



**Snohomish Health District
Board of Health Minutes
March 8, 2022**

The meeting was held via Zoom conference call/video.

Members Present

Julieta Altamirano-Crosby, Councilmember, Lynnwood
Elisabeth Crawford, Councilmember, Mukilteo
Megan Dunn, County Councilmember
Mark James, Councilmember, Marysville
Anji Jorstad, Councilmember, Lake Stevens
Heather Logan, Councilmember, Arlington
Sam Low, County Councilmember
Kyoko Matsumoto Wright, Mayor, Mountlake Terrace
Jared Mead, County Councilmember
Nate Nehring, County Councilmember
Neil Tibbott, Councilmember, Edmonds
Stephanie Vignal, Councilmember, Mill Creek
Ben Zarlingo, Councilmember, Everett

Comings and Goings

Ms. Heather Logan arrived at 3:27 p.m.

Members Absent

Joe Neigel, Councilmember, Sultan
Stephanie Wright, County Councilmember – BOH Chair

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Board of Health was called to order at 3:02 p.m. via Zoom conference call by Board Vice Chair Anji Jorstad.

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 Ms. Megan Dunn and seconded by Ms. Julieta Altamirano-Crosby to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 8, 2022. The motion passed with 12 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 3 absent.

Public Comment

Vice Chair Jorstad reported two public comments were received. Mr. Shawn Frederick read the following public comments into record:

- An email from High School Senior Jackson Long in Edmonds opposing the removal of masks in schools for the remainder of the year
- An email from Resident Alice Hopkins in favor of removing masks in schools

Consent



It was moved by Mr. Neil Tibbott and seconded by Ms. Stephanie Vignal to approve the following items on consent:

- a. Approve vouchers and Res. 22-11 authorizing Health District expenditures from January 16, 2022, to February 15, 2022
- b. Authorize the Administrative Officer to sign amendment #1 to the consolidated contract with the Washington State Department of Health

The motion passed with 12 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 3 absent.

Briefings

Policy POL 120-003 concerning telecommuting (SR 22-010; P. Aguilar)

Ms. Pamela Aguilar briefed the Board on the telecommuting policy draft, which has gone through committees several times. This policy would replace the emergency policy put into effect at the beginning of 2020 and would be a permanent policy. The policy adds field/non-field staff definitions and parameters regarding eligible home address and adds a checklist for supervisors to ensure fairness and equity when approving telework. The checklist is new and hasn't been implemented yet. Once the policy is approved, all employees wishing to telecommute would need to resubmit a request and the checklist would be utilized then.

Legislative update (no staff report; N. Thomsen)

This is the last week of the legislative session. Last week was a very big week for meeting cut offs. Bills that had passed through one side of the house had to also pass the opposite chamber to continue moving through the process.

House Bill 1074 regarding opioid fatality review has been passed by both the House and the Senate. The Senate drafted an amendment to include deaths from withdrawals and a request to the Department of Health to perform statewide surveillance. Because of this, it now needs to go back to the House for approval. If it passes, it will then be forwarded to the Governor for approval and signature.

The EMT Bill also passed the Senate and House with no changes. It will be forwarded to the Governor for review.

The cannabis revenue bill has passed both chambers but needs to go back to the Senate for the concurrence vote. There were a lot of amendments made in the House. It's still unclear what will happen in terms of funds allotment but will need to go to JLARC to continue to work on this process in a more in-depth way.

The budget is being tightly guarded but the general feeling is that it's good news and shouldn't have a lot of changes. There is about \$1B difference between the House and Senate proposed budgets.

On the federal side, last spring, DelBene's office reached out to the Health District with an invitation to submit a request through the community project fund. With direction from the Board of Health, the Health District submitted a request for \$250,000 to go toward upgrading to a new electronic health record system. Staff received word this morning that congress is expected to pass the funding bill, which includes that project and staff are hoping to receive good news from the federal government this week.

Administrative Officer's Report

Mr. Frederick briefed the Board on the following:

- Foundational Public Health Services. The funding for the 21-23 biennium is growing significantly compared to previous years. All of this funding, as currently designed, is set up to be ongoing funding and would require legislative action to change the amounts. The funds are required to be spent within



the allocation period and money not spend would be sent back to the State to be reallocated to other local health jurisdictions.

- Two amendments to ILAs have been signed. Both were for subcontractors to the vaccination work for reimbursement using FEMA funds.
- COVID trends are moving in the right direction.
- Mr. Frederick is acting as Incident Commander at the Health District for COVID activities. Staff have begun preparation plans for demobilization of activities.
- There will be a budget amendment in the near future. Adjustments needed are largely due to COVID funding.
- Ms. Heather Thomas has accepted the job as the City Administrator for the City of Snohomish.

Health Officer's Report

Measles. The genotype for the case matches the dominant circulating strain from the country the child was traveling from. This confirms the epidemiology that it was acquired overseas. Health District staff completed the investigation process for household contacts, as that was the only exposure within the Health District's jurisdiction. The end of the maximum incubation period is March 12.

COVID-19. Things continue to improve. Case counts and case rates continue to fall and are now 95% off the Omicron peak for reported cases.

Test positivity, which peaked around 35% is now down to 5% countywide. Demand for testing has dropped as well.

Hospitalizations due to COVID are also declining but that trend lags behind case incidence by a couple weeks. The case rates per 100,000 for Snohomish County match closely what is being experienced through the Puget Sound region. The hospital census count, which is a daily total of hospitalizations due to COVID, speaks clearly to impacts on the healthcare system during a surge. Hospitals are recovering but at a slower rate because people who are admitted to the hospital are often there for a couple of weeks. As of today, the total number of people in Snohomish County hospitals is down to 21 with 1 or 2 on ventilators. The total hospital bed count for the county is 650 and at the peak over a third of those hospital beds were occupied. That has now come down to 4-5% of beds occupied.

School-associated outbreaks are down dramatically.

Vaccination is plateauing overall. About 80% of the eligible population in Snohomish County is at least partially vaccinated and 72-73% have completed their vaccination. Of about 600,000 people that are fully vaccinated, about half have had at least one booster dose. Vaccination administrations in the county have slowed dramatically and are at around 6,000 per week with the vast majority of those being booster shots. A couple of months ago the number of vaccinations administered per week was around 25,000.

The local masking order issued back in August for indoor public places and the local isolation and quarantine order were both rescinded in January 2022. This was done to harmonize with the state and people are now directed to follow state guidance. The statewide masking mandate, which includes schools, will sunset on March 11. Masking is still required in healthcare, shelter, long-term care, correction, and pharmacy settings. Masking in schools will be the personal choice of those attending and not a statewide recommendation.

The main goal as we move out of an emergency response is to continue to protect the health care system and limit severe disease, disability, long COVID, and death. Vaccination will transition to the health care system. Testing will as well, and also can be performed with home test kits. Case and contact investigation will focus on addressing outbreaks in congregate and high risk settings, such as long-term care, shelters, jails and prisons, and schools.



Executive Session

The Snohomish Health District Board of Health will recess and convene into Executive Session for the purposes sale, acquisition, or lease of real property pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)©, potential litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i), and personnel matter pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to evaluate qualifications of an applicant for public employment. Executive Session is expected to last up to 15 minutes. Unless extended to a later time, the Board will reconvene into regular session at 4:02 p.m. and is not expected to take action. The Board of Health extended Executive Session 5 minutes and 2 minutes and reconvened into regular session at 4:09 p.m. and did not take action.

Written Reports

Vice Chair Jorstad noted that the following reports can be found in the Board packet:

- a. Sound Foundation for Public Health Annual Report
- b. Finance Manager's Report for November 2021 (SR 22-006; S. Centanni)
- c. Finance Manager's Report for December 2021 (SR 22-013; S. Centanni)
- d. Program Policy Committee draft minutes – Feb. 17
- e. Administration Committee draft minutes – Feb. 23
- f. Executive Committee draft minutes – Feb. 28
- g. Public Health Advisory Council draft minutes – Feb. 23

Information Items

Vice Chair Jorstad requested Ms. Sarah de Jong to announce upcoming meetings. Ms. de Jong announced the upcoming meetings, noting the date and time for the Executive Committee may change.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

Stephanie Wright, Chair

Shawn Frederick, Administrative Officer / Secretary