clarke noted that effective with this meeting the PHAC is also changing into new roles and responsibilities due to actions by the legislature.

Chair Clarke opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair/Chair Elect. Ms. Lisa George nominated Jean Doerge. There were no other nominations, and Ms. Doerge becomes the Vice Chair for 2022.

Public Comment

Mr. Clarke noted that no public comment was received.

Briefings and Discussion

PHAC Bylaws Implementation (N. Thomsen, L. George, J. Clarke, P. Love, J. Doerge, and J. Biermann)

The PHAC bylaws were adopted by the Board of Health at its December meeting. Ms. Nicole Thomsen and PHAC members discussed the following topics:

- Two members have stepped down from their roles which leaves the current number of active membership to 11. In order to recruit new members to fill the number of required sector representatives, PHAC members will need to create an application process.
- One new requirement is an increase in the number of meetings. Previously the PHAC met every other month and the new requirement is for the PHAC to meet monthly. PHAC members discussed the meeting time and decided that moving the meeting to a slightly earlier time, 7:30-9:00 instead of the current 7:45-9:15 works better for PHAC members present.
- The PHAC is now subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) which means there are some other requirements that members need to be aware of.
- The PHAC bylaw ad hoc committee met in November but the December meeting was postponed due to the holidays. That committee worked on drafting sector definitions. Ms. Nicole Thomsen presented the sector definition draft document and invited PHAC members to share any feedback they may have regarding the sector definitions. Feedback received included:
 - The definitions do include wording that implies some role-specific expertise needed.
 - Whether the healthcare practitioner definition should be broader or more specific, as there are healthcare practitioners not only in the healthcare system, but also industrial or school settings as well.
 - The water district sector is classified as a business sector. While there is a business piece to it, it could also fall under government as it is technically a government operation.
 - Suggestion to clear up the language regarding non-profit organizations more to include 501(c)(3) status as without that clarification there are many organizations that could fit the description but may not be properly assigned.
 - The “Members with lived experiences” section is very vague.
 - Create a connection between SHD definitions to the definitions in the legislation
- The PHAC bylaw ad hoc committee also created a draft of an application that could be used for potential new members. Committee members discussed the application and process. This draft was created after researching other similar advisory boards for public health. The process should also be defined for how a person applies and whether there’s an interview or not.

2022 WA Legislative Session (N. Thomsen, H. Thomas)

Legislative session is in its third week. COVID is still a main topic of conversation amongst legislators. This is a short session at only 60 days. There are three bills that have been classified as high priority:

House Bill 1074. As of Friday afternoon, it was voted out of the House and is now on its way to the Senate. This is a high priority bill for the Health District that essentially creates an analogous process to the child death review process but for adults and specifically focuses on substance abuse and suicide.

House Bill 1893. This is sponsored by local delegate Brandy Donaghy in regards to allowing emergency medical technicians.

Restructuring cannabis revenue appropriations. This includes additional funds to local health jurisdictions to perform prevention outreach and education on the topic.

On the State side, the Health District is tracking:

Additional COVID funding. This legislature will be making appropriations of the ARPA dollars.

Employment and child care protection for isolated or quarantined individuals. This bill could be expanded to include childcare protection if a child needs to isolate or quarantine and this could affect parents or caregivers that need to take time off work and still pay for that spot in childcare.

The Washington State Public Health Association is having its annual legislative advocacy day coming up on February 8. All are welcome to participate. The event will be virtual again this year and Ms. Thomsen will email the invitation to all PHAC members.

Administrative Officer Report

Mr. Shawn Frederick reported that the 2022 budget that was adopted at the December Board of Health meeting represents a significant shift in more than a decade of previous budgets, where the Health District repeatedly saw cut after cut. The budget contains significant improvements and investments in the Snohomish Health District over the course of the next year. Mr. Frederick briefed on the changes in the 2022 budget, including:

- 33 new FTE: 15 new FTE in Prevention Services, 14 in Environmental Health, and 3 in Administration.
- Addition of Permit Technician positions to help expedite the land use application process.
- Replacement of vehicles in the fleet with interest in hybrid or electric vehicles moving forward
- Addition of an executive leadership position for the Sound Foundation for Public Health. They would be a staff member of the Health district but perform work for the Sound Foundation.
- \$100,000 allocation for a study to determine health access needs in Snohomish County.
- Continued COVID operations, such as testing and vaccination.

This expansion of services is funded in part by incoming COVID funds but also by foundational public health funds that were approved by state legislation in its last legislative session.

Health Officer Report

Case Counts and Testing. The Omicron variant has created a huge peak in cases that has dwarfed the peaks in all prior waves since the beginning of the pandemic. University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation projects that Western Washington cases peaked the second or third week of the month of January and are now roughly halfway back down that curve. Historically, SHD testing operations have a 5-10% positivity rate. These numbers have recently jumped up to 30-35% and similar increases in test-positive proportions are being seen throughout the healthcare community. Positive cases are still predominantly young adults with the majority of cases in adults 20-59 years of age. Young children, especially those that are school age also have a high number of cases as well. Looking at cases by areas in the county, south Everett seems to have a higher concentration of cases, with the spread moving along the I-5 corridor.

Hospitalizations. Hospitals are under heavy duress and experiencing a large increase in hospital admissions, with Providence admitting 20 to 25 new COVID patients per day. Limited-staffing issues are also creating additional stress on the hospital systems.

Vaccinations. Of the 850,000 total Snohomish County residents, 555,000 have completed their initial vaccination schedule and almost half of that number have received their booster dose as well. Around 20-25,000 doses are being administered to Snohomish County residents with the vast majority of those being booster doses and very few people initiating or completing their initial series. The cumulative proportion of residents that have initiated vaccination has now reached almost 80%. Non-Hispanic whites and Latinos have the lowest vaccination rates, at 62% and 63%, respectively. Pacific Islanders have the highest vaccination coverage at 100% but that is probably an underestimate of their true population. Looking at vaccination coverage by location generally shows better coverage in the I-5 corridor and closer to King County.

Health District Operations. In addition to testing sites, The Health District is also procuring and distributing home testing kits as well as masks and increasing public access to vaccination sites with mobile outreach efforts targeting underserved populations and helping to coordinate and guide long-term care facilities, schools, and other special populations in achieving vaccination in their populations. The Health District also acts as a local hub for delivery, storage, and secondary distribution of vaccine. Our disease control and



containment efforts are now largely focused on outbreak investigations and we de-emphasize individual case contact investigations because the sheer number of cases being reported and the speed at which the virus is moving through the community is not amenable to traditional contact investigation efforts being helpful.

Information Items

Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Clarke announced upcoming meetings.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

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