

Public Health Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2024

5:30-7:30 PM



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Members Present: Ashley Mariscal, Breein Scarlet-Fiser, Elma Blum, Emily Estes, Kristine Buist, Kevin Fischer, Kurt Truong, Laurie Schacht, Marla Sanger, Michael Watkins, Robert Ferrier, Sandra Brown, Scott Johnson, Tyler Clary, Mark Collier, Paul Childers, Tracey Fernandez
Councilor Sue Marshall (ex-officio), Alan Melnick (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Franklin Johnson, Kimberly Dauphin, Nissa Buchanan

Staff: Andrea Pruet, Jeff Harbison, Roxanne Wolfe, Guadalupe Perez, Mallori Berry

Public Guests: None

Welcome and call to order

Chair Sandra Brown opened the meeting and completed a roll call of the PHAC members.

PHAC Business

- September 24, 2024, meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Health Officer Update

- Respiratory Illness update
 - We are currently in respiratory illness season, when we typically see an increase in cases of RSV and influenza – and we still have COVID-19 circulating as well.
 - We monitor COVID-19 activity throughout the year, but now that we're in respiratory illness season, we'll resume our routine monitoring of influenza and will also be monitoring RSV activity.
 - We've resumed our weekly respiratory illness updates on social media and our [respiratory illness data webpage](#).
 - Our weekly updates are posted on Thursdays and share data on Clark County emergency department visits and hospitalizations due to COVID-19, influenza and RSV.
 - And we're monitoring influenza and COVID-19 deaths, and those will be reported monthly on our website and social media.
 - RSV deaths are not required to be reported and, as a result, will not be included in our updates.
 - We also have embedded on our website the respiratory illness dashboards from the state Department of Health, as well as links to state data on virus activity and vaccination rates.
 - In addition, our Infectious Diseases team is collecting lab results from local health care providers to monitor influenza test positivity.
 - They send a weekly report to health care partners that is also posted on our website.



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- So far, influenza and RSV activity has been very low and is not contributing to emergency department visits or hospitalizations.
- Emergency department visits and hospitalizations due to COVID-19 increased slowly throughout the summer in Clark County and across the state.
- In the most recent week of data – Oct. 6-12 – hospitalizations due to COVID-19 decreased to 1.7%, which is lower than this time last year. 1.3% of emergency department visits were due to COVID-19, which is slightly lower than this time last year.
- We are seeing a significant increase of Pertussis and have more cases in Clark County than the last six years combined.
 - 342 cases so far in Clark County, leading the state of Washington.
 - 64% of cases have never been vaccinated.
- The best way to protect yourself from severe illness is to get vaccinated.

Public Health in Action

- Reviewed attached presentation on Adult Family Home Epidemic Preparedness Tool that will be presented at Board of Health on 10/23.



10.22.24 Meeting
slides.pdf

Budget Update

- Fund Balance review



Fund Balance
Historical.pdf

- Will begin discussions of using excess fund balance strategically in future budgets and the history of the fund balance using the fund balance policy we follow.
- Our Fund balance was mostly stagnant until 2020, when the combination of COVID-19 response funds and then three years of rapidly growing State FPHS grant funds led to fund balance growth.
- We currently have \$8+ million-dollar fund balance surplus, beyond the minimum target fund balance; there will be a substantial hit in late 2024 for a grievance ruling, however, we still should have approximately \$8M in surplus fund balance.
- We are working with our Budget Office and County Finance Manager to begin drawing down on our fund balance to “glidepath” into a sustainable model.
- Using strategic approach to make sure we can continue priority services with this glidepath approach.
- Once we have more data, our goal is to develop a four-to-five year forecasting budget model.
- 2026 budget will include two full years of COLA increases due to contract negotiation process; and 2027 budget, we'll no longer have ARPA funding.

Committee/PHAC Updates

- Bylaws update
 - Reviewed attached document as a group to prepare for voting in November.



PHAC
Bylaws-rev.9.16.24_Fin

- PHAC Member/Community updates
 - Nominations Committee
 - Need a slate of officers to vote on at the first meeting in January 2025.
 - If you are interested in helping Michael and Tyler with nominations, please reach out to Mallori Berry at Mallori.Berry@clark.wa.gov. You may also nominate yourself if you are interested in one of the three positions:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair
 - Member at large
 - The Executive Committee meets once per month for one hour to plan to PHAC agenda. The Chair of the Executive Committee meets once per month for 15-30 minutes to go over the facilitator agenda. Additional meetings may be planned if new members join the Council, letters need to be drafted, etc.
 - PHAC Vacancies
 - Mark Collier officially re-appointed as Clark County septic contractors through 9/30/27.
 - Kristine Buist appointed as Clark County law enforcement community through 9/30/25.
 - *Non-Elected representative city of Vancouver*: Elma Blum has been appointed through 9/30/27; Acceptance letter has been signed and will be on the Council Consent agenda for October 15, 2024.
 - *Clark County educational community*: Position has been posted through 10/31. Have not received any applications. Will extend posting if needed.
 - *A nurse practicing in Clark County*: Position has been posted through 10/31. Will extend posting if needed.
- BOH/PHAC retreat planning
 - *Members*: Councilor Sue Marshall, Councilor Glen Yung, Alan Melnick, Roxanne Wolfe, Emily Estes, Breein Scarlett-Fiser, Laurie Schacht Nissa Buchanan, and Marla Sanger
 - Next planning meeting is scheduled for 11/6 from 3:00pm-4:30pm.
 - Will send out a poll to PHAC and BOH members after the election to determine the date of the retreat. Looking to host it at the end of the first quarter in 2025.
 - The retreat will be a full day offsite and around six hours in total.
- Racial Equity Consultant update
 - Had two respondents that were finalists and completed the interviews.
 - Finished the references and working on final steps before we publicly announce the awardee.
 - Anticipate a contract in place by mid-November.



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- **Community Updates**
 - *Councilor Marshall:* Ending Community Homelessness Association (ECHO) has been reorganizing to coordinate response for the unhoused population. ECHO has been struggling with severe weather and when to call events as resources are limited and stretched thin.
 - Would like to see if CCPH could collect data on the reasons behind why people are unhoused to better serve this population.
 - *Laurie Schacht:* YWCA is hosting workshops on socializing and connecting on 11/9 -11/10 from 10:00am-4:30pm regarding BIPOC Youth Summit.
 - *Bob Ferrier:* Battle Ground University that provides training on how City Government works met for their fifth and final time on 10/22. Students will be recognized by the City Council during a 'graduation ceremony' that will occur during the next City Council meeting on November 4th.

Closing

The next PHAC meeting is scheduled for December 3rd, 2024, from 5:30-7:30 and will be held *virtually*.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00p.m.