

Public Health Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2025

5:30-7:30 PM



Members Present: Sandra Brown, Elma Blum, LoraLynn Lord, Robert Ferrier, Paul Childers, Mark Collier, Scott Johnson, Tyler Clary, Emily Estes, Kimberly Dauphin, Laurie Schacht, Michael Watkins, Chad Williams, Kurt Truong, Tracey Fernandez, Councilor Glen Yung (ex-officio), Alan Melnick (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Kevin Fischer, Franklin Johnson, Marla Sanger, Breein Scarlett-Fiser, Ashley Mariscal, Councilor Wil Fuentes (ex-officio)

Staff: Gerry Preston, Brianna da Silva Bhatia, Mallori Berry

Public Guests: Wynn Grcich

Welcome and call to order

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

PHAC Business

- December 3, 2024, meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Health recruitment update

- PHAC welcomed Clark County Public Health's new Deputy Health Officer, Dr. Brianna da Silva Bhatia.
- Public Health is recruiting for the Deputy Director position and will begin interviewing for the position in February.

Executive Committee Elections

- Welcomed LoraLynn Lord and Chad Williams to the Public Health Advisory Council. LoraLynn Lord has accepted the Nurse Practicing in Clark County position and Chad Williams has accepted the Clark County Law Enforcement position on PHAC.
- We are still recruiting for the Clark County educational community position on PHAC. The position has been posted through 1/31/25. We have not received any applications, and we will continue to extend the posting as needed.
- PHAC term limits
 - Bylaws Committee met and proposed that we extend the term limits for three PHAC positions; a Clark County federally recognized tribe member, a Doctor of veterinary medicine practicing in Clark County, and the Youth representative, to September 30, 2027.
 - This proposal was made to ensure that majority of our positions are not terminated the same year and would even out the position termination date, so we have the same number of open positions each year.
 - Recruitment for Public Health Advisory Council positions can take a long time to fill. To mitigate this issue, the Bylaws committee also proposed that three months prior to termination, they would reach out to the member to see if they would like to continue on PHAC. If the member does not want to continue, we would recruit for the position. If they would like to continue on PHAC, we would push their name forward for appointment, but



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the position would not be recruited for. A new procedural document would be created to accommodate any changes made to this process.

- All were in agreement with the proposed term limit changes.
- **Vote on Officer Slate**
 - Per the Bylaws, at the first meeting of each year we are to vote on the following slate of candidates:
 - Chair (2-year term)
 - Candidate: Sandra Brown
 - Vice Chair (2-year term)
 - Candidate: Emily Estes
 - Member at large (1-year term)
 - Candidate: Laurie Schacht
 - Officer Slate was unanimously approved by the Public Health Advisory Council using consensus voting.

Public Comment

- Wynn Grcich

Health Officer Update

- Respiratory Illness update
 - **Current Respiratory Illness update**
 - Nearly 21% of influenza tests in Clark County came back positive during the most recent week of preliminary data (1/12-1/18).
 - This marks the third consecutive week of decreasing positivity, after peaking at 36% at the end of December 2024.
 - This is the seventh week with test positivity above 10%.
 - We consider it to be “active” flu season after two consecutive weeks with positivity above 10%.
 - Emergency department visits and hospitalizations due to influenza remain elevated but have been decreasing over the last three weeks.
 - Influenza hospitalizations and ED visits are both higher than they were at this time last year.
 - COVID-19 and RSV activity continues to be low.
 - Vaccines that provide protection against all three respiratory illnesses are available, but vaccination rates are low.
 - **Preventing Respiratory Illness**
 - Get vaccinated.
 - Protect infants from RSV with monoclonal antibodies, which are available for infants, based on their age, whether their mother was vaccinated and their risk for severe illness.
 - Stay home when sick and keep sick children home from school.
 - Consider masking in crowded indoor places, especially if you or someone you live with is at higher risk for severe illness, or if you have cold-like symptoms and must leave your house.
 - Wash hands frequently with soap and water.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. Germs spread this way.
 - Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces.

- Avoid spending time with people who are sick.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle (eat well, be physically active, get enough sleep, etc.).
- **Whooping Cough Update**
 - We're continuing to see high numbers of whooping cough cases in Clark County.
 - In 2024, we had 577 cases of whooping cough in Clark County.
 - In 2023, we had 14 cases.
 - We had four hospitalizations due to whooping cough in 2024. No deaths.
 - Of the cases in 2024:
 - Over half (52%) had never received a pertussis-containing vaccine
 - 58% were not up to date on pertussis vaccination for their age
 - 11% of cases have been among children younger than 1 year (65 cases)
 - Children ages 1-9 years old make up the largest percentage of cases (more than half – 53% as of October)
 - Clark County isn't alone. Statewide, whooping cough case numbers are significantly higher than previous years.
 - 2,024 cases were reported in Washington through December 28, 2024.
 - Clark County has the highest number of cases, and the third highest rate of cases.

PHAC Updates

- 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.
 - Last planning meeting took place on 12/12/24. Looking to schedule the retreat to take place between end of March and beginning to mid-April. Will send out a poll to both PHAC and BOH members once dates have been identified.
- PHAC Member/Community Updates
 - *Dr. Kimberly Dauphin:* Seeing a lot of Ringworm in cats and dogs as well as scabies which can cause hair loss, rashes and scabbing in humans. A new Pet Urgent Care will be opening on February 5th off McGillivray and 164th.
- PHAC Goals
 - Reviewed PHAC meetings, goals, activities and accomplishments in 2024:
 - Previewed the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). PHAC members engaged in small group discussions after the CHIP presentation to react to what is exciting about this plan, and how PHAC could play a role in supporting the CHIP.
 - Reviewed the PHAC goals and discussed 1) What themes do you see in these goals, and 2) What criteria could PHAC use to pick priority goals?
 - Goals discussed: Move forward with the decision matrix and racial equity framework tools, focus on our scope of work and the Board of Health relationship (Committee formed and planned for retreat in 2025), and worked on bylaws changes on decision making model for PHAC (changed to consensus model in August 2024).
 - Partnered with Commission on Aging, Community Development, and Public Health to cross walk the COA's Aging Readiness Plan with Public Health's Community Health Improvement Plan to determine opportunities to collaborate.



- PHAC approved by-laws change to consensus-based model of decision making in place of Roberts Rules of Order.
- Reviewed Environmental Public Health Fee ordinances up for adoption for 2025 fee schedule.
- Public Health in Action presentations in 2024 included:
 - Sexually Transmitted Infections Program Update, presented at the April Board of Health meeting.
 - Food Waste Composting Pilot
 - Food Safety for Temporary Events
 - Opioid Morbidity and mortality data
 - Clark County Health Youth Survey Data
 - Health effects of lead and lead exposure identification and prevention
 - Adult Family Home Epidemic Preparedness Tool

Closing

The next PHAC meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2025, from 5:30-7:30 and will be held *virtually*.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:50.