

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
June 1, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Commissioner Charlotte Garrido at 12:32 p.m.

REVIEW AND APPROVE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Rob Gelder moved and Mayor Becky Erickson seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the May 4, 2021, regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The June consent agenda included the following contracts:

- 1749 Amendment 20 (2173) *Washington State Department of Health, Consolidated Contract*
- 2111, *Jefferson County Public Health, Nurse Family Partnership*

Mayor Putaansuu moved and Mayor Erickson seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda, including the Contracts Update and Warrant and Electronic Funds Transfer Registers. The motion was approved unanimously.

CHAIR COMMENT

Chair Garrido said she really appreciated the presentation by Dr. Robertson last month. It was inspiring and enlightening.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cynthia Bellas: Spoke about noninvasive surveillance testing and a pilot study her team would like to launch in Kitsap County utilizing CARES act funding. Ms. Bellas was joined by Dr. Jeremy Rossman, founder of Research-Aid Networks and a virologist at the University of Kent and Dr. Derek Toomre, professor, researcher and inventor from Yale. Cynthia emphasized that this is a legitimate effort to combat the Covid transmission through our community.

Dr. Jeremy Rossman: Spoke about a very cheap and accessible smell test to identify COVID cases in the community. He said COVID is looking better in many communities, however we still do not have the level of full vaccination that is needed to protect the community. We are also seeing more variants. He said, until we get to the point of really good vaccine protection we are at a place where extra precautions can make a difference. This smell test can be done at home and at a community level to help stop the spread of COVID. Dr. Rossman said it is an example of a system that can be used locally while being a shining example of something that can be done internationally. He said there is no financial interest in this.

Dr. Derek Toomre: Explained that this is a factory test that can be done with an app. The team has done clinical trials in Brazil and with the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation. He said modeling shows that if this could be done in a repeated way it could block transmission. The team would like to do a clinical study on a large cohort of people, an island community like Bainbridge Island would be optimal. He said this would be beneficial for the community and outside of the US in general. Dr. Toomre noted this rapid COVID test won the X Prize for rapid COVID test competition out of 720 teams, but he said the key part is to show that this can work in a community and have an impact. Dr. Toomre said his team would like to ask for consideration and have a conversation about a clinical trial.

Mayor Wheeler would like to reinforce and welcome this company to discuss this with the staff. Ms. Bellas will follow up with an email to Dr. Morrow and Mr. Greller to discuss a meeting date.

Ms. Angie Berger read a public comment received via email regarding the racism as a public health crisis resolution. The individual inquired about the Health District and County's status and timeline for this resolution.

HEALTH OFFICER/ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Health Officer Update:

Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer, deferred his remarks until the COVID-19 presentation.

There was no further comment.

Administrator Update:

Mr. Keith Grellner, Administrator, reminded the Board that last month, for the first time in over a year, we had a non-covid agenda item when the Board adopted Resolution 2021-01, Declaring Racism is a Public Health Crisis. Mr. Grellner shared the implementation plan for Kitsap Public Health District and showed an ongoing timetable. He explained the Health District's plan of identifying leads, new hire plans and an internal equity committee. He said there has been a lot of progress made since the meeting last month.

Chair Garrido commented that this was a great plan and asked if it could be emailed to the Board. She commented that it is a very ambitious piece of work that deserves a lot of discussion and mutual understanding.

Commissioner Gelder likes the idea of reporting back to the Board and noted that he would like to see an annual report to the community. This could be a portion of another process or stand alone. Chair Garrido agreed with providing an annual report for helping the public understand what we are doing. Mr. Grellner said he would be happy to make that happen.

There was no further comment from the board.

2020 WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR CLEAN WATER KITSAP

John Kiess, Environmental Health Director, introduced Grant Holdcroft, Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) Program Manager.

Mr. Holdcroft gave a presentation on protecting public health through preventing and correcting water pollution in partnership with Clean Water Kitsap. In his report he spoke about 2020 PIC program highlights, health advisories for local streams, 2020 water quality monitoring results and standards, water quality in lakes, and pollution sources and prevention. Additionally, in 2020 the PIC program:

- Monitored 69 streams for pollution,
- Collected 3,642 water samples,
- Logged 13,107 staff hours,
- Had 340 health advisory days for local lakes, and
- Increased number of usable shellfish beds by 137 acres

Mr. Holdcroft said the vast majority of work the PIC program does is based on investigating septic tank issues and poor agricultural practices as sources of pollution. Staff work with property owners directly to keep the surface water clean. The PIC program helps people find and fix septic system issues every day to keep waste out of our water ways. Most of the time staff offer technical assistance and connect individuals with Craft3 for loans, however sometimes people are not able to qualify for a loan to fix their septic tank. Mr. Holdcroft shared an anecdote about someone who had applied for a loan but did not qualify because her income was \$500 of Social Security a month. Staff were able to find a solution with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and helped the resident apply for a loan. After a year and a half, and with the help with USDA and a patient septic installer, the PIC staff kept their commitment to public health and helped the low-income homeowner make the repair. Septic system designs and bids are part of the process and the design costs at least \$1,400. PIC is working to address that stumbling block. This success story is featured on the USDA website and exemplifies the work the PIC team does daily to take care of pollution.

The Washington State Department of Ecology recently changed the freshwater quality standard to test for *E. coli* instead of fecal coliform. When the state changes standards, Mr. Holdcroft explained, it becomes challenging to tell if there has been an environmental impact on water quality over time. The Health District had previously been able to use the fecal coliform sampling to show trends of water quality improving or declining. In 2020, 34 Kitsap streams met the standard, 29 streams met part of the standard, and 6 streams failed the standard.

Mayor Erickson asked what the rationale is for switching the state standard from the fecal coliform to *E. coli*? Mr. Holdcroft explained that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has implemented this change nationally, so the state Department of Ecology has had to follow suit. Mr. Kiess added that the EPA changed the standard based on health data – it is shown that high *E. coli* values in recreational waters are more directly correlated with water born illness and are proving to be the better indicator over time. The same was not found to be true for fecal coliform. Washington state was one of the last states to switch to the *E. coli* indicator.

Mayor Erickson asked if the PIC program is still using microbial source tracking (MST) with adequate libraries. Mr. Holdcroft confirmed that the PIC program still uses MST and it is constantly being upgraded with additional libraries.

Mayor Erickson said she is concerned that, by changing the standard, it is going to be more difficult to find the contaminant that is going into a failing creek and determine if it is human or animal. Mr. Kiess clarified that MST analysis is not tied to fecal coliform or *E. coli* bacteria and said staff can tell the difference between ducks and human feces in the water.

Commissioner Gelder is asked how this impacts the total maximum daily load (TMDL) and how the program focuses on that. Mr. Kiess recognized that many jurisdictions have been asking the Washington State Department of Ecology the same question and Ecology has yet to fully clarify. There are two TMDLs for bacteria in Kitsap: Liberty Bay and Dyes Inlet. Mr. Kiess said we have met the overall goals for bacteria, and the receiving waters are meeting standards. The good news, Mr. Kiess said, is as long as we continue to monitor for bacteria and keep our receiving waters safe, the State Department of Ecology will recognize our work in lowering the fecal load to our receiving waters.

Mayor Erickson asked when this transfer happened. Mr. Holdcroft said the standard changed in February 2019, but the sunset period of the previous standard ended in December of 2020.

Mayor Greg Wheeler noted the City of Bremerton has programs in place to provide payment options for those with difficulty paying sewer connection fees. Mayor Wheeler would welcome a discussion about this with PIC staff.

Mr. Holdcroft continued his presentation with maps of various regions and the stream health within those parts of the county. Additionally, he noted the PIC program monitors 17 lakes during the summer and posts public health advisories at these lakes when they are unsafe for swimming due to toxic bacteria. There are many common sources of people pollution and steps to take to improve the water quality.

Chair Garrido wanted to know how this information is getting out to the public. Mr. Holdcroft said staff hand out lots of educational materials and time talking to residents about septic systems and agricultural waste, so it does not adversely impact water quality. Mr. Kiess added that through the Clean Water Kitsap partnership, WSU Extension, Kitsap County Public Works, Kitsap Public Utility District, and other partners get the word out on how to protect water quality.

Commissioner Gelder asked why the streams of focus are changing from year to year and asked if there is a general logic to this. Mr. Holdcroft explained staff generally find, through investigation, that septic and agricultural waste is often the culprit. Staff sample 6-8 spots on a stream and find the segment that has the higher number, then focus their efforts on that segment. Mr. Kiess added that decreased numbers for problem streams are generally due to one big pollution spot and small successes over time that add up. Some of the cleanup work in large

drainage basins allowed the bacteria load to go down over time. Fixing one problem can show a large decrease in the bacterial load over the year.

There was no further comment.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Dr. Morrow approached the Board regarding COVID-19 updates and commented it is great to see the streams in good shape and commended the PIC program on a job well done.

Dr. Morrow let the board know that the case rates, hospitalizations, and deaths are all decreasing while vaccinations (now available to age 12 and up) are increasing in Kitsap. The governor plans to reopen the state on June 30th, or earlier if we can hit 70% of the population vaccinated prior to the end of the month. We are still not out of the woods; things are going in the right direction but it is important to note that the disease activity is still high. At the national level, daily averages are the lowest since June of 2020. Dr. Morrow reminded the board that vaccinations are crucial and showed a graph based on disease activities by age group. The lowest vaccinations correspond with the highest case rates. Dr. Morrow shared a graph showing the vaccination rates and disease activities by race and ethnicity. This reflects continual inequities and disparities that the Health District is working on correcting.

Dr. Morrow said that access to vaccine and willingness to get vaccinated are still issues in Kitsap. He said data shows 97% of new COVID-19 cases are in unvaccinated individuals locally and nationally. He said vaccines appear to be effective against all circulating strains and noted the UK variant is about 75% of all current cases. Washington Department of Health shows that Kitsap vaccination rates (which includes full population, regardless of eligibility) are behind the state average, behind Jefferson and ahead of Pierce County. These numbers do not reflect the Veteran's Administration or the Department of Defense. He said the Health District believes that these vaccinations increase Kitsap rates by about 7% and would bring us in line with the statewide numbers.

Dr. Morrow said the Health District is shifting strategies to encourage vaccination. There has been some shift from high throughput clinics to pharmacies giving more vaccines and the goal is to get vaccines out to physician's offices and administered there. He said strategies to get people off the fence include making vaccines available, convenient, safe, and easy. Dr. Morrow has worked with the medical community to make sure all the barriers to give vaccinations at routine clinic visits have been lifted. Vaccines can be stored in the refrigerator for a month, and there is no longer concern for using all available doses in the vial the day it is open. Dr. Morrow emphasized that providers should listen to their patients' needs and concerns and provide vaccine information to them.

Lastly, Dr. Morrow shared new guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Labor and Industries (L&I) regarding masks. He emphasized that unmasking is for vaccinated people only, and noted that employers and businesses may continue masking requirements to reduce risk to staff and others in their facilities.

Mayor Wheeler acknowledged the efforts to improve vaccine accessibility in Bremerton but commented that vaccine hesitancy is a complex issue in Bremerton, which primarily has to do with lack of trust for a variety of reasons which would be economic status, race, or lack of a primary health care relationship. Mayor Wheeler encourages everyone to continue outreach and gaining trust within the communities.

There was no further comment.

ADJOURN

There was no further business; the meeting adjourned at 1:47 p.m.



Charlotte Garrido
Kitsap Public Health Board



Keith Grellner
Administrator

Board Members Present: Mayor Becky Erickson; Commissioner Charlotte Garrido; Commissioner Robert Gelder; Deputy Mayor Kirsten Hytopoulos; Mayor Robert Putaansuu; Mayor Greg Wheeler; Commissioner Ed Wolfe.

Board Members Absent: None.

Community Members Present: See Attached

Staff Present: Amy Anderson, Public Health Educator, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response; Kandice Atisme, Program Manager, Case and Contact Investigation, COVID-19; Sarah Beers, COVID Emergency Operations Coordinator, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response; Angie Berger, Administrative Assistant, Administration; Dana Bierman, Program Manager, Chronic Disease Prevention; Holly Bolstad, COVID Community Outreach Specialist, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response; Stephanie Byrd, Confidential Secretary, COVID-19; Elizabeth Davis, COVID Vaccine Public Health Nurse, COVID-19; Anna Diaz, Secretary Clerk 2, COVID-19; April Fisk, Program Coordinator, Contracts Manager, Public Records & Safety Officer, MAC, Administration; Yolanda Fong, Director, Community Health Division; Keith Grellner, Administrator, Administration; Jill Guerrero, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Grant Holdcroft, Program Manager, Pollution Identification and Correction; Karen Holt, Program Manager, Human Resources; John Kiess, Director, Environmental Health Division; Siri Kushner, Assistant Director, Community Health Division; Melissa Laird, Manager, Accounting and Finance; Megan Moore, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer, Administration; Beth Phipps, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, Communicable Disease; Tatiana Rodriguez, Communications Specialist, COVID-19 Program; Stephanie Schreiber, Community Liaison, Chronic Disease Prevention; Annye Tapia, Disease Intervention Specialist, COVID-19; Mindy Tonti, Community Health Worker, HIV Case Management.

Kitsap Public Health Board Meeting (Virtual Attendance)

Webinar ID

861 8605 2497

Actual Start Time

6/1/2021 11:54

First Name**Last Name**

Amy

Anderson

KANDICE

Atismé-Bevins

Sarah

Beers

Cynthia

Bellas

Angie

Berger

Dana

Bierman

Holly

Bolstad

Stephanie

Byrd

John

Clauson

Tiffany

Cooper

Kitsap

County Commissioners Office

Liz

Davis, Kitsap Public Health

Anna

Diaz

Ivy

Edmonds-Hess

April

Fisk

Yolanda

Fong

Keith

Grellner

Jill

Guerrero

Grant

Holdcroft

Karen

Holt

John

Kiess

John

Koch

Siri

Kushner

Melissa

Laird

Barbara

Lemon

Monte

Levine

Linda

McAboy

Tracy

Miller

Megan

Moore (she/her)

Irene

Moyer

Beth

Phipps

KIRO

Radio

Tatiana

Rodriguez

Jeremy

Rossman

First Name**Last Name**

Bob

Russell

Stephanie

Schreiber

Stacey

Smith

Michael

Spencer (BKAT)

Annye

Tapia

Mindy

Tonti

derek

toomre

SHELLEY

WEATHERBY

Tayler