



**Snohomish Health District
Board of Health Minutes
May 11, 2021**

The meeting was held via Zoom conference call/video.

Members Present

Scott Bader, Councilmember, Everett
Elisabeth Crawford, Councilmember, Mukilteo
Megan Dunn, County Councilmember
Adrienne Fraley-Monillas, Councilmember, Edmonds– BOH Vice Chair
Christine Frizzell, Councilmember, Lynnwood
John Joplin, Councilmember, Brier
Anji Jorstad, Councilmember, Lake Stevens
Sam Low, County Councilmember
Kyoko Matsumoto Wright, Mayor, Mountlake Terrace
Jared Mead, County Councilmember
Nate Nehring, County Councilmember
Dan Rankin, Mayor, Darrington
Linda Redmon, Councilmember, Snohomish
Jeff Vaughan, Councilmember, Marysville
Stephanie Wright, County Councilmember – BOH Chair

Members Absent

None

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Board of Health was called to order at 3:01 p.m. via Zoom conference call by Board Chair Stephanie Wright.

Roll Call

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

Arrivals/Departures

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Ms. Linda Redmon and seconded by Mr. Dan Rankin to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 13, 2021. The motion passed with 15 yes votes, 0 no votes, 0 absent.

Public Comment

Public comment was accepted in writing prior to the meeting. Chair Wright reported no written comments were received.

Written Reports

Chair Wright noted that the following written reports can be found in the Board packet:

- a. Finance Manager's report for February 2021
- b. Program Policy Committee draft minutes – Apr. 15
- c. Administration Committee draft minutes – Apr. 28
- d. Executive Committee draft minutes – Apr. 29

Consent

It was moved by Mr. Scott Bader and seconded by Mr. Rankin to approve the following items on consent:

- a. Approve vouchers and Res. 21-13 authorizing April 2021 Health District expenditures
- b. Authorize the Environmental Health Director to restructure the Environmental Health division to separate the Land Use and Safe Environments programs, as well as reassign the health educator to serve the entire division
- c. Approve the Community Equity Advisory Board bylaws
- d. Approve POL 135.001 concerning budget policies
- e. Approve POL 130.001 concerning finance policies
- f. Approve Res. 21-12 recognizing Amy Beth Cook for her service on the PHAC

The motion passed with 15 yes votes, 0 no votes, 0 absent.

Staff and Ms. Stephanie Wright expressed their gratitude for Amy Beth Cook and her contributions with the Public Health Advisory Council.

Briefings

COVID Response (SR 21-048; S. Frederick)

The county is seeing its third highest peak of COVID-19 cases since the pandemic began. To ensure the Health District has the capacity to maintain efforts should another surge arrive, Mr. Shawn Frederick presented a framework for staffing that could expand and retract depending on the progression of the disease. The framework concentrates on school/childcare work and also accounts for capacity to onboard staff and manage various financial strings coming into the Health District.

Action

Proclamation for National Nurses Week (SR 21-049; S. Frederick)

Mr. Frederick read a proclamation, thanking and recognizing nurses for their dedication and selfless work they perform.

It was moved by Mr. Rankin and seconded by Ms. Anji Jorstad to authorize the Board of Health Chairperson to sign a proclamation recognizing and honoring the nurses of Snohomish County. The motion passed with 15 yes votes, 0 no votes, 0 absent.

Administrative Officer's Report

The child care health outreach team has recently been chosen by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) as a recipient for the 2021 Innovative Practice Bronze Award for their development of educational material that was shared statewide to provide guidance to childcare providers.

Therese Quinn, a Health District emergency management specialist, was recently recognized by the National Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) as a recipient of the Elizabeth Fitch Memorial Leadership Award – a national award that recognizes individuals who exemplify outstanding passion, commitment, spirit of volunteerism, partnership, and leadership qualities.

Staff are continuing to work on figuring out the best options for replacing eight HVAC units that were installed in 2007; one of the units has recently failed.

On May 5, staff discovered a significant portion of the basement had flooded. It's believed that at some point within the past couple weeks, a vehicle hit a tree in the median in front of the building, which then damaged the irrigation system, causing water to leak and saturate the soil. Water then began leaking into the building. It took about three days, after the water was turned off, for it to stop seeping in at a significant rate. A water remediation company has been onsite since the day the flooding was discovered to vacuum the water in the initial phases and are now dehumidifying the space. The Health District's insurance adjusters and the City of Everett's insurance adjusters will be onsite to perform their evaluations and we expect in the near future to receive a final plan from the water remediation company regarding restoration of the damaged areas. Ten vehicles were also relocated from the basement to a satellite lot to allow the water remediation company a clear work space.

There has been an increase in interest for both the Rucker building and the South county building within the past 30-45 days. The South County building has had several showings and we are excited for the possibility of renting the space out in the near future.

The Health District has traditionally played a supportive role to Human Services efforts in response to wildfire seasons. With the wildfire season approaching, leadership will meet with Human Services to discern their plans for this year and ensure effective coordination and communication.

Health Officer's Report

E.coli

A presumed outbreak of E. coli O157:H7 has been detected in King and Snohomish County. Out of nine detected cases, seven were in King County and two were in Snohomish, with a total of six hospitalizations. As with most foodborne diseases, about 10% is typically detected out of what occurs, and so there is a strong possibility that there are more cases that are going undetected.

Tuberculosis

Five new TB cases have been reported over the last seven days, with three confirmed and two suspected; there is no known link between these cases. Overall, the active case census has almost doubled in the past 5-6 weeks – from 11 cases on April 1 to the current number of 20.

COVID-19

Cases appear to be coming down from a recent peak of 1,000 cases per week two weeks ago. Hospitalizations, both total and new people hospitalized with COVID, are at about half of the peaks of both the first and third waves. Hospitals are able to handle the workload and the age groups hospitalized are also younger than previously experienced. The 50-59 age group has the highest number of hospitalizations, followed by the 40-49 age group, and then ages over 65 coming in third. The number of adults on ventilators is at about 10%; the prior wave had ventilator use around 20%.

About two weeks ago, there was a spike in long-term care cases, with 12 out of 16 cases originating from staff working in one unit in a single facility. Subsequently, there have been no long-term care cases despite the higher rates seen in the community. Deaths are still occurring but at a fraction of what was experienced with the prior wave. The lower case and death rates speak to the cocooning achieved with vaccinations of this demographic.

The testing positivity rate has risen to about 8%. Testing demand of Health District resources remains steady at about 2,000 tests administered at testing sites per week. These testing sites are administering about 20% of the 10,000 tests countywide each week and we are seeing similar positivity rates as other testing partners in the county.

We are seeing a continued expansion of the B.1.1.7 variant, which is about 50-70% more transmissible than the previous strains circulating in the community and is the fastest growing strain statewide.

Almost 650,000 doses of vaccine have been administered in Snohomish County. Looking at residents' vaccination status, 380,000 have initiated vaccination and almost 280,000 have completed their vaccination schedule, representing about 46% and 34%, respectively, of the total population. Of the eligible population (ages 16 and up), about 42% are fully vaccinated and 57% have initiated vaccination. While these numbers continue to improve, they're still not high enough to curb transmission, which speaks to the need for a balanced attack with vaccination and maintaining the ability to perform case containment. Over 70% of adults over the age of 65 have initiated vaccination and 65% have completed their vaccination schedule.

Interest in vaccination is now waning, following a peak of 8,000 doses administered per day. There's still a demand for mass vaccination clinics but a diversification of the portfolio means the closure of the vaccination effort over the coming weeks and months as we begin to transition away from an emphasis on Health District-operated high-throughput settings. Mass-vaccination clinics are shifting some of their hours and days of operations to make appointments more accessible and vaccines are also being diverted to the healthcare system.

The Snohomish County Vaccine Task Force has focused on reducing disparities in vaccine coverage. The Latino population, which is experiencing the largest disparity, has begun to close the gap its vaccination rates. Part of this can be attributed to that demographic's age distribution being younger, so as vaccination age lowers, that group will naturally begin to catch up.

Yesterday the FDA authorized the emergency use of the Pfizer vaccine from the minimum age of 16 years down to 12 years based on favorable results for safety and efficacy in younger adolescents. This will be reviewed by CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the Western States Scientific Review Committee and will likely culminate in the adoption of this recommendation by the CDC and the Washington State Department of Health.

One challenge of the Pfizer vaccine is the deep freeze requirement that many clinics are unable to meet, causing a potential barrier for pediatric clinics to administer the Pfizer vaccine to younger age groups. Because of this, a spillover is expected into mass-vaccination sites; however, there will come a point when vaccinating younger age groups is no longer practical due to the design of these sites. The Vaccine Task Force is also exploring how to make use of its existing efforts to accept adolescents into the current community-oriented clinics.

Representatives from the Office of Social Justice and the Vaccine Task Force will be invited to attend committee meetings to further discuss outreach being performed for minority populations.

Executive Session

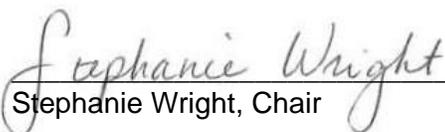
The Snohomish Health District Board of Health convened into executive session for the purposes of potential litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) and for collective bargaining matters pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(a). Unless extended to a later time, the Board will reconvene into regular session at 4:00 p.m. and is not expected to take action. The Board announced they will extend executive session 10 minutes, 5 minutes, and 5 minutes. They reconvened at 4:20 p.m. and did not take action.

Information Items

Chair Wright announced upcoming meetings.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 p.m.


Stephanie Wright, Chair


Shawn Frederick, Administrative Officer / Secretary