

Whatcom County Council as the Health Board

**COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010**



Minutes - Final

**Tuesday, October 4, 2022
10 AM
Hybrid Meeting**

**HYBRID MEETING (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN
INSTRUCTIONS AT www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL
360.778.5010) JOINT MEETING WITH THE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Carol Frazey
Kaylee Galloway
Kathy Kershner

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Health Board Chair Todd Donovan called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 6 - Barry Buchanan, Todd Donovan, Carol Frazey, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, and Kathy Kershner

Absent: 1 - Tyler Byrd

Announcements**PHAB and Health Board call to order. Land acknowledgment. Roll call of PHAB and Health Board members. Approve PHAB September 2022 minutes (pages 2-5)**

The following Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) members were present at roll call:

- Barry Buchanan
- Greg Thompson
- Steve Bennett
- Shamika Brooks
- Sterling Chick
- Leah Wainman

Leah Wainman gave the land acknowledgment.

Members of the PHAB did not vote on the September 2022 minutes because they did not have a quorum.

Public comment

The following people spoke:

- Natalie Chavez
- Pamela Carron
- Misty Flowers
- (Name not given)

Health Board/County Council update on relevant items

Erika Lautenbach, Health Department Director, stated it is Children's Health Month and she introduced the presentation. She also requested that board members share issues or policies they are thinking about as the Health Department develops their work plan for 2023.

Allison Williams, Health Department, presented, spoke about a preventive care media toolkit, and played a related video.

Lautenbach stated the Single Entry Access to Services (SEAS) program (referenced in the video) is in part funded by Whatcom County and by the City of Bellingham and the home visiting nurse (Erin Schuldt) in the video is part of the County's nurse family partnership. She answered whether the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program has picked back up again after not getting as much attention and demand from potential users in the last few years.

Amy Harley, Co-Health Officer, thanked Allison and Kathryn DeFilippo (Health Department) for their efforts.

Kershner asked the speakers whether this program is promoting parents vaccinating their children with the COVID-19 vaccine as well as the standard childhood vaccines, and what the current professional opinion is on vaccinating children six months and above with an experimental vaccine.

Harley stated from what she has seen, they are promoting routine preventive care and particularly developmental assessments and screenings as they saw in the video.

Williams stated it does not call out any particular vaccines but is a focus on the importance of safety of getting in with your regular health care provider for your child and it is really a discussion for families and providers together. She also stated that SEAS has been in our community for a dozen years at least, providing navigation for families with children ages birth to 21 and is now expanding to include parents prenatally to age five.

Harley answered what the medical community's current standard operating procedure is for the COVID-19 vaccine for children six months and older, whether parents are being encouraged, whether it is being discussed, or whether most medical providers are past it now. She answered whether national professional organizations are still recommending it, and whether providers will then be pressured to recommend it.

Community Health Assessment/Community Health Improvement Plan (pages 6-21)

The following people presented:

- Emily O'Connor, Lydia Place/Healthy Whatcom/PHAB
- Amy Hockenberry, Whatcom County Health Department
- Amy Rydel, Whatcom County Health Department/Healthy Whatcom

Rydel introduced the item and asked members what they hope will be discussed today. Responses were as follows:

Bennett: Access to childcare, kindergarten readiness, and expanding on the previous presentation about child health

Donovan: Access to dental health

Brooks: Mental health access for children and youth

Kershner: The staffing crisis and shortage we have in all human services in Whatcom County (childcare workers and support staff that work with people with developmental disabilities and with seniors)

Rydel presented (presentation slides on file) on:

- Community Health Improvement Overview
- Community Health Improvement in Whatcom County

She answered how we know we are getting results, and learning more about results-based accountability.

Hockenberry spoke about the role data plays in the process.

Rydel presented about tools for collaborative strategic planning, including results-based accountability (RBA) and the “groundwater approach” of not just looking at individuals within the system but also looking at the system as a whole.

O’Connor presented about the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

Hockenberry spoke about important dates related to County Government so they can see how closely aligned their work is, and implementation and evaluation of the CHIP.

The speakers answered how we get to the "how we'll get there" strategies as referenced in the presentation, who the "we" are that are involved in the Community Health Improvement Plan, whether they are organizations speaking for the community or whether they have community members who are not attached to an organization, whether those people are included in the decision-making process of priorities, and what the evaluation findings are and efforts moving forward as it relates to racial equity.

Rydel presented on opportunities for alignment and what they can expect to

see in the next 18 months.

Lautenbach closed the presentation and stated they want to create opportunities, where members' interests lie, to engage in this process, by either being formally or informally involved or receiving information. She asked what is resonating for them in this work, how they could see themselves contributing to the work, and where they would like to be more involved or more informed of the process.

The following members answered:

Bennett stated he enjoys these joint meetings because it unifies our understanding of what is going on. He is looking forward to continuing the partnership with Healthy Whatcom.

Chick spoke about mental health access. He is going to be a strong advocate that they clearly define what access means and what they can do to make that word matter.

Frazey stated she likes that they are focusing on prevention and also the idea of funding the most basic components. She asked whether there will be accountability for each of the programs involved as they consider funding.

Donovan asked whether the dashboard will have new data coming closer to 2022 or being updated in real-time.

Kershner spoke about the community health crisis with drug overdoses and stated she would like to see an emergency proclamation for the fentanyl crisis in our community. She asked what we are doing about kids that are overdosing on fentanyl.

Lautenbach spoke about the drug problem and balancing intervention and prevention. She stated they could potentially have a conversation in Kershner's Public Works and Health Committee about the opioid task force, paired with information about the opioid settlement that the State of Washington has finalized with a number of pharmaceutical companies and what the share of that will be for Whatcom County and the cities. There is a lot of intervention work happening that we do not talk about as much as we should but it is a great time to talk about what we are doing, knowing that all of these complex issues are national problems and not just local problems.

Meeting evaluation

Bennett opened it up to anyone who wanted to offer a meeting evaluation but no one spoke. He stated he appreciates the work they all did today.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

The County Council approved these minutes on October 11, 2022.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Todd Donovan, Health Board Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE