

**KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**April 1, 2025**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tara Sell at 8:30 a.m.

Board members present gave a brief introduction.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Becky Erickson moved and Commissioner Christine Rolfes seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the March 4, 2025, regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The April consent agenda included the following contracts:

- 2233, Amendment 4, *Kitsap County, GIS Services*
- 2441, Amendment 3, *Washington State Department of Health, Consolidated Contract*
- 2462, *Kitsap County Jail*

Member Dr. Michael Watson moved and Member Drayton Jackson seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**HEALTH OFFICER/ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Administrator Report:

Yolanda Fong, Administrator, shared several updates:

- **Loss of Federal Funds:** Due to decisions made at the federal level, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) terminated multiple pandemic-related grants, resulting in a loss of approximately \$130 million in funding for Washington State. This will impact key areas such as epidemiology, laboratory capacity, immunization efforts, the Care Connect program, and health equity initiatives. The Health District has received a notice from DOH suspending COVID-19 vaccine funding, which was expected through June 2025. These funds supported vaccine clinics for children and adults, the coordination of vaccine efforts with community partners, and other vaccine-related campaigns. In response, the Health District has removed future vaccine clinic promotions from its website, although information about vaccine clinics through Peninsula Community Health Services remains available. Ms. Fong noted she will be

meeting with leadership to discuss next steps and strategies to address these funding cuts.

- County Health Rankings: The University of Wisconsin's 2025 County Health Rankings ranked Kitsap County highest in Washington under the Community Conditions area, which considers social and economic factors, physical environment, and health infrastructure. A summary of the report is available on the Health District's website.
- GovDelivery Access Issue: The Health District's notification service, GovDelivery, was temporarily inaccessible due to unauthorized activity. Notifications continued via the Health District's website, and full service is expected to resume soon.
- National Public Health Week (April 7-13): In celebration of National Public Health Week, the Health District will recognize staff and promote public health awareness through social media and blog posts.

Board members discussed the updates and asked clarifying questions.

There was no further comment.

Health Officer Report:

Due to the Health Officer's absence, Lynn Pittsinger, Community Health Director, shared the Health Officer Report on behalf of Dr. Gib Morrow:

- Public health is currently facing serious challenges, including funding cuts, attacks on credibility, and threats to its mission. Thousands of public health workers have been laid off nationwide, though the Health District expects to avoid personnel cuts in 2025 due to careful financial stewardship and ongoing monitoring of funding streams.
- The Board was thanked for supporting legislative priorities related to the continued funding and strengthened authority of public health. This support enabled Health District staff to meet with state legislators in March to advocate for Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS), using local stories to highlight the value and impact of public health work.
- FPHS funding, which represents nearly 20% of the Health District's total budget, has been instrumental in supporting essential services such as policy development, community health improvement planning, education, communications, and disease control efforts. This revenue stream was at risk of significant cuts; however, due to legislative action, funding will likely be maintained at current levels. Dr. Morrow expressed deep appreciation to the Board and other elected officials for their support of public health funding as a legislative priority and for their ongoing advocacy on behalf of the Health District.
- In other parts of the nation, public health decisions are being made without the use of scientific evidence or best-available data. The Health District plans to continue using scientific information and evidence to guide the agency's work. Using evidence-based

practices saves lives and money and allows the agency to deliver effective and responsible public health services.

- To underscore the value of public health investment, Dr. Morrow cited recent measles outbreaks. Measles, a vaccine-preventable disease, spreads rapidly in under-vaccinated communities. Recent outbreaks have sickened hundreds, caused deaths, and required costly response efforts. Approximately 20-40% of those infected are hospitalized; complications can include deafness, neurological damage, and long-term immune dysfunction. The estimated social and economic burden of each measles case is around \$40,000 in healthcare costs, medical interventions, public health response, and lost productivity. The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective preventative measure that is free through state and federal programs. Alternative remedies like cod liver oil and vitamin A are not effective in preventing this disease. A recent case in Snohomish County demonstrated the benefits of a swift, coordinated public health response, which successfully minimized community risk.

There was no further comment.

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**

Kandice Atismé-Bevins, Equity and Performance Program Manager, shared updates related to the Health District's Strategic Plan and Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP). During the presentation, Ms. Atismé-Bevins discussed the following:

- The development of the Strategic Plan in 2023 and the Board's approval of new mission and vision statements, guiding principles, and strategic initiatives.
- The core components of the Health District's Strategic Plan and SIP, and the approach taken to develop the SIP.
- Methods the Health District uses to monitor, evaluate, and update SIP activities.
- Highlights of work completed under each of the five strategic initiatives in 2024.
- Lessons learned in 2024 and strategies planned to strengthen SIP efforts in 2025.

Board members discussed the update and asked clarifying questions.

There was no further comment.

#### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW: SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS AND HEPATITIS C**

Kelsey Stedman, Sexually Transmitted Infections and Hepatitis C Program Manager, shared an overview of the Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and Hepatitis C (HCV) program. In her presentation, Ms. Stedman addressed the following topics:

- The program's placement within the agency's organization structure and the program's team members.

- The meaning of notifiable conditions and the specific notifiable conditions prioritized by the STI/HCV program.
- The Health District's role in STI response, including surveillance, investigation, technical assistance, testing, and treatment.
- 2024 data for Kitsap County related to chlamydia, gonorrhea, HIV, and syphilis cases.

Due to time constraints, the presentation was abbreviated. Remaining content will be addressed at a subsequent meeting.

Board members discussed the presentation and asked questions.

There was no further comment.

#### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW: HIV CASE MANAGEMENT**

Ashley Duren, HIV Medical Case Management Supervisor, shared an overview of the HIV Case Management program. In her presentation, Ms. Duren highlighted:

- The program's placement within the agency's organizational structure and the staff comprising the HIV Case Management team.
- The number of clients served and associated demographic information.
- The geographic areas in which services are provided.
- Funding sources that support program operations.
- The types of client support offered, including healthcare navigation, insurance navigation, advocacy, education, and wraparound services.
- The role of Peer Navigators in supporting clients facing challenges such as being newly diagnosed or those struggling with mental or behavioral health.
- Viral suppression as a key program priority.
- Current caseload performance measures for active clients.
- Client support services such as food assistance, medical transportation, and housing assistance.

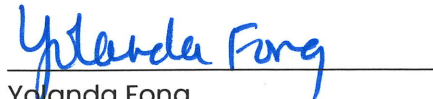
There was no further comment.

#### **ADJOURN**

There was no further business; the meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m. Chair Sell announced the Board will be moving into a closed session pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(b). She noted the Board will not reconvene after the closed session.



Dr. Tara Sell  
Kitsap Public Health Board



Yolanda Fong  
Administrator

**Board Members Present:** *Mayor Becky Erickson; Member Drayton Jackson; Member Stephen Kutz; Mayor Ashley Mathews; Mayor Rob Putaansuu; Commissioner Christine Rolfes; Member Dr. Tara Sell; Member Dr. Jolene Sullivan; Member Dr. Michael Watson; Mayor Greg Wheeler.*

**Board Members Absent:** *None.*

**Community Members Present:** *Janet Kalmen, Community Member; Jeff Riggins, Suquamish Tribe.*

**Scribe:** *Margo Chang, Management Analyst, Kitsap Public Health District.*

**Staff Present:** *Kandice Atismé-Bevins, Program Manager, Equity & Performance Management; Angie Berger, Management Analyst, Equity & Performance Management; Dana Bierman, Program Manager, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention; Ashley Duren, Social Worker 3, HIV Medical Case Management; Yolanda Fong, Administrator, Administration; Jessica Guidry, Director, Public Health Infrastructure Division; Adrienne Hampton, Policy, Planning, and Innovation Analyst, Administration; John Kiess, Director, Environmental Health Division; Lynn Pittsinger, Director, Community Health Division; Tad Sooter, Public Information Officer; Kelsey Stedman, Program Manager, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Hepatitis C, and HIV Case Management.*