



## WHATCOM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD SUMMARY (DISCUSSION ONLY - No Quorum)

JULY 16, 2019

**Present:** Barry Buchanan, Rachel Lucy - Chair, Chi-Na Stoane - Vice Chair

**Absent:** Sterling Chick, Barbara Juárez, Lindsey Karas, Les Seelye

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
<b>Approve Notes From Last Meeting</b>	Due to the lack of a quorum, no official business was conducted.
<b>Director's Report (DR)</b>	<p>Highlights: Those involved in the CHI process had a prioritization session which led to 3 focus topics. The team will work with community partners to move these forward. They hope to have the plan together by year end.</p> <p>Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement (WAHA) closed due to funding constraints. They held a meeting with key stakeholders to determine how to fill gaps created by their dissolution. The ACH has been asked to look at regional capacity for this.</p> <p>Human Services and our advisory boards are working to ensure Whatcom County has a severe weather shelter in place this winter. The County is in discussions with the City of Bellingham to determine how to best administer and utilize the 1046 State tax dollars we retain for housing.</p>
<b>PHAB Membership Recruitment update</b>	<p>We will reach out to a City Council member to fill the government position. Those present were asked to send names of potential candidates to Tammy or direct them to the County website for application materials. Chi-Na and Sterling will review applications with Regina.</p>
<b>Timeline for PHAB work over next 6 months</b>	<p>The group discussed the timeline for key activities including priorities that came out of the joint meeting with the Health Board. Updates were given for the following priority areas:</p> <p>Early Childhood Development: A subgroup is working in collaboration with Generations Forward to have an action plan by end of January 2020.</p> <p>Housing and Homelessness: Paul Schissler sent policy suggestions for affordable housing to Regina and the Executive's Office. These will be on the agenda for the August Housing Advisory Committee (HAC) meeting. Rachel recommended a few PHAB members attend the HAC meeting.</p> <p>Advocacy for FPHS: Local health departments and the State Department of Health are already planning for the next cycle.</p> <p>We need to add the corresponding work around housing and add: Nov 2019 - begin work on 2020 policy agenda.</p>
<b>Hot Topics</b>	<p>County Council is working on draft code amendments to Cherry Point.</p> <p>There is a pending resolution for planning principals for Jail Prevention/Behavioral Health and the potential for a 2020 ballot initiative for a new jail with more treatment and transitional housing options.</p>

<p><b>Hot Topics continued</b></p>	<p>Status of housing and food insecurity on college campuses in our community.</p> <p>What are the impacts of climate change and air quality in relation to topics discussed by PHAB? Someone with a passion and expertise for climate change would fit our board vacancy for physical environment. We will discuss the impacts of wildfire smoke at the July Health Board (HB) meeting.</p>
<p><b>Progress update on Health Protection for Immigrant Families</b></p>	<p>Holly walked the group through the process thus far. There will be one or two more task force meetings. The task force is working on a report of findings and experiences to bring back to the HB in October. They will incorporate specific recommendations scoped around the language in the resolution, and will also build off of the new Washington State sanctuary law.</p> <p>Though there may be access to services, people don't know how to connect or are afraid to. There is a large gap in access to mental health care. Can we provide safe access to healthcare?</p> <p>Thanks to Lindsay, the PHAB lead on moving this forward.</p>
<p><b>Review of Joint Session Health Board/PHAB session meeting notes and next steps</b></p>	<p>The report was included in the agenda packet. It contained three objectives that came out of the discussion.</p> <p>What would be our framework (toolkit) for advancing Health Policy? Barry felt there was a lot of energy around working together. Chi-Na felt it was powerful to hear lived experiences by the panel.</p> <p>Developing health policy is our responsibility and is a specific work we (PHAB, Health Board, and the Health Department) can do together.</p> <p>We broke into small groups to review, discuss, and develop recommendations for a draft health policy toolkit, to be finalized prior to the July 30<sup>th</sup> Health Board meeting.</p> <p><b><u>Observations and recommendations:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We should better utilize the monthly Public Works and Health Committee meetings to remind about the scope and role of the HB, and ensure understanding of health programs and issues.</li> <li>• When we bring items to the HB, it is important to remind them that we are bringing it to them and not to the City or the County Council because of their role as the HB.</li> <li>• Be aware of political impacts and consider the public will for proposed policy change.</li> <li>• We collaborate with the City. Who else we should we be working with?</li> <li>• Consider best practice and evidence based practice. Can they be the drivers to change?</li> <li>• Do we have the ability to measure the change? Impacts can be measured over time.</li> <li>• All policies have potential for health impacts. How do we communicate the elements of Health in all policies? Draw a clear line for how the policy connects to the outcomes we are trying to reach.</li> <li>• Create public trust.</li> <li>• Key: Keep the focus on how to achieve a health goal.</li> <li>• We have to figure out how to scale what is working elsewhere to fit Whatcom County.</li> <li>• Forms of policy work include passing of resolutions and prioritization.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other/Public Comment</b></p>	<p>Appreciate the understanding of the compilation of the organizations and policy groups who need to work together to improve health in our community.</p>

<p><b>What went well?</b> <b>What can we improve?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good follow-up to the retreat.</li><li>• Great meeting. (x2)</li><li>• Continuity and plan for future meetings</li><li>• Nice to see thread following through</li><li>• It is a boon to have the right person from council to see the issues</li><li>• Thanks to Rachel for facilitating what is important</li><li>• Great content in the packet</li><li>• Excited for first meeting and hope to come to more</li><li>• Excited and encouraged about the work</li></ul>
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