



MEETING OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

January 11, 2024
7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting

In person: Administrative Conference Room, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham, WA 98225
Public Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83928523398?pwd=L1dqUUZGVVVI5bE5HT1VGb2l1TlVtUT09>
Join by phone: 1 253 215 8782, Webinar ID: 839 2852 3398, Passcode: 98225
(members and presenters: please use Zoom link in your meeting invitation)

A G E N D A

Meeting Topics		Presenter	
1.	Call to order. Acknowledgments. Roll call of PHAB Members. Approve minutes from December meeting. (Pages 2-4)	7:00 - 7:05	Sterling Chick
2.	Public Comment	7:05 - 7:10	Sterling Chick
3.	Health Director/Health Officer Update	7:10 - 7:20	Erika Lautenbach/HIA staff for Greg Thompson
4.	County Council/Health Board member welcome	7:20 - 7:30	?
5.	Revisit PHAB roles and responsibilities (Pages 5-7)	7:30 - 7:50	Sterling Chick
6.	Discuss PHAB meeting structure and sub-group options (Pages 8-9)	7:50 - 8:20	Sterling Chick/Erika Lautenbach
7.	Final Comments/Next Steps/Adjourn	8:20 - 8:30	Sterling Chick
<p>The public is invited to email written comments on agenda items or other topics of interest to the Public Health Advisory Board at PHAB@co.whatcom.wa.us. Please put "PHAB Public Comment" in the subject line. Written comments received at least 48 hours before the meeting will be distributed to board members prior to the meeting. Oral comments from the public will be limited to topics on the agenda.</p> <p>Per RCW 42.17A.555 the use of public facilities to support or oppose candidates or ballot issues is prohibited. Members of the public and the legislative body are not allowed to speak in support of, or in opposition to, a ballot measure or individual candidacy during an open public meeting. Please refrain from raising campaign issues when addressing the Board.</p>			
Adjourn			

Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance.



WHATCOM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 7, 2023

Present: Steve Bennett (Chair), Sterling Chick, Madison Emry, Christine Espina, Jeffery Hart, Lindsey Karas, Kathy Kershner, Chris Kobdich, Michael Massanari, Guy Occhiogrosso, Emily O'Connor, Robyn Phillips-Madson, Ashley Thomasson, Amy Harley for Greg Thompson, Shu-Ling Zhao

Absent: Teri Bryant, Adrienne Renz, Edna Revey, Vesla Tonnessen, Leah Wainman

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
Call to order	Steve Bennett presented a land acknowledgement. Roll call of Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) members.
Approve Minutes	Sterling Chick moved that the minutes from the November 2 meeting be approved as presented. The board voted and the motion passed. Ayes: 15, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0
Public Comment	The following people spoke: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natalie Chavez
Health Director/Health Officer Update	Erika reported that the County Council passed the 2024 mid-biennium budget this week. Budget updates that we shared with the PHAB are in place and moving forward. Health Officer Dr. Greg Thompson is away. Co- Health Officer Dr. Amy Harley reported no updates and is here to answer questions. No questions asked from the PHAB members.
Health Board/County Council Update	Councilmember Kathy Kershner reported no updates. This is her last PHAB meeting as a councilmember. She thanked all PHAB members. She stated that she enjoyed working with them and appreciated their collaboration and support. Steven Bennett extended the same thanks to Kathy for her partnership and her work put in this year. Sterling Chick asked about the outcome of a motion to change qualification requirements to boards and commissions during Tuesday's Council meeting. Kathy Kershner responded that the motion was passed. The major change is that the person does not have to be a citizen or a registered voter to serve on Whatcom County boards and commissions.
PHAB Chair and Vice Chair Nominations and Vote	Steve Bennett said that this is also his last PHAB meeting. He opened the floor for any nominations for other individuals or self-nominations for a PHAB Chair and a Vice Chair; also, for discussions about roles and responsibilities as well. Sterling Chick self-nominated to be the Chair. The board voted and the nomination passed. Ayes: 15, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0

	<p>Councilmember Kathy Kershner nominated Emily O'Connor to be the Vice Chair. Emily accepted the nomination. The board voted and the nomination passed. Ayes: 15, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0</p>
<p>PHAB Workplan for 2024</p>	<p>Steve Bennett opened floor for an open-discussion, ideas and feedback for PHAB 2024 workplan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councilmember Kathy Kershner stated that she hopes the PHAB continues to take a look at issues affecting our senior population in our County, to make sure we design our environments and services to support our ever-growing senior population. • Steve Bennett stated that he hopes the PHAB continues conversations about PHAB workflow, to ensure the workflow be communicated with other boards and commissions and task forces, to partner with the Health Board to facilitate the workflow function and ensure we are on the same page. • Erika commented that we are happy to have communication with other boards and commissions. If you, in your role, as a member of other boards and commissions, and you know that you will work on certain topics or issue areas, that can be incorporated into PHAB agenda as well, so we can be supportive of your work. We will check in with other boards and commissions on their respective work plans too. • Guy Occhiogrosso stated that he is an advocate for housing availability. He said that an intersection point of many of our issues has homeless and the opioid crisis, the work of PHAB, the work of PHAB members such as Emily O'Connor, and the Healthy Children's Fund is housing availability. He suggested that some of points can be incorporated in PHAB's dialogue with other county committees such as Business and Commerce. Business and Commerce has been very vocal on the housing availability topic. Dialogues can start with the Planning Commission and the Comprehensive Plan process. Erika commented that both Whatcom County and City of Bellingham are going through their Comprehensive Plan process. She anticipated what there will be conversations about how we can ensure that health is considered and highlighted in both of these plans. • Emily O'Connor suggested that in the early next year to really think about what we hope to accomplish throughout the year, and to think about the meeting schedule and structure to allow conversational space. She looks forward to having a good plan in place to carry out goals and objectives we set for the year. • Guy Occhiogrosso suggested that the PHAB to continue to be intentional in mental health care. • Madison Emry suggested that the PHAB spend some time on education and prevention for at-risk youth. • Ashley Thomasson suggested that in the next few months we talk about how to bring other groups some PHAB members are representing in to help the PHAB to launch its workflow well. Steve Bennett agreed that we need to ensure other groups feel they are partnered in.
<p>Thank you to departing members – nomination process</p>	<p>Erika thanked Steve Bennet for his service in the past few years. Erika stated that Steve had been with us when we were facing the most significant challenges the Health and Community Services department had ever faced; he helped her in so many different ways as a PHAB member, as a Vice Chair and as a Chair through lots of hard and challenging times. She always appreciates his level-headedness, good ideas, thoughtfulness, kindness, care and sense of humor.</p>

	<p>Erika thanked Councilmember Kathy Kershner for her partnership last year. Erika stated that it has been her pleasure to serve with Kathy and have Kathy be a member of the PHAB. She appreciates Kathy's thoughtful way to engage and collaborate with the PHAB.</p> <p>Both Erika and Sterling Chick thanked Lindsey Karas for being a long serving member of the PHAB. This is Lindsey Karas' last PHAB meeting as well. Lindsey Karas thanked Sterling, Erika and Steven for their thoughtfulness. Lindsey stated that she had a good time being a PHAB member.</p>
Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 8:10 AM.



RCW 70.46.140

(Per Washington Administrative Code) Community health advisory boards—Membership—Meetings.

(1) A community health advisory board shall:

(a) Provide input to the local board of health in the recruitment and selection of an administrative officer, pursuant to RCW 70.05.045, and local health officer, pursuant to RCW 70.05.050;

(b) Use a health equity framework to conduct, assess, and identify the community health needs of the jurisdiction, and review and recommend public health policies and priorities for the local health jurisdiction and advisory board to address community health needs;

(c) Evaluate the impact of proposed public health policies and programs, and assure identified health needs and concerns are being met;

(d) Promote public participation in and identification of local public health needs;

(e) Provide community forums and hearings as assigned by the local board of health;

(f) Establish community task forces as assigned by the local board of health;

(g) Review and make recommendations to the local health jurisdiction and local board of health for an annual budget and fees; and

(h) Review and advise on local health jurisdiction progress in achieving performance measures and outcomes to ensure continuous quality improvement and accountability.

(2) The advisory board shall consist of nine to 21 members appointed by the local board of health. The local health officer and a member of the local board of health shall serve as ex officio members of the board.

(3) The advisory board must be broadly representative of the character of the community. Membership preference shall be given to tribal, racial, ethnic, and other minorities. The advisory board must consist of a balance of members with expertise, career experience, and consumer experience in areas impacting public health and with populations served by the health department. The board's composition shall include:

(a) Members with expertise in and experience with:

(i) Health care access and quality;

(ii) Physical environment, including built and natural environments;

(iii) Social and economic sectors, including housing, basic needs, education, and employment;

(iv) Business and philanthropy;

(v) Communities that experience health inequities;

(vi) Government; and

(vii) Tribal communities and tribal government;

(b) Consumers of public health services;



(c) Community members with lived experience in any of the areas listed in (a) of this subsection; and

(d) Community stakeholders, including nonprofit organizations, the business community, and those regulated by public health.

(4) The local health jurisdiction and local board of health must actively recruit advisory board members in a manner that solicits broad diversity to assure representation from marginalized communities including tribal, racial, ethnic, and other minorities.

(5) Advisory board members shall serve for staggered three-year terms. This does not preclude any member from being reappointed.

(6) The advisory board shall, at the first meeting of each year, select a chair and vice chair. The chair shall preside over all advisory board meetings and work with the local health jurisdiction administrator, or their designee, to establish board meeting agendas.

(7) Staffing for the advisory board shall be provided by the local health jurisdiction.

(8) The advisory board shall hold meetings monthly, or as otherwise determined by the advisory board at a place and time to be decided by the advisory board. Special meetings may be held on call of the local board of health or the chairperson of the advisory board.

(9) Meetings of the advisory board are subject to the open public meetings act, chapter [42.30](#) RCW, and meeting minutes must be submitted to the local board of health.

[[2021 c 205 § 7.](#)]

NOTES:

Finding—2021 c 205: See note following RCW [43.70.675](#).



FOR DISCUSSION ON PHAB ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND RCW 70.46.140

From the highlighted section, each “shall” can be rearranged and grouped into three workflow categories:

1) Assigned from the Health Board to PHAB, often on an ad hoc basis:

- (a) **Provide** input to the local **board of health** in the recruitment and selection of an administrative officer, pursuant to RCW [70.05.045](#), and local health officer, pursuant to RCW [70.05.050](#);
- e) **Provide** community forums and hearings as assigned by the local **board of health**;
- (f) **Establish** community task forces as assigned by the local **board of health**;

2) Assigned to PHAB from Health and Community Services:

- (c) **Evaluate** the impact of **proposed public health policies and programs**, and assure identified health needs and concerns are being met;
- (g) **Review** and make recommendations to the **local health jurisdiction** and **local board of health** for an annual budget and fees.
- (h) **Review** and advise on **local health jurisdiction** progress in achieving performance measures and outcomes to ensure continuous quality improvement and accountability.

3) Assigned to PHAB by state code:

- (b) Use a health equity framework to **conduct, assess, and identify** the community health needs of the jurisdiction, and **review and recommend** public health policies and priorities for the local health jurisdiction and advisory board to address community health needs;
- (d) **Promote** public participation in and identification of local public health needs;



PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD SUB-GROUP OPTIONS

Equity

Goal/Purpose: One of the overarching areas for department and community strategic action is to decrease health disparities and inequities. Health and Community Services (HCS) will welcome a dedicated Equity position in early January, who can provide support to PHAB members in identifying an equity framework (per WAC – use a health equity framework to conduct, assess, and identify the community health needs of the jurisdiction...) and developing recommendations for implementation of the ‘Racism as a Public Health Crisis’ resolution. This group will also work collaboratively with the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission to ensure work aligns and supports their goals.

Membership: 3-4 members

Frequency: monthly or every other month for the year

Nominations

Goal/Purpose: As PHAB implements its hub and spoke model, this committee would be responsible for contacting boards, commissions, and key partners that lack a member. This group would also review applicants and make recommendations to the full PHAB and County Council on who to appoint.

Membership: 3 members

Frequency: As needed/as vacancies occur

Communications

Goal/Purpose: PHAB does not currently have formalized or effective methods to communicate with partners, the public, the county council, and other boards and commissions. Per WAC, PHAB is responsible for ‘providing community forums and hearings’ and ‘promoting public participation in and identification of local public health needs’. This group would develop options, make recommendations and support staff in producing and disseminating information about PHAB priorities and activities.

Membership: 3-4 members

Frequency: Monthly for the year



Code Changes

Goal/Purpose: The current code does not support joint decision-making between boards/commissions and the county council regarding applicant recommendations and does not allow for time to review. This group would work with staff to develop code change recommendations for Council approval to ensure better engagement and decision-making.

Membership: 2-3 members

Frequency: One meeting to review and finalize draft

Operationalizing the Model

Goal/Purpose: When former Chair Steve Bennett and Director Erika Lautenbach presented the Hub and Spoke Model, there were significant questions about how to operationalize the model. This group will be charged with supporting department and PHAB leadership in developing a working organization around the model.

Membership: 5-6 members

Frequency: Monthly for the year

Board/Commission Assessment Implementation

Goal/Purpose: This group will support staff in selecting priority items and implementing the recommendations made in the 2023 Board and Commission Assessment. This group will also provide recommendations and support for other HCS boards and commissions to implement the assessment.

Membership: 4-5 members

Frequency: Monthly or every other month for the year