

Tacoma-Pierce County

Board of Health



Study Session Minutes

January 6, 2021
3 -5 p.m.

3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98418
Board of Health Clerk, (253) 649-1502

Remote Attendance Only

Dial in: 253-215-8782

Passcode: 381338

Meeting ID: 984 7588 1196

Call to Order

Chair Ushka called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Members Present: Catherine Ushka, Derek Young, William Hirota, Patricia Johnson, Keith Blocker, Bruce Dammeier arrived at 3:14 p.m., Dave Morell arrived at 3:23, Marty Campbell arrived at 3:23, Alternate Board Member Ken Farmer, Alternate Board Member Baggett; Alternate Board Member Jani Hitchen.

Members Excused:

Also, present: Anthony L-T Chen, Director of Health; Cindan Gizzi, Deputy Director; Nigel Turner, Communicable Disease Control Division Director; Christopher Schuler, Finance and Operation Director; Marcy Boulet, Communities of Focus Coordinator; Kayla Scrivner, Communicable Disease Control Program Manager; Guest Jan Burly.

Proclamation 20-28 temporarily prohibits in-person contacts with the public that are required by the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) (RCW 42.30) and the Public Records Act (PRA) (RCW 42.56), suspending some statutory language that would require such contacts. It is effective from March 24, 2020 until midnight, April 23, 2020, unless extended beyond that date.

COVID-19 Update

Anthony Chen, Director of Health; Nigel Turner, Communicable Disease Control Division Director and Christopher Schuler, Finance and Operations Director advised Board Members on disease trends and provided a CARES Act update.

Mr. Turner reviewed the Health Department's [COVID-19 case count dashboard](#). He updated Board members on 14-day case rates, levels of hospitalizations, healthcare system readiness and responding to outbreaks and testing.

He advised board members on the Governor's Roadmap to Recovery. It will include four metrics: positivity, trends in hospitalizations for COVID-19, ICU capacity and trend in overall cases. Mr. Turner advised it will be used to determine progress towards relaxing restrictions in terms of social gathering.

Mr. Turner advised all areas in Washington state are in the first phase. The State will produce data at the end of this week that will allow the health department to assess where they are.

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Mr. Turner advised one significant change is we go from being a single county into a region with King County and Snohomish in terms of the data. The idea is it creates a more stable region that is better aligned with the healthcare market.

Christopher Schuler, Finance and Operations Director provided a 2021 funding update. He advised funding continues to evolve as we move into 2021. Mr. Schuler updated board members on 2021 quarter 1 continued efforts.

Dr. Chen addressed questions regarding the criteria in the Governor's Roadmap to Recovery and the central region which includes Pierce County, King and Snohomish. Discussion followed around organization charts, leadership, accountability, and coordination.

Discussion ensued around reeducating the public, posting our own county level data, and continued daily updates so we understand what is happening in Pierce County. Discussion followed regarding a federal block grant to Pierce County to support the community through COVID and its approach. Further discussion ensued around communication and clarity from the Governor's office on the Roadmap to Recovery.

Rural Health Engagement

Marcy Boulet shared information on services and partnerships within rural communities. She discussed unique opportunities and challenges outlying communities experience.

Discussion followed on health department engagement in these rural communities, establishing satellite offices, doing more in district meetings and how we get more representation on the board of health. Board members shared their feedback on unique opportunities and challenges rural communities experience.

Guest Jan Burley advised board members on current challenges to residents of the White River community such as food insecurity, transportation, affordable housing, and behavioral health. Ms. Burley shared how she worked to develop partnerships to address some of these challenges. Ms. Boulet talked briefly about a partnership with Key Peninsula's Community of Focus.

Chrissy Cooley advised board members on holistic water quality programs. Discussion followed on how we can better serve rural communities.

Chair Ushka recommended allowing more time for presentations like this one.

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Kayla Scrivner provided board members with a COVID-19 vaccine update. She advised board members on Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department roles and responsibilities. Phased prioritization. Phase 1a administration. Phase 1b/c planning.

Ms. Scrivner advised board members on two roles. **State Department of Health** overall is the lead on vaccine role out. They provide the guidance and allocation, administer provider enrollment, and manage data for the state. **Local Public Health** role is encouraging and supporting provider enrollment, sharing accurate and reliable information with the public and engaging community partners - talking about vaccines.

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Ms. Scrivner advised on limited vaccine availability and phased distribution approach. Vaccine distribution is a statewide plan lead by the state we live in. Ms. Scrivner advised on storage, provider eligibility, application, and prioritization process. She advised there is not a physical distribution from the state to county site. Vaccines comes directly from the manufacturer. Ms. Scrivner advised second doses are accounted for.

Ms. Scrivner provided board members with a visual the State Department provided to the health department. It gives a visualization of how many doses per week we are getting out to people and which week of the year we expect to be in each of the phases.

Ms. Scrivner explained the approach of phase 1a: local pharmacy partnership, targeted clinics with Pierce County Department of Emergency Management and community engagement. She shared phase 1b/c planning approach. Ms. Scrivner gave an overview of the Washington's COVID-19 Vaccine Phases. She emphasized the need to continue to mask and follow safety precautions.

Discussion followed around reassurance and safety of the vaccine. Dr. Hirota shared frustrations from colleagues on the inefficient roll out. He shared providers are willing to participate in vaccine clinics. Discussion ensued around patients who do not have a primary care doctor and how do they get the vaccine.

Ms. Scrivner advised they are working on a 1-800 phone number for folks to call, phase finder tool and call center so there are a lot of access points. Discussion followed on partnership with long-term care facilities getting a list of those that have been visited and are getting their vaccinations.

Vice Chair Young encouraged board members to send him their questions on vaccine roll-out. He will collate them get it to the health department. Vice Chair Young expressed his disappointment with the strategy as we see it.

Dr. Chen reminded folks the answer is not in the vaccination right now. The real answer is people need to wear their mask, limit travel, and buckle down on this. He advised kids are going to be going back to school. He shared that in school pilot infection rate is really low and teachers over 50 will vaccinate in February. Stay focused, work together as a community, and temper our expectations.


Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

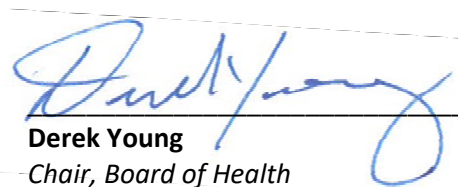
Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

ATTEST:



Patricia Darden
Clerk, Board of Health



Derek Young
Chair, Board of Health

February 3, 2021

Date Signed