



To Protect and Promote the Health and the Environment of the People of Kittitas County

Public Health Study Session
March 26, 2025
at 10:00 am
Commissioners' Conference Room
Meeting Minutes

Present: Brett Wachsmith, Laura Osiadacz, Cory Wright
Public Health: Chelsey Loeffers, Candi Blackford, Erin Moore, Jesse Cox

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 by Lara Osiadacz.

Citizen Comment (1 minute time limit)-None

Department Business

BOHAC

Chelsey Loeffers informed the board that the Board of Health Advisory Committee has evolved over time and is no longer advising the Board of Health but is a non-profit whose purpose is to administer the Public Health Champion annually. Ms. Loeffers asked for direction on what to do with the committee. The board noted that we should have a Board of Health Resolution done to rescind the original resolution. This would allow them to operate as a non-profit and separate from the county.

Environmental Health Coordinator position update

Jesse Cox updated the board that the department is moving forward with transitioning Lucy Garcia to the Environmental Health Coordinator. This will leave the Environmental Health Specialist position open. Due to the uncertain fiscal environment the department will not be filling this position at this time. The decision is a proactive step to maintain fiscal responsibility and help mitigate any financial impact during this uncertain time. The department will reevaluate filling this position in the future.

Behavioral Health Needs Assessment overview/update

Erin Moore announced that the health department is conducting a community behavioral health needs assessment that will include qualitative data from key informant interviews, community survey, and focus groups as well as quantitative data pulled from state and federal data sources. All assessments will be completed by June 30th. The department has conducted approximately 10 key informant interviews with agencies and individuals that are part of the behavioral health system. The press release will go out on 03/27/2025.

Discussion about data and the ability to encompass opioid settlement funds and data that will be gathered.

Public Health website discussion

Erin Moore noted that she is working closely with IT to ensure the selected platform aligns with IT's requirements and supports future integration with the larger county website. Public health and IT have met with some potential vendors as part of the "Unofficial bid" process required to proceed with the project. KCPHD staff is working on a wireframe of content and desired page layout to submit to consultants to get official bids. The department will continue to update the board on the progress of the project.

APPROVED

4-15-25



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Covid Funding Update

The department has been notified from the Department of Health that CDC Funding for covid/communicable disease and covid vaccine activities has been cut as of March 24, 2025. This is funding that was expected to end June 30, 2025. It just happened sooner than we thought. The department has flexibility with FPHS funding and will be able to backfill this time.

Opioid Settlement Update

Kasey Knutson is working on familiarizing herself with opioid settlement funds. The program is planning to have a standard RFP process before we go into an application phase. The program will need to work thought agreements and put together options for possible funding distribution. Discussions about funding for Public Health program support and some funds for sustaining harm reduction due to the decrease of FPHS funds.

MRSC

Brett Wachsmith noted that state legislature has cut MRSC funds. The cuts mean a decrease in MRSC staff by 20%. Association of Washington Cities is taking this up with cities to raise awareness to the legislature.

Next month is Child Abuse Awareness Month and the county is partnering with the cities and will be lighting up buildings with blue lights. CASA will run a press release through Kasey Knutson. Mr. Wachsmith noted that he would like to invite Kasey Knutson to the South-Central Local Diversion Program meeting. Mr. Wachsmith noted that the Human Services Division could be a good resource for other counties.

Meeting concluded at 10:26

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Osiadacz".

Laura Osiadacz, BOCC Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Candi Blackford".

Candi Blackford, Clerk