



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

**KITTITAS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH (BOH)  
Meeting Minutes  
December 19, 2024  
Commissioners' Auditorium**

**Present**

Board of Health (BOH): Laura Osiadacz, Brett Wachsmith, Danielle Bertschi, Linda Navarre, Dede Utley

Absent: Cory Wright

Public Health: Candi Blackford, Kasey Knutson, Jesse Cox, Chelsey Loeffers, Erin Moore, Katie Odiaga, Kelly Bacon, Kate Johnson, Jessica Santos, Dora Beukelman, Lauren Wickerath, Emma Madland, Mackenzie Carter, Lianne Bradshaw, Cambron Walker, Rebecca Moon, Whitney Wheelock

*Brett Wachsmith called the Board of Health meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.*

**Approval of Minutes**

Brett Wachsmith asked for a motion to approve the September 19, 2024, meeting minutes as presented.

12.01: Motion to approve September 19, 2024, meeting minutes as presented. Danielle Bertschi moved to approve the September 19, 2024; Board of Health meeting minutes as presented. Linda Navarre second. All approved. Motion 12.01 carried to approve the September 19, 2024; Board of Health meeting minutes as presented.

**Public Comment:**

Open at 10:05 a.m.

Closed at 10:05 a.m.

**Department Updates**

**Director Update**

Chelsey Loeffers provided the following updates:

**Staffing Updates**

- Jess Santos: Communications Coordinator started in November.
- Kasey Knutson: Moved over to Human Services Manager in November.
- Emma Madland: Human Services Administrative Specialist started in December.
- Eli Martinez: Program Specialist (COVID-19 data) started in December.

**Funding Updates**

Communications Grant from DOH for opioid and fentanyl awareness, prevention, and education campaigns:

- Awarded \$26,414 to develop an educational toolkit and media, focus on risks, reducing stigma, expand awareness and prevention, and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment resources.

Air Quality Grant Award:

- We have been awarded over \$104,000 from the Department of Ecology for the Air Quality for Overburdened Communities grant. This funding will focus on planning and designing projects to reduce emissions of air pollutants, with community engagement as a central component.

Pollution Prevention Assistance (PPA) Grant Application:

- In January, Environmental Health will apply for the PPA Grant with the Department of Ecology. This grant supports a partnership with Department of Ecology (DOE) to assist small businesses in reducing toxic chemical use, safely managing dangerous wastes, and protecting water quality. The program is entirely education-based, providing businesses with the knowledge and tools to implement sustainable practices that prevent pollution.

Departmental Updates

- All staff retreat was on September 27, 2024:
- Completed annual training on HIPAA and records management review.
- Harm reduction team naloxone training.
- Strategic planning updates.
- Presentation from Dr. Larson.
- Training from Nash on behavioral styles and how we show up, work together, emphasize strengths.
- Flu Clinic:
  - The annual flu clinic was held on October 25, 2024, and was successful. Kelly Bacon will present on the clinic later in the meeting.
- Annual Archiving Day December 13, 2024:
- Stop the bleed training provided for the Management team and Environmental Health. We plan to bring training to full staff.
- Archived records, completed destruction logs, cleaned out emails, and prepped for 2025.

Nash training:

- Total of 10 days, over 80 hours of training over summer/fall
  - Decision making, accountability, communication, working as a team, supporting staff

Strategic planning:

- The department has decided on three overarching categories of work to focus on:
  - Workforce development and professional environment.
  - Streamline Administrative Processes.
  - Organizational Infrastructure with focus on capacity building around FPHS categories and human services.

**Division/Program Updates**

Health Promotion

- Health Promotion partnered with FISH Food Bank for their FARM4FISH program for the 2nd year in a row. Gardens at Wippel Park and out front of the Morris Sorenson building. They grew over 20 pounds of fresh produce was donated to FISH.
- The team attended the Washington State Public Health Association (WSPHA) conference in October. Rebekah Moon and Cambron Walker presented at WSPHA and received great feedback for their presentation.
- Nea Alfaro attended Ellensburg Downtown Trick or Treating (October 31st) and distributed 575 toothbrushes and 144 toothpastes as part of her outreach for the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program. Many thanks to The Red Pickle for allowing KCPHD to hand out toothbrushes and toothpaste from their location.

Environmental Health

Environmental Health has been actively working on several key initiatives to improve public health and enhance program efficiency:

- Automated Permit Renewal Notifications

In collaboration with SmartGov and key staff, we are planning on implementing automated permit renewal notifications. These notifications will be sent directly to establishments, streamlining the renewal process, and improving compliance.

- Cistern Program Development  
We are further developing the cistern program, designed to provide an alternative water source in areas where traditional water systems are not feasible. We are currently working with a developer to launch the first cistern project in the county.
- Tick Surveillance Plans  
Environmental Health is planning to conduct tick surveillance in the coming year to monitor tick populations. We are coordinating with state officials to secure funding for this important work.

### Communicable Disease

#### Harm Reduction

- From September 1- November 30, the Harm Reduction team has distributed 496 naloxone kits through the Syringe Service Program (SSP) and community naloxone trainings.
- Participants reported 41 opioid overdose reversals using SSP distributed naloxone during that time period.
- 5 SSP participants have been tested with rapid Hep C testing at SSP and referred for treatment as appropriate.
- 34 SSP participants were referred to medications for opioid use disorder and SUD treatment, and 378 referrals to other social support services.
- Providing care navigation for 5 participants.
- Worked with partners to increase the hours to be open during lunch, aligning with other programs that clients may be attending on site such as recovery meetings.
- Organize visits with BOH members.

#### Communicable Disease:

- Offered COVID and Influenza vaccines at our county jail.
- Hosted two DOH Care-A-Van events offering all childhood immunization, COVID-19 vaccines, and Mpox vaccines.
- Staff continue to manage outbreaks. Pertussis information is coming up later in the agenda.

#### CYSHCN:

- Whitney Wheelock is doing outreach to providers to educate them on how to refer CYSHCN to resources, and she was featured on Dr. Merrill-Steskal's radio show.

### PH Infrastructure

- Assessment Coordinator, MacKenzie Carter, continues to work on strategic planning, building out objectives, and workgroups.
- She is planning community presentations on the CHA and the CHIP. She is also working on the CHIP monitoring and evaluation plan and collecting data from the first year's activities.
- Epi, Lianne Bradshaw, just finished a project around overdose deaths with a pilot cohort with DOH. We are working on a department data policy. Data utilization and stewardship are hot topics within the public health system.
- Emergency management is updating our emergency plans including Emergency Operations Plan, Integrated Preparedness Plan, Flu Clinic AAR, as well as working on increasing activities for the Medical Reserve Corps.
- Kelly Bacon was just accepted to attend a training at Texas A&M in June where they have a "Disaster City. They are an Emergency Management training campus that has as real as it gets scenarios (real airplanes, collapsed buildings, train derailments, etc.). This is a unique opportunity, and Ms. Bacon was selected out of many applicants.
- Communications Coordinator has hit the ground running and is working hard on a department Communications Plan that aims to increase engagement and trust with the community as well as streamline internal communications processes such as social media and brand guidelines.

## Human Services

- The department has successfully brought on Emma Madland as the Human Services Administrative Specialist. She has already attended two different board meetings and is here at BOH for introductions.
- Kasey Knutson hosted a DD networking event with local employers to increase community job carves.

## Committee Updates

- 1/10<sup>th</sup> Advisory Committee
  - Awards were presented and the county is in contract negotiations with award recipients. 13 applicants, 8 awardees for a total of \$2m. The following received awards:
    - Boys and Girls Club, Community Builders, Comprehensive Healthcare, HopeSource, KCFOA, KCRCO, Kittitas County Superior Court, Upper Kittitas County Senior Center
    - Public school districts receiving noncompetitive funding, all have opted in, total of \$624,000
  - The committee has vacant seats currently and will be recruiting for multiple seats in the new year.
- Homelessness and Affordable Housing
  - The Affordable housing RFP for \$250,000, specific to increasing the available inventory of affordable housing in Kittitas County through the acquisition, rehabilitation, and construction of affordable housing is open until January 24, 2025, at 5:00pm.
  - The committee added one new committee member and have applicants for the other vacant seats.
- DDAC
  - DDAC is just about to finalize the County Plan for Developmental Disabilities (also known as the biennial plan) so we can put forth to BOCC. This is an active group of individuals who have already completed some of the activities identified in the plan.
- VAB
  - The Veterans Advisory Committee had a quarterly meeting. No new updates.

## Health Officer Update

Dr. Mark Larson updated the board on the following:

- Avian Influenza: Discussed the increase of disease in other states and testing for cows and raw milk. Washington does have a migratory bird issue and expects cases to increase in Washington State.
- Pertussis: Noted that there was a positive case in Kittitas County and the department was working to mitigate spread. Dr. Larson discussed community risk, and the goals of the department are:
  - To reduce transmission
  - Keep kids in school
  - Regain trust of community

The group discussed increases in RSV and Influenza I the community as well.

## Quarter 3 Finance Presentation

Katie Odiaga reviewed the quarter 3 financial update:

- Revenue: Budget vs. Actuals
- Expenses Budget vs. Actuals

No questions from the board.

## 2025 Budget Review Presentation

Chelsey Loeffers gave a brief presentation/discussion about the Public Health 2025 Budget that outlined the following:

- 2025 Budget Breakdown.
- Estimated Total Revenue Breakdown.
- 2025 Preliminary Budget Breakdown.
- Estimated Total Expenses Breakdown.
- Admissions Tax \$100K Breakdown.
- Fund Balance and restricted Uses.
- New Positions for 2025.
- Vacant Existing Positions.

Ms. Loeffers also discussed the new Human Services final 2025 Budget:

- 2025 Budget Breakdown Estimated Revenue.
- Primary Revenue Sources.
- Total Budget Breakdown Estimated Expenses.
- Community Contracts.

Ms. Loeffers reviewed staffing for Public Health and Human Services. No questions from the board.

#### Emergency Management Presentation

Kelly Bacon presented on the 2024 Drive-Thru Flu Clinic. Ms. Bacon noted that the flu clinic is an annual event and provides free flu vaccine to the public. The event also serves as a single point of distribution exercise for Public Health, our partners, and volunteers. The planning for the clinic starts early in the year with securing vaccine, establishing a location, identifying staff positions, and any additional resources needed. This year the clinic included a Disability and Inclusion Officer to the Incident Command Structure ensuring accessibility and inclusion are considered in all logistical operations and coordinated with disability service providers. Ms. Bacon reviewed the command and general staff duties from the start of planning to the day of the event. After the event is finished, there is a meeting to talk about improvements. This is called the After-Action Report Improvement Plan. This will be used to help improve the event for the next year.

#### New Development connection to public sewer or allow Large On Site Sewage System (direction)

Jesse Cox requested that the Board of Health provides direction to either: Require connection to public sewer for new developments when feasible and allowed by the sewer utility or allow Large Onsite Sewage System (LOSS) as an alternative. Mr. Cox reviewed the process and noted that under WAC 246-272A-0025(3) new developments within a serviceable distance (200') of an established public sewer system are typically required to connect to that system unless otherwise authorized by the Board of Health. The regulation intends to ensure public health is protected by utilizing centralized wastewater treatment where feasible if the sewer utility allows the sewer connection.

Currently, Kittitas County does not have an adopted policy explicitly addressing this scenario, which has created a need for a decision to ensure clarity and consistency moving forward. Mr. Cox noted there is a current situation that requires direction from the board. The board discussed risks and potential stakeholders for future discussions. The board agreed to go with no policy action today and continue to address requests on an ad-hoc basis with Health Officer discussion. The board gave direction to staff to bring this discussion to CDS and the planning commission.

#### Other Business

##### Annual Election for the Vice Chair of the Kittitas County Board of Health

The group discussed the Vice Chair position and nominated Dede Utley to be the Board of Health Vice Chair for 2025.

**12.03: Motion to elect Dede Utley as the Board of Health Vice Chair for 2025. Linda Navarre moved to approve Dede Utley as the Board of Health Vice Chair for 2025. Danielle Bertschi second. All Approved. Motion 12.03 carried to approve Dede Utley as the Board of Health Vice Chair for 2025.**

Member Updates

Concluded at 11:28 a.m.

*Dede Utley, co-chair*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura Osiadacz, Commissioner, Chair  
*Dede Utley, Vice Chair*

*[Signature]*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chelsey Loeffers, Director  
Kittitas County Public Health

*Candi Blackford*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Candi Blackford, Clerk of the Board of Health