



## WHATCOM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 22, 2020

**Present:** Steve Bennett, Barry Buchanan (first 20 minutes), Sterling Chick - Vice Chair, Lindsey Karas, Chi-Na Stoane - Chair, Leah Wainman

**Absent:** Barbara Juarez, Les Seelye

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
<b>Call to Order and Roll Call</b>	Roll call of Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) Members
<b>Board Members</b>	Chi-Na and Astrid contacted Barbara and received the impression that her schedule is too full for her to participate on PHAB at this time. Astrid encouraged her to let Tammy know if she felt she could no longer serve on the board and to provide us with recommendations of others who could serve in that role. Once we have her request to withdraw, we will advise the Executive and he will send her a letter of acknowledgment.
<b>Planning for Joint Health Board/PHAB Meeting</b>	<p>Barry noted that this will be our third annual joint meeting with the Health Board. The familiarity the Health Board got with members and concepts of the PHAB has helped build mutual understanding on many things. Chi-Na provided an overview of the agendas for both of the October 6<sup>th</sup> meetings with the Health Board. It is important to clarify and define the roles of the Health Department, PHAB and the Health Board annually to strengthen understanding and alignment; and to encourage civil dialogue on challenging public health issues in the coming year.</p> <p>Board members were asked to think ahead about the public health issue they are passionate about so when we get to this agenda item, we don't use more than a minute each. They were also asked to send thoughts on overarching public health goals to Tammy.</p> <p>The Public Health 3.0 model provides good framing for us as chief health strategist as does revisiting our Community Health Assessment from 2018 focusing on the social determinants of health. Board members recommended we ensure there is a universal understanding of what public health is as an institution, and that we are on a new path because of the pandemic. We are recovering from what has been like a siege and there will be damage done to the public health system. How do we measure where we are so we can start moving forward from here?</p> <p>Barry will provide approximately 3 minutes of opening music at the joint meeting.</p>
<b>Child and Family Action Plan (CFAP) Meeting with Executive</b>	The Chair and Vice Chair requested permission to speak to the County Executive regarding the CFAP Task Force on behalf of PHAB. The desire is to engage him in a dialogue that will last throughout the Task Force because the Executive's Office is important in moving key pieces of the CFAP forward. Budgetary decisions fall more to the Executive and legislative decisions fall to the County Council.
<b>Sheriff Asks</b>	<p>The Sheriff expressed that there are challenges in the ability to engage and communicate with specific populations and asked for ideas to help facilitate this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spanish radio is a successful communication route</li> <li>• Connect with City of Bellingham Immigration Advisory Board for specific resources</li> </ul>



<p><b>Sheriff Asks (continued)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are positive past experiences Bellingham Police department has engaged in with immigrant communities</li> <li>• Let the Sheriff know there are resources in the community</li> <li>• Realize there are years of distrust. Trust and relationship may take years to rebuild.</li> <li>• Encourage him to define his goals for the work and speak to it openly with the leaders in the community.</li> <li>• Remove the threat: communicate to the populations that feel threatened, that the local policy of law enforcement to not engage.</li> </ul> <p>The funds for some of the communication position went away due to COVID-19 budget cuts. The Sheriff is negotiating on how to re-up that position. Their other communication person got pulled into the COVID-19 response.</p> <p>Though it is not PHAB's job to fix what is broken between Sheriff's Office and the immigrant community, we can have a role in fostering this healing our community. There is work that needs to take place on the Sheriff's Office part, and they need to take the lead on this. What is their commitment in this process? The Sheriff is open to continued conversation. It is important to keep it in front of his mind.</p> <p>This may be an opportunity to report back to the HPIF Task Force, and have them disseminate the information the Sheriff shared with PHAB members. We would need to strategize whether to bring the task force back together or to reach out to members of the task force to see if they would like to be involved on an individual basis. If the task force is to be brought back together and requires facilitation, it involves contracts and budget and will need a separate conversation with Health Department Director and Assistant Director.</p> <p>We will set a separate meeting to strategize on reconvening the task force, as well as the scope.</p>
<p><b>Resolution Addressing Racism</b></p>	<p>In addition to the items decided on at the last PHAB meeting, a team worked to incorporate feedback from the community. Astrid provided a high-level overview of the updates and noted the intent to keep a data driven public health focus.</p> <p>Steve walked the group through the additional changes to the document.</p> <p>Other items for clean up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will verify the information in the whereas about mortality.</li> <li>• We will look to see if there is local data we can add. The Health Department will vet the data and apply DOH Small Numbers Standards as needed.</li> <li>• We will use Black American and take out African American for consistency throughout the document.</li> </ul> <p>The group was asked to consider how we get additional input from the community while moving it forward to the October Health Board meeting. We can move it forward to incite this action and make sure that once the action is incited all impacted communities are integrally involved in that process. If we send it out for more rounds of feedback we will not be able to present it to the Health Board in October. We will not have another PHAB meeting until November.</p> <p>Motion: To pass this resolution adding the local data and rewriting it to incorporate the minor edits in today's version. Approved (5,0)</p>
<p><b>Other/Public Comment</b></p>	<p>None.</p>
<p><b>What went well? What can we improve?</b></p>	<p>Thanks to Shu and Cristina for the feedback in finalizing the resolution. Acknowledgement of Drue's comment and of an understanding of the imperfect process we are in. My deep hope that we are opening this door so real action can begin.</p> <p>Ever since being on the PHAB it has been about equity. This fits with our mandate to get at those pieces where there are people who are disadvantaged. It is our mission. It is what we do.</p> <p>Thank to those who had opportunity to provide input and all those who will be providing input into the future and helping steer us as we embark on this.</p>

I've had to take a step back, but appreciate all the work that has been done with the Sheriff and all of this work. I appreciate all of my team members

The process to create a more equitable community involves sharing power. We're taking steps in the right direction. I'm looking forward to joint Health Board and PHAB meeting. These are timely conversations to have given the role COVID has had in highlighting the confusion around roles and responsibilities. and shared understanding of

Still reeling from Drue's honest feedback to us. Holding in my heart that we do not always have to go by colonial time, especially because we are on Native American lands and we do not Native American representation here, though there were conversations with Barbara. I appreciate the robust conversation. My brain is on Drue's very valid comments.

We have multiple roles. At the Health Department we are stewards of technical public health expertise, but we are doing it in the context of how to have a healthy inclusive engaged community. I appreciate the comments and those holding us, elected officials, and the community accountable for justice. We are moving toward justice in the context of civil government and we need to be working outside of that. It's all part of the mix. It's messy. Let's keep being messy and moving forward.

Thanks for open dialogue, I really appreciate that.

Appreciate the comments people made, especially the buy in and input from everyone. We'd all like to hear how great we are doing, but this is a difficult conversation. In order to get momentum and move forward we need to have real conversation. We started that today. I hope everyone feels this is a space for where we can have a difficult conversation. Thanks to everyone for your time, emotional energy, and brain to talk about this.