

THURSTON COUNTY  
WASHINGTON  
SINCE 1852

## BOARD OF HEALTH

Minutes of July 6, 2010

### 1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Attendance: Chair Valenzuela, Vice-Chair Wolfe, Commissioner Romero, County Manager Don Krupp, Department Director Sherri McDonald, Health Officer Diana Yu and Clerk of the Board of Health Kathy Patton.

Commissioner Valenzuela called the meeting to order.

a) **Approval of Board of Health Agenda** – Commissioner Wolfe moved that the agenda be approved. Commissioner Romero seconded the motion. The motion carried.

b) **Approval of Board of Health Minutes**

May 18, 2010 Public Hearing – Minutes were amended to correct the signature block.  
June 1, 2010 – Commissioner Valenzuela asked that item six “Health Effects of Tobacco Use/Program and Policy Options for Reducing Tobacco Use” Section of the June 1<sup>st</sup> minutes be amended to include in the policy options for consideration that a tobacco-free campus policy could include hiring only non-smokers. Commissioner Wolfe moved to approve the minutes of May 18 and June 1 as amended. Commissioner Romero seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### 2) UPDATE ON CITIZEN ISSUES - none

### 3) OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD - none

### 4) CONSENT ITEMS – none

### 5) PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE I, APPENDIX A OF THE THURSTON COUNTY SANITARY CODE

Art Starry, Environmental Health Division Director, advised the Board that this hearing is to consider making permanent a reduction of the administrative fee for six-month food establishment permits and is a follow-up to an action the Board took at the June 1, 2010 Board of Health meeting to reduce this fee on a temporary basis. Mr. Starry noted that the Ordinance signature block will be corrected.

Commissioner Valenzuela opened the hearing to take testimony. There was no testimony given. Commissioner Wolfe moved to adopt the ordinance which would reduce the administrative fee for six-month food establishment permits as set forth in Article I, Appendix A, Section II, A, 13 of the Sanitary Code for Thurston County. Commissioner Romero seconded the motion. The motion carried.

6) **VITAL RECORDS OVERVIEW/CHILD DEATH REVIEW**

Patti Swanson, Administrative Services Manager, provided an overview of Thurston County's Vital Statistics program, which is a very important service to the public of providing birth and death certificates. Birth certificates for those born in Washington State from 1921 to present and Thurston County death certificates for the current and past two years can be obtained either in person at the Lilly Road office or through the mail. Information is also available at the Department website.

The vital statistics for birth and death records is an essential data source used to calculate changes in Thurston County population growth and change over time. It also helps to evaluate health risks and disease, creation of educational information and materials, and put together prevention activities. This information is gathered from both birth and death certificates. Birth data is utilized to plan for health education, to express need in a grant application and to identify risk groups. Death data requests are used to rank leading causes of deaths, prioritization of community efforts and identification of vaccine preventable illnesses. The Department works closely with the State Department of Health, the Coroner's Office, and funeral homes to electronically move and share information.

Ms. Swanson also introduced staff involved with providing this service to the public. Susan Flynn and Joan Boone are primarily responsible for tasks related to vital records. Debbie Trees and Emmie San Nicolas also provide backup when primary staff is not available.

Dr. Yu provided information on the child death review process and review panel makeup. The panel consists of independent reviewers including the Coroner, Health Officer, physicians, safety advocates, medic one (and sometimes includes fire and law enforcement), and Child Protective Services. The focus is on preventable causes of death in children 18 years of age or younger. The review team is asked to make a conclusion as to if there was any way to prevent a death.

The pilot program began in 1997, which included some funding and format. The funding ended in 2000. There is currently two half-time Washington State Department of Health (DOH) staff that provides support. In 2009, Thurston County joined a national Child Death Review (CDR) database.

Some of the causes of death included having a safe place for children to sleep, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), undiagnosed metabolic disorders, and infectious diseases. Campaigns to provide a Safe Place to Sleep and "Back to Sleep" have resulted from the Child Death Reviews.

The number one cause of death in our community for the older age group is suicide and accidents. Community youth suicide prevention programs have been instituted in schools to reduce the number of suicides and the Grim Reaper programs in school highlight the effects of motor vehicle accidents and death.

**7) BRIDGE TO PRIMARY CARE WORKGROUP**

Sherri McDonald, Public Health and Social Services Director, outlined the Department's response to direction given by the Board of Health regarding access to health care treatment in Thurston County. Ms. McDonald's presentation included the proposed workgroup, *Bridge to Primary Care*, with a list of potential organization to be represented, a timeline for the work, and a draft invitation letter. The objectives for the group are as follows:

1. Develop a model for increasing primary care capacity in Thurston County.
2. Develop a community-wide implementation plan for health care insurance, finance, and medical treatment reforms that best serves Thurston County.
3. Position Thurston County to be in a priority position for new or emerging funding sources and programs to improve access to care.

The Commissioners had several questions and comments and asked that a Briefing be prepared that would provide more detail on the proposal and one that could potentially encompass primary and mental health, as well as dental care.

**8) DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. McDonald provided copies of and outlined a white paper on *Membership Considerations for Thurston County Board of Health* for the Board to review. Ms. McDonald introduced Megan Hopkins, an Intern from Truman State University. The following sections are included in the report: Section I – Local Board of Health-Authority to Expand Board of Health Membership; Section II – Health Department Versus District; Section III – Description of the Project; Section IV & V – Reasons to Expand or Not to Expand the Board; Section VI – Other Considerations; VII – New Membership; VIII – Staff Recommendations. The Commissioners had several questions about the information gathered. One concern was how non-elected members could affect the Board of Health's Quasi-Judicial role. They noted that gathering additional information from a broader group of counties would be helpful in providing more detail and assist in their decision-making process.

Mr. Starry outlined the legislative agenda for 2011, which came out of the June WSALPHO Board of Directors and general membership meeting. These key issues were chosen in order to maximize our chance of success and achieve the greatest benefit from our limited resources. The platform for 2011 legislative work included:

1. Maintain Public Health funding,
2. Support WSAC efforts to provide counties with more funding tools,
3. Eliminate costly or unfunded programs with requirements that do not further public health protections,
4. Promote Public Health policies important to us that will have a minimal impact on our resources and
5. Identify priorities for the next Public Health funding investment or other funding opportunities that align with our priorities.

The Board asked if any assessment has taken place for when Blue Ribbon Commission

Tobacco funding is no longer available. Mr. Starry noted that the legislature would need to take steps to replace that money, which is approximately \$380,000 per year to Thurston County.


9) **HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT**

Dr. Yu outlined revisions to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) about notifiable conditions (which are diseases that are reportable to Department of Health and Local Health Jurisdictions). The final draft will be out for review sometime in the next three weeks. It will go before the State Board of Health's November 2010 meeting. One piece to highlight is the unexplained critical illness and/or death that could be related to an infectious disease. This is a catchall and is included as a notifiable condition for those who die or have a very severe illness with symptoms that looks to be or sounds like it might be related to an infectious disease. In this case, it needs to be reported to the Health Department. The earlier we are aware of these cases the better we will be able to provide guidance for the community on how to protect yourself if you may have been exposed. The Health Officer's role is to prevent more disease and is one of the most important roles.

10) **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned.

**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
Thurston County, Washington

  
KAREN VALENZUELA, Chair

  
CATHY WOLFE, Vice-Chair

  
SANDRA ROMERO, Commissioner

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Patton, Clerk of the Board

Date: 8/3/10