



BOARD OF HEALTH

**The Thurston County Board of Health has responsibility
and authority for public health in both incorporated
and unincorporated areas of the County.**

Minutes for September 16, 2020 Special Meeting

1) Call Meeting to Order

Chair Tye Menser called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

In Attendance:

Tye Menser, Chair; John Hutchings, Vice Chair; Gary Edwards, Commissioner; Ramiro Chavez, County Manager; Robin Campbell, Assistant County Manager; Schelli Slaughter, Public Health and Social Services Department Director; Dr. Dimyana Abdelmalek, Health Officer; and Lydia Hodgkinson, Clerk of the Board of Health.

Vice Chair John Hutchings joined the meeting at 2:05

Approval of the Board of Health Agenda:

Commissioner Edwards moved to approve the meeting agenda. Chair Menser seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously. The motion carried.

Approval of meeting minutes:

Commissioner Edwards moved to approve meeting minutes from the August 11, 2020 regular meeting and work session notes from August 4, 2020 and August 11, 2020. Chair Menser seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously. The motion carried.

2) Proclamation – Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Jennifer Simmons, Public Health and Social Services (PHSS) Education and Outreach Specialist, introduced the Proclamation and spoke on behalf of suicide prevention. She introduced Scott Hanauer, Chair of Thurston Youth Alive. Commissioner Edwards acknowledged suicide is a big issue for Veterans who have served our Country. He then read the Proclamation proclaiming September Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in Thurston County and encouraged all residents to envision a world dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide through prevention education and advocacy.

Chair Menser noted due to the September 7, 2020 Labor Day Holiday, this special meeting replaces the September 8, 2020 regular meeting.

3) Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board - none

4) Resolution appointing an alternate local Health Officer

Schelli Slaughter, PHSS Director, in her capacity as Board of Health Administrator, explained the purpose of proposed Resolution H-07-2020 appointing an alternate local Health Officer. In the event of the absence or incapacity of the current health officer, the appointment of an alternate local health officer shall occur when said alternate is appointed to act in the capacity of the local health officer. An alternate health officer may be appointed who is qualified in accordance with the standards prescribed in RCW 70.05 051 through 70.05.055 to hold the office of local health officer in Washington State in the event of incapacity or unavailability of Dr. Dimyana Abdelmalek or other primary local health officer appointed by the Thurston County Board of Health. This resolution will appoint Diana Yu, MD MSPH as an alternate local health officer for Thurston County. Chair Menser questioned why Dr. Yu needs to be appointed when we have the capability to appoint a qualified alternate. Ms. Slaughter explained Dr. Yu is not currently a local health officer therefore she needs to be appointed. **Commissioner Edwards moved to appoint Resolution H-07-2020 appointing Dr. Diana Yu to act as an alternate local health officer for Thurston County. Chair Menser seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously. The motion carried.**

DEPARTMENT ITEMS

5) Set a Public Hearing on a Smoking and Vaping in Public Places or Places of Employment Ordinance

Chair Menser explained the topic is to set a public hearing on October 13, 2020 to receive public comment on a proposed Thurston County Smoking and Vaping in Public Places and Places of Employment Ordinance. He then introduced Kateri Wimsett, a PHSS Education and Outreach Specialist, who provided a presentation on the proposal.

In May 2019, the Thurston Board of Health gave direction to the PHSS staff to develop a vaping in public places ordinance as part of the strategy to protect public health and prevent youth initiation. A briefing to update the Board about vaping and its impacts was held in October 2019 when the Board confirmed their direction for PHSS staff to begin providing presentations about the draft policy to other local governments and stakeholders. Staff has since presented to the County/City Managers Meeting, and the cities of Rainier, Tenino and Tumwater, with no concerns expressed about the possible new local vaping in public places policy. Staff have also started engagement with businesses.

Ms. Wimsett discussed types of vapor products, including e-cigarettes and variations of e-cigarettes. She then shared public health concerns about vaping in public places: potential health effects from exposure to vapor, especially for vulnerable populations; rapidly normalized use by teens and young adults; and vaping other drugs, including marijuana and illegal drugs. Ms. Wimsett discussed what is in the aerosol used in vaping as per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) - volatile organic compounds; nicotine; cancer causing chemicals; heavy metals such as nickel, tin and lead; ultrafine particles; and flavoring such

as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease. She noted people near those who are vaping have nicotine in their blood and there is no safe level of nicotine exposure for pregnant or breastfeeding women. She then shared current vaping (e-cigarettes) use statistics for Thurston County youth, based on a 2016 Healthy Youth Survey, showing youth vaping is increasing. Ms. Wimsett explained concerns of nicotine use, which is highly addictive: can harm the developing brain; can impact parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control; can increase risk for addiction to other drugs; and can lead to dependence and addiction especially in adolescence. She then explained the Washington State Laws on Use in Public Places:

Smoking prohibited (passed in 2005):

- Indoor public places
- School grounds, indoor/outdoor
- Places of employment, indoor/outdoor

Vaping prohibited (2016 State Vaping Law):

- Schools and childcares, indoor/outdoor
- Outdoor playgrounds, during daylight when children present
- Inside school buses and elevators

Marijuana use prohibited:

- In view of the general public
- Indoor public places
- Outdoor public places per definition, e.g. streets, parks, beaches, playgrounds

Ms. Wimsett noted 12 Washington State Counties have passed a County Vapor Product Regulation. She then explained the proposal for the Board to consider on Vaping Restrictions:

- Indoor Public Places with exception of tastings in licensed retail outlets per state law.
- Places of employment including outdoor spaces (patios/decks) where employees are expected to go as part of their work.
- Outdoor places where children are present
- Require signage

The restrictions would go into effect on January 1, 2021 with full enforcement 6 months later.

Commissioner Edwards noted, generally he is opposed to creating regulations that are not fully enforceable but he is in support of protecting our youth who are 30% of our population but 100% of our future. Chair Menser questioned the exception of tasting in licensed retail outlets for the proposed Indoor Public Places vaping restriction. Ms. Wimsett referenced the state law and discussed the exception. Ramiro Chavez, County Manager, requested the time of 5:00 p.m. be included in the motion.

Commissioner Edwards moved to amend the motion to set a public hearing at 5:00 PM. Chair Menser seconded the motion.

Commissioner Edwards moved to set a Public Hearing on October 13, 2020 at 5:00 PM or as soon as the matter may be heard at the Thurston County Courthouse, Room 280 of Building 1, to receive public comment on the proposed Thurston County Smoking and Vaping in Public Places and Places of Employment ordinance. Chair Menser seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously. The motion carried.

6) Board of Health Members' Health Related Activities and Accomplishments

- Commissioner Edwards reminded everyone to wear masks.
- Vice Chair Hutchings noted he has received a flu vaccine.
- Chair Menser – noted his participation in the Opioid Task Force and noted the opioid use numbers were looking better but they are now rising across the State; potentially related to mental health dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy, etc.

7) Health Officer's Report

Dr. Abdelmalek reported on:

- COVID-19 update - general transmission in Thurston County is down trending; today the percentage of positive tests is at 1.8%
- Wildfires air quality status – still in an unhealthy 228 range; reminded everyone to stay updated on current air quality forecasts; limit outdoor activity and wear N95 masks as COVID masks are not effective to protect from poor air quality; Thurston County has stopped outdoor activities for staff until air quality improves which is anticipated to be better by the end of the day tomorrow (September 17th).
- Flu vaccination – four clinics are scheduled
- COVID-19 vaccine - the response team is working on preparing to administer the vaccine when it becomes available.

Chair Menser questioned the poor air quality number of 228. Dr. Abdelmalek briefly explained the numbers; noted the monitor is in Lacey on College Street; the desired air quality number is below 50; she explained the ranges of good to poor air quality. At Chair Menser's request, Dr. Abdelmalek will research if rain and/or wind has a positive effect on air quality.

8) Director's Report

Ms. Slaughter reported on:

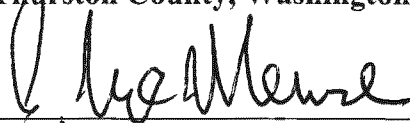
- COVID-19 update – noted we are on day 224 of response; and provided the following information:
 - 1107 positive cases of COVID-19
 - 79 cases have ever been hospitalized; 14 are hospitalized now
 - 907 have been released from Isolation and Quarantine
 - Hospitals are at 83% capacity
- Thanked the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) for the Resolution recognizing Public Health and Social Services staff for their ongoing efforts in responding to the COVID-19 emergency.
- Noted there will be a Board of Health Briefing on Racial Equity following this meeting.

Ms. Slaughter then addressed the Board Members' questions regarding how the numbers of positive tests are calculated stating positive cases are based on individuals not on the number of tests they are given; information regarding the time frame that recovered individuals can catch COVID-19 again which the CDC states is 90 days; and length of time immune compromised individuals can shed the virus which she stated according to the CDC is 20 days instead of 10 days for uncompromised individuals.

Chair Menser acknowledged the Resolution the BoCC adopted yesterday (September 15, 2020) commending the PHSS Staff not only for their work with COVID but with wildfires also.

9) **Adjournment** – Chair Menser adjourned this rescheduled meeting at 2:25 PM.


BOARD OF HEALTH
Thurston County, Washington


TYE MENSER, Chair


JOHN HUTCHINGS, Vice Chair


GARY EDWARDS, Commissioner

ATTEST:


Lydia Hodgkinson, Clerk of the Board

Date: November 10, 2020

Thurston Community Television (TCTV) - The Board of Health meetings are aired on TCTV each week on Sundays at 3:30 p.m., Mondays at 8:00 p.m., Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m., Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m., and Fridays at 6:30 a.m. and at 5:00 p.m.