Kittitas County Public Health Department

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

Public Health Study Session
August 26, 2026
at 10:00 am
Commissioners' Conference Room
Meeting Minutes

Present: Laura Osiadacz, Brett Wachsmith
Others: Chelsey Loeffers, Candi Blackford, Erin Moore, Denise Payton, Katie Odiaga, Robin Read

No citizens present for public comment

Department Business

Human Services Committees Update

Robin Read, of Robin H Read Consulting, updated the board on the Human Services committees development of their strategic plans work. Each group is working on mission, vision, and value. Ms. Read gave updates on each individual committee and next steps. Good progress is being made to develop each committee's strategic plans.

Senior Support and Advocacy Program and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project Contracts Discussion and Decision

Chelsey Loeffers provided a brief review of the document recording fee and the purpose of the fee. In previous years Hopesource programs, Senior Support and Advocacy Program and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project, contracts have gone through the Homelessness and Affordable Housing Committee for review and recommendation for funding. With the transition in 2025 the BOCC directly awarded funding for these contracts for a two-year cycle. Current contracts will end in Dec 2027. The group discussed the process going forward to include a presentation to the board about the program, a non-competitive RFP, demographics for the people who they serve, metrics, and budget with no Homelessness and Affordable Housing Committee involvement.

Veteran Service Program Partner Support Discussion

Candi Blackford noted that the Kittitas County Veteran Services Program (VSP) encourages participants to access resources available to veterans through other local programs, providing basic resource navigation, warm hand offs, and some additional access assistance depending on the needs of the individual. Clients bring significantly different life experiences, education, skills, and current capacity when applying for support for a program like a Veteran Build Home. A recent individual experienced challenges with:

Mrs. Blackford noted that Denise Payton, Kittitas County Veteran Service Officer, identified some areas of improvement from the VSP perspective, including:

- Having a local representative here to help applicants move through the process and is available help to those applicants who have barriers and need extra assistance
- Single or limited point of contact for ongoing communication on next steps and actions
- Checklists for the process

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- Habitat-process
- Lender-process

The group discussed the previous application that Habitat for Humanities has applied for and was awarded funding from the County through our Homelessness and Affordable Housing Committee (HAHC). The funds helped them create housing opportunities for those in need in our community and discussed the future HAHC funds and discussion about how these can be leveraged or prioritized in different ways to support these efforts.

Environmental Heath Permit Volume Review

Chelsey Loeffers noted that due to the recent decline in building and development in Kittitas County there is concern around permit volume and related environmental health revenue. Public health tracks annual permits, inspections, and license volume data. The data is reviewed annually and based on the immediate past year and five-year comparison, data permit volumes for building and development related activities have decreased over time, but are stabilized by consistency in the food, solid waste, and living environment programs. The health department uses multiple data points in determining estimates annual volume for fee modeling and staffing needs. Reduction in volume over five years has been slow and there are some increases in several key areas. The department will continue to closely monitor permit and inspection volumes.

Health Officer Update

No Health Officer update this month.

Other

The board discussed Hopesource contract and a conflict of interest with a subcontractor. The county is working with Hopesource and will be updating the County Agreement for Service to add a conflict-of-interest section for future purposes.

Brett Wachsmith discussed quorum issues in the Behavioral Health Committee meeting due to members resigning or being unable to attend meetings for personal reasons. The group discussed possible solutions until the group can work on how to address the issue.

Meeting concluded at 11:04 am

BOCC Chair

Candi Blackford, Clerk