



Whatcom County Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (BHAC) Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: July 10th, 2023, 3:00pm-4:30pm, Hybrid – Zoom & In-Person at 800 E Chestnut St, Suite 1B

BHAC Committee Members Present: Erika Creydt, Wendy Jones, Shannon Boustead, Michael Massanari, Erika Lautenbach, Dave Reynolds, Barry Buchanan & Stephen Gockley

BHAC Committee Members Absent: Bill Elfo, Mullane Harrington & Nick Evans

PHAB Committee Members Present: Steve Bennett, Teri Bryant, Sterling Chick, Kathy Kershner, Chris Kobdish, Michael Massanari, Guy Occhiogrosso, Emily O'Connor, Greg Thompson, Shu-Ling Zhao, Robyn Phillips-Madson & Madison Emry

PHAB Committee Members Absent: Christina Espina, Jeffery Hart, Lindsey Karas, Adrienne Renz, Edna Revey, Ashley Thomasson, Vesla Tonnessen & Leah Wainman

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Erika Lautenbach, Perry Mowery, Joe Fuller, Malora Christensen, Jennifer Gay & Riley Myers

Agenda Item	Discussion
<p>1. Welcome BHAC Roll Call PHAB Roll Call BH IPRTF Subcommittee Roll Call</p> <p>Introductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral Health Advisory Committee • Public Health Advisory Board • IPRTF Behavioral Health Subcommittee 	<p>Barry Buchanan (BHAC) – Called the meeting to order.</p> <p>Perry Mowery (WCH&CS) – Roll call for BHAC.</p> <p>Steve Bennett (PHAB) – Roll call for PHAB.</p> <p>Perry Mowery (WCH&CS) – Roll call for BH IPRTF.</p> <p>Erika Creydt (BHAC) – Motion to approve minutes from the previous BHAC meeting.</p> <p>Wendy Jones (BHAC) – Seconded the motion.</p> <p><i>Motion Approved – Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 1</i></p>



<p>Review/approval of 4/10/23 BHAC Meeting Minutes</p>	
<p>2. Behavioral Health Program Fund Projection, Planning & Recommendations</p>	<p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Glad to have a joint meeting since this topic is of interest to all of these groups. There are growing reserves in the Behavioral Health Fund and it is projected to reach \$8M by the end of the year. The fund has been under spent over the last three years, somewhere between 20% and 29%. There are a lot of immediate mental and behavioral health concerns and these funds need to be put to good use. Priorities are prevention, especially youth mental health, as well as treatment and after care services. Today Erika would like input from the different committees on how the funds should be spent with a consensus at the end of the discussion that can be brought forth as a recommendation to council on their August 1st meeting and then hopefully passed as an ordinance.</p> <p>In the matrix hand out, the blue colored items are theme recommendations from different school district superintendents and from Chuckanut Health Foundation focus groups with teachers. The green colored items are requests from school districts for behavioral health staffing. This is one-time funding and they can't expect the sales tax to finance these positions long term. The orange colored items are capital requests from school districts. These requests still need follow up investigation to see if there's other funding available for them.</p> <p>Would like the committees to discuss the three options from the handout and come to a consensus and recommendation.</p> <p>Erika Creydt (BHAC) – Curious if all of the school districts were aware of the request process. Seems like only a couple of districts make up the majority of requests. Want to make sure we're distributing equitably.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Met with every school district superintendent one on one. Some school districts only made specific proposals that are going to be rolled into a system/county wide level.</p> <p>Emily O'Connor (PHAB) – Curious about details for the process this year and what happens with the fund in an ongoing way. Supports multiyear commitments to give stability. Curious about the data collection for the outcomes of these projects.</p> <p>Stephen Gockley (BHAC) – With making time limited choices, curious about what thought has been given and what metrics are in mind and how will things be measured.</p>



	<p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Would like to know utilization rates for school districts, example telehealth therapy. Would be nice to get the committees input on what should be done when the assessment is finished.</p> <p>Heather Flaherty (IPRTF) – Just came from a discussion about the Meridian Early Learning Center and think it’s a great project. The idea is to build childcare for the county, ARPA has pledge dollars. Will create behavioral health workforce development.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Great model for other jurisdictions, just a question of what can be reasonably pledged and what other sources might be available.</p> <p>Peter Frazier (IPRTF) – Curious about what work is being done in behavioral health in schools that this would be in addition to or replacing.</p> <p>Joe Fuller (WCH&CS) – Currently have contracts with all school districts and it does look different district to district based on their needs. Some districts are more substance use focused and some are more mental health focused, and some are a mix, depends on healthy use survey needs. Currently receiving end of year reports from the school districts and should have that report ready to send out by next month.</p> <p>Steve Bennett (PHAB) – Vast majority of kids get resources in school, but there is a minority of students function outside of the school system. Wants to make sure that line item isn’t forgotten in the process.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Would be a good idea to have another “road show” for the committees to see how the Behavioral Health Fund dollars are being used.</p> <p>Stephen Gockley (BHAC) – Has an impression that there aren’t a lot of professional services happening in schools, there are assessments and linking to resources, but there’s a lack in capacity of community-based providers. Interested if there’s another layer of planning/strategizing for better ways to connect students identified as needing treatment with other providers.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – The Education Service District received a large grant, funding some positions at .5 and .7. This additional funding will help make some of those positions full time.</p>
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	<p>Wendy Jones (BHAC) – Curious if the data collection will go past the three years. Specifically interested to see if this data can show a reduction 10 years down the road of adults going to jail because they were identified in school and provided help.</p> <p>Joe Fuller (WCH&CS) – Existing contracts submit three different types of reports and some of them might be feasible for these new services.</p> <p>Kathy Kershner (PHAB) – Supportive of prevention at the lowest possible level, but would like to see these funds used for treatment.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – The funds being discussed today are only a portion of the surplus that are specifically focused on prevention. Would like committees to now vote on one of the three funding options from the Behavioral Health Fund reserve spend down Discussion Form.</p> <p>Barry Buchanan (BHAC) – Motioned to vote on option one.</p> <p>Michael Massanari (BHAC&PHAB) – Seconded the motion.</p> <p>Barry Buchanan (BHAC) – Opened discussion on the motion.</p> <p>Emily O’Connor (PHAB) – Curious about when the committees will revisit the C options.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Likely before the end of the year.</p> <p>Chris Kobdish (PHAB) – If the committee decides to fund for two years instead of three, curious about what happens to the funds not used.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Two years of funding is around \$3M and three years of funding is around \$4M. There are other demands with the funds that it could be used for, but believe the reserves can cover this and hopefully partially fund the capital requests.</p>
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	<p>Stephen Gockley (BHAC) – With greater than expected revenue, curious if that is expected to continue in the coming years. Would recommend option three.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Not sure how the sales tax revenues will look over time, but the expenditures were lower than expected. Not sure if the structural surplus will continue or if it will balance out.</p> <p>Shu-Ling Zhao (PHAB) – Curious if the timeline is known for Dr. Everett to move forward with the project and if it lines up with the Health Departments timeline for next recommendation.</p> <p>Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Don’t know the timeline and this meeting is part of the follow up.</p> <p>Barry Buchanan (BHAC) – Withdraw motion to vote for option one.</p> <p>Michael Massanari (BHAC & PHAB) – Agreed to withdraw second of motion.</p> <p>Stephen Gockley (BHAC) – Move for BHAC to vote on approval of option three.</p> <p>Barry Buchanan (BHAC) – Seconded the motion.</p> <p><i>Motion Approved – Ayes: 6, Nays: 0, Abstain: 1</i></p> <p>Emily O’Connor (PHAB) – Motion for PHAB to vote on approval of option one.</p> <p>Shu-Ling Zhao (PHAB) – Seconded the motion.</p> <p>Kathy Kershner (PHAB) – Not opposed to option one, but would like to ask for regular updates on how the funding is working.</p> <p>Sterling Chick (PHAB) – Getting staff hired will take a year and it will probably take three years to get these programs fully running.</p>
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	<i>Motion Approved – Ayes: 11, Nays: 1, Abstain: 0</i>
3. 2022 Annual Behavioral Health Program Fund Report	Perry Mowery (WCH&CS) – Service Expenditures for 2022, PITA service types include prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare. Intervention is funded at a higher percentage in part to an increase in the GRACE program, among other things. Individuals served by service type includes prevention, school, training, court services/intervention, jail BH & medication, community treatment, and housing support. Total revenue was \$7.8M and total expenditures were \$5.8M. There are also funds provided to the county for behavioral health services from the BHASO, and from a dedicated cannabis account.
4. Public Comment	Riley Myers (WCH&CS) – Call for public comment. Kristin Hannah (Public) – A great and encouraging meeting, glad to witness it. Would like to emphasize Wendy Jones’ point about collecting data to show how prevention impacts the jail population.
5. 2023 Assessment of Whatcom County Health and Community Services Advisory Groups	Erika Lautenbach (WCH&CS) – Hired a consultant to do an assessment of the advisory groups. Findings include that staff don’t feel they have enough time to effectively support advisory groups, not feeling equipped to support advisory groups in a manner that facilitates development, pathways for providing input/advice are not clearly understood which leads to feeling that individuals can less effectively weigh in, and groups with responsibilities to provide input on budgets and allocations don’t feel like they have an opportunity to provide meaningful input. There were ten primary recommendations from the findings and the Community & Organizational Development Manager has been asked to think about the technical components.
6. Adjournment	Barry Buchanan (BHAC) – Meeting adjourned.
Next Meeting:	October 9th, 2023 3:00pm-4:30pm Hybrid – In Person at 800 E Chestnut St, Suite 1B / Virtual via Zoom