Tacoma-Pierce County
Board of Health

Regular Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2023
3 - 5 p.m.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department - Auditorium
Hybrid Format with in-person and remote attendance

Dial in: 253 205 0468 Meeting ID: 879 2956 5840
Passcode: 593189

Call to Order
Board Member Herrera called the December 20, 2023, Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Regular meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call
Board of Health Members Present: Jani Hitchen, Marty Campbell, Kiara Daniels, Paul Herrera, Nicholas Rajacich arrived at 3:07 p.m. Alternate Board Members: Robyn Denson, Bryan Yambe.

Board of Health Members Excused: Bruce Dammeier, Catherine Ushka.

Comments by the Public (not related to a specific agenda item)

The Board will consider written and oral public comments. Submit written comments any time prior to when a Board of Health meeting adjourns at director@tpchd.org. Written comments we receive prior to noon on the date of a Board of Health meeting will go to Board members before the meeting.

For the duration of the declared public health emergency, make oral comments when you join the meeting by phone with the number, meeting ID, and passcode at the top of the agenda. Press *9 to raise your hand and signal you wish to make a comment. Our Public Comment Facilitator will identify you by the last four digits of your phone number and unmute you when it is your turn to speak.

All written and oral comments will become part of the meeting record.

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

Approval of the meeting minutes for **November 1, 2023**.

Resolution No 2023-4821 – Authorization to contract with CureMD for $200,000 to provide medical billing services for the period January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Resolution No 2023-4822 – Authorization to contract with Netsmart Technologies, Inc. for $160,000 to provide continuing electronic health and patient record system during the period January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Resolution No 2023-4823 – Authorization to contract with SpecGX/Mallinckrodt for $125,000 to provide liquid methadone drug supply for the Treatment Services program during the period January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

Resolution No. 2023-4824 – Authorization to contract with Express Employment Services in the amount of $648,000; Express Healthcare Professionals in the amount of $448,000; cTrace Solutions, Inc. in the amount of $200,000 to provide qualified temporary staffing for the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

Board Member Herrera read the title into the record. Board Member Campbell moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Vice Chair Hitchen.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Regular Agenda

Resolution No. 2023-4818 – Authorization to contract with Beckon of Love AFH LLC not to exceed $475,000 to provide continued support for families or individuals to isolate and prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the community for the period of January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024. The Clerk read the title into the record. Vice Chair Hitchen moved to adopt the resolution. Seconded by Board Member Campbell.

David Carr, Program Manager for COVID-19 Initiative presented the resolution. Discussion followed on the continuation and location of the facility. Mr. Carr advised there is one adult family home for individuals to isolate.

There were no comments from the public.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Resolution No. 2023-4820 – Authorization to increase operational and purchasing agreements with Amazon Capital Services, Inc. from $75,000 to $150,000 for office, miscellaneous and medical supplies for the period of January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. The Clerk read the title into the record. Vice Chair Hitchen moved to adopt the resolution. Seconded by Board Member Campbell.

Ingrid Payne, Finance and Operations Director presented the resolution. She advised board members the Department underestimated the contract amount for 2023 and is asking for an increase to cover this year's purchases for 2023. Discussion followed on how this increased amount works with the new budget.

Ms. Payne advised this ask is for 2023 and does not impact the 2024 biennium budget. She shared they will work with the existing budget to cover costs.

Further discussion ensued around whether this resolution is due to increased costs or is it closing out the costs of items. Ms. Payne advised board members an increase of costs factored into this request.

There were no comments from the public.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Resolution No. 2023-4825 – Authorization to contract with Anthony L-T Chen, MD, MPH, not to exceed $90,000 to serve as Health Officer for Pierce County for the period of January 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024. The Clerk read the title into the record. Vice Chair Hitchen moved to adopt the resolution. Seconded by Board Member Daniels.

Ingrid Payne, Finance and Operations Director presented the resolution. Discussion followed on a contingency plan if Dr. Chen is no longer available. Nigel Turner, Division Director, Communicable Disease Control advised that the Department engaged in an agreement with Washington State Department of Health with Dr. Herbie Duber to cover the needs of the health officer including potential standing orders or advice on specific issues.

Mr. Turner advised board members the Department used this service several times and it has been effective. The Department will hold this in place until a new health officer is in place.

There were no comments from the public.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

COMMENTS BY INTERIM DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

[Cindan Gizzi, Interim Director of Health]

First flu death

Interim Director of Health Cindan Gizzi advised board members a Pierce County woman died from flu on Dec. 2. She was in her 70s and had underlying health conditions. It was Pierce County's first flu death of the season. Pierce County had 35 reported flu deaths during the 2022-23 flu season.

Ms. Gizzi shared that last year; we saw a sharp increase in RSV among children and older adults. She shared COVID-19 is still with us. Ms. encouraged everyone to continue to take simple steps to protect yourself and those you love from respiratory illness.

Environmental Health Code Update

The Environmental Health Code for Pierce County includes the Department's regulations and enforcement procedures for several programs, including food safety, onsite septic, drinking water, underground storage tanks, and smoking in public places.

Ms. Gizzi advised board members that about once a year, the Department typically propose revisions or additions to this local Environmental Health Code. This year, the Department will ask the Board of Health to adopt updated health and safety regulations for: Camps, Primary and secondary schools, Water recreation facilities, and Food service.

She shared these updates will not change any services or processes for our customers; they will provide improved regulatory transparency.

Ms. Gizzi shared we will propose adopting state regulations. Incorporating these state regulations into our local Environmental Health Code allows us to leverage enforcement, appeal and variance procedures set forth in the code.

She advised this will give us a consistent administrative approach across all programs represented in the Environmental Health Code.

The Board will see a full resolution at its regular meeting on Jan. 17.

Dangerous household chemicals

Ms. Gizzi shared that soon, you can learn more about perfluoroalkyl (per-fleur'-ahl-kuhl) and polyfluoroalkyl (pahl'-ee-fleur'-roh-al-kuhl) substances, or PFAS, and why you should avoid them in your household.

PFAS are a group of chemicals that manufacturers used in many consumer products and industrial processes. Several government agencies are working with manufacturers to phase these chemicals out, but they can still be found in everyday products like: Cleaning supplies, Water-resistant fabrics like rain jackets, umbrellas, and tents, Grease-resistant paper, Nonstick cookware, Personal care products, like shampoo, dental floss, nail polish, and eye makeup, Stain-resistant coatings on carpets, upholstery, and other fabrics.

Ms. Gizzi shared that over the next 2 years, we will help Pierce County residents learn about how they can reduce their exposure to PFAS. A Washington Department of Ecology (DOE) grant will support education, outreach, and an exchange of PFAS-laden cookware.

You'll soon see ads from us teaching people how to stay safe!

Youth Alcohol Prevention: Above the influence

Cenora Akhidenor, Health Promotion Coordinator presented on Youth Alcohol Prevention: Above the influence. Ms. Akhidenor informed board members on how this work connects to the Department's strategic plan.

Ms. Akhidenor advised board members alcohol is the most used substance among youth. She advised board members 14% of high school students report binge drinking.

She shared data on alcohol use and mental health for alcohol drinkers and non-drinkers, advising board members 10th graders who drink alcohol report seriously considering suicide more than those who don't drink. Ms. Akhidenor shared data on where youth get their alcohol.

Ms. Akhidenor advised board members on program goals, shared a look ahead, and advised on past work. She discussed what a coordinated approach to reduce substance use among youth would look like and who should be involved.

Ms. Akhidenor advised board members on what the program did last year. She informed board members the program held townhalls with schools and organizations, participated in community planning and educating community.

Discussion followed on how we know which strategies are working. Sebrena Chambers, Strengthening Families Division Director advised board members the program looks at surveys, feedback, and synthesized data to determine which strategies work best.

Board members responded to the question of how they can support and influence local action.

Discussion followed on being strategic about our actions and initiatives, collaborating with schools on messaging, making alcohol less accessible at home.

Board member Herrera thanked staff for the work they are doing. This is one of the things we continue to work on

COMMENTS BY BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS

Board members thanked staff for the work they do to inform board members and community and the work they do to have better public health outcomes in our county.

Vice Chair Hitchen wrapped up the year with a note of thank you to staff, PCTV and collogues.

Executive Session

At 3:55 p.m. Board Clerk Patricia Darden announced the Board will go into Executive Session to last 30 minutes to discuss complaints against a public employee pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(f). At 4:31 p.m. Legal Counsel, Gregory Jacoby announced the Board will extend Executive Session by 15 minutes.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

ATTEST:

Patricia Darden

Patricia Darden
Clerk, Board of Health

Chair
Chair, Board of Health

January 17, 2024
Date Signed