



## 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 February 14, 2017

#### 1) 3:30 p.m.) Call Meeting to Order

Commissioner Blake called the meeting to order.

**In Attendance:**

Bud Blake, Chair; John Hutchings, Vice Chair, Gary Edwards, Commissioner; Art Starry, Public Health and Social Services Department Interim Director; Dr. Rachel Wood, Health Officer; and Lydia Hodgkinson, Clerk of the Board of Health.

**Approval of the Board of Health Agenda:**

Vice Chair Hutchings moved to approve the meeting agenda. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Approval of the meetings minutes:**

Vice Chair Hutchings moved to approve the meeting minutes for November 8, 2016; December 6, 2016 public hearing and December 16, 2016. Chair Blake accepted the meeting minutes. The motion carried.

#### 2) Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board

**Citizen:** Toni Taber

**Issue:** Ms. Taber, a Hospice Nurse at the Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice, spoke regarding negotiations between Providence and the SEIU (Service Employees International Union) 1199NW regarding support of increased staffing levels and pay; and decreased work hours at Providence.

### DEPARTMENT ITEMS

#### 3) Thurston Thrives Action Team Highlight – Education and Resilience

Liz Davis, Community Coordinator for Thurston Thrives addressed the Board introducing Meghan Sullivan, TOGETHER! Executive Director and a representative on the Coordinating Council for the Child and Youth Resiliency Action Team. Ms. Davis explained in 2013 the Child and Youth Resilience Action Team was kicked off at a Community Summit on Resilient Children and Resilient Communities sponsored by the Junior League of Olympia. This year's Community Summit will be held on February 25<sup>th</sup> at South Puget Sound Community College's Lacey campus from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm; pre-registration is available online at [jlolympia.org](http://jlolympia.org); the Community Summit, held in partnership with Thurston Thrives, is in its fifth year; it is free to the public; lunch and child care are included with pre-registration.

Ms. Sullivan provided an update and history of the Education and Resilience Action Team (ERAT) which is a merging of three of the original Thurston Thrives Action Teams - Education Team, a Child and Youth Resilience Team and a Community Resilience Team.

Ms. Sullivan shared the ERAT Strategy Map explaining their vision and then shared a snap shot of statistics and trends regarding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Individual and Family Resilience in Thurston County. Ms. Sullivan explained and discussed an Integrated Services example of the Tumwater Community Schools Initiative and provided background for the use of the Community Schools Model which was a pilot project by the Tumwater School District in partnership with the Education Action Team in 2014. She then shared additional stories of success as a result of this work. Ms. Sullivan then discussed the work around Engaged Learning to enhance career readiness: a work group chaired by Wes Pruitt, with representatives from Education Services District 113, Thurston Economic Development Council, Thurston County Chamber of Commerce, local school districts, YWCA of Olympia and Timberland Regional Library This work group's next meeting is February 27<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-5:00pm at the Thurston Economic Development office. At Vice Chair Hutchings request, Ms. Sullivan explained ACEs, adverse childhood experiences. At Chair Blake's request, Ms. Sullivan explained when ERAT meets and the action teams, noting Jessica Bateman with United Way is the contract person for meeting information. She then answered the Board's questions regarding other pilot projects; funding for these projects and ongoing discussions regarding potential work with other Teams such as the Food Action Team. The Board expressed their appreciation and thanked Ms. Sullivan for the great work being done by herself and ERAT Hub and the work groups. Contact information for Thurston Thrives and ERAT:

- Go to [www.ThurstonThrives.org](http://www.ThurstonThrives.org)
- Meghan Sullivan, Executive Director - TOGETHER!  
(360) 493-2230 x104  
[MSullivan@thurstonTOGETHER.org](mailto:MSullivan@thurstonTOGETHER.org)
- Liz Davis, Community Coordinator - Thurston Thrives  
(360) 561-2984  
[Liz@NWVP.org](mailto:Liz@NWVP.org)
- Chris Hawkins, Community Engagement, Evidence and Partnerships Manager – PHSS Department  
(360) 867-2513  
[hawkins@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:hawkins@co.thurston.wa.us)

#### 4) **Suicide Awareness**

Gary Warnock, County Coroner, addressed the Board to discuss and share 2016 data on suicides in Thurston County. He stated the topic of suicide is a difficult subject to discuss, noting his life has been effected by suicide as many in the audience may have been also. He provided information on the number of suicides investigated by the Coroner's office in 2006 and discussed how the number of suicides has increased over the last 10 years. He shared possible reasons for the increase of suicides such as during that time frame we went through two wars and an economy recession. Mr. Warnock explained that during this 10 year period many of those who committed suicide were veterans; or active duty soldiers unable to get the help they needed; patients unable to get the medications they needed when a major pain clinic in Seattle shut down; patients with mental health issues; others with relationship problems; and many that lost their jobs preventing them from supporting their families. He then shared a handout providing a monthly breakdown of the number of calls into the 911 Center in 2016; a breakdown of the 53 suicides by

the mode of suicide and gender; and a breakdown of the number of suicides by ethnicity. Mr. Warnock noted that so far in 2017 there have been 5 suicides reported in Thurston County. He expressed his strong opinion that we as a society can never do enough to promote suicide awareness and prevent suicides. He noted hand outs are available at schools in our community and information is presented to them. He then addressed the Board members' questions and provided clarification on the presented data. Mr. Warnock offered to provide graphs of suicides by the month for additional years to the Board members. Vice Chair Hutchings questioned if, at his request, the lead of Medic One's debriefing team reached out to the Coroner's staff to assist them with debriefs regarding cases they deal with. Mr. Warnock stated contact was made and the Coroner's office will be pursuing debriefing information for staff and expressed his appreciation of Vice Chair Hutchings' concern. Dr. Wood expressed her appreciation of Mr. Warnock's visits into schools to provide suicide prevention education and information to students and staff. The Board thanked Mr. Warnock for his hard work and dedication in dealing with this hard issue.

Mary Ann O'Garro, Epidemiologist with PHSS, addressed the Board to provide data information on patterns and prevention of suicide. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to talk about this important subject. Ms. O'Garro noted the 2016 suicide information Mr. Warnock shared is concerning and the number of suicides in 2017 is concerning also. She explained the information she was to share would be based on the past 5 years prior to 2016. She stated suicide is the 8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for Thurston County residents and stated based on this 5 years of data an average of 44 residents died each year from suicide. She explained factors that are taken into account when looking at data and comparing Thurston County statistics which show that Thurston County's suicide rates are consistently higher than Washington State's rates as a whole. She provided data collected by reviewing death certificates for 2011 through 2015, noting an average of 130 county residents per year were hospitalized for suicide attempts but did not die. She explained there is science behind this research and we are fortunate to have people looking at what is effective to decrease suicide and take effective action which entails looking at risk and protective factors of suicide. She described Risk Factors for suicide and Protective factors; noting that no matter what you do or where you are at, if the community addresses these factors they increase the ability to reduce suicide. Commissioner Edwards questioned if when a suicide death information is compiled is occupation, history of illness other than mental illness and recent conflicts considered. Ms. O'Garro stated the data is obtained from death certificates which do not include this type of information but she would be willing to look further for the information to answer the question. Vice Chair Hutchings commented on the tremendous work that TOGETHER! is doing to limit access by our youth to guns, alcohol, knives, illegal drugs and prescription drugs. The Board thanked Ms. O'Garro for the information.

Duncan MacQuarrie from the Thurston Gun Sense Coalition addressed the Board and introduced his wife Diana MacQuarrie stating they have lived in Thurston County for over 30 years and are long time educators, working in the Olympia School District, the Tumwater school district and higher education. He explained that gun violence shootings in the past prompted Mrs. MacQuarrie and himself to form the Thurston Gun Sense (TGS) Coalition. Mr. MacQuarrie gave a history of TGS a "grass roots" organization that began in the fall of 2015 and was initially a small group of 10 Thurston County residents with a goal to address gun violence and reduce local gun-related deaths such as homicides, suicides and accidental deaths. At that time, they contacted Mary Ann O'Garro with the PHSS department to obtain state data which showed over 80% of gun deaths in Washington State are suicides. Mr. MacQuarrie stated because of this data the TGS's focus shifted to suicide prevention and intervention. He noted that by the spring of 2016 the initial small group of individuals had expanded to about 40 individuals representing a diverse group of various agencies and organizations throughout the county. Mr. MacQuarrie shared TGS's Vision and Mission. He then described connections with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) efforts related to TGS's mission and vision. Mr. MacQuarrie shared a quote by Margaret Mead – "*Never*

*doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has.*" Mr. and Mrs. MacQuarrie addressed and discussed the Board members' questions and comments regarding broadening their focus perspective to include discussion about "why" guns are used as well as other components; and explained actions taken and support systems available to help families who have experienced suicide. The Board expressed their appreciation of the MacQuarrie's, and their group members, for their efforts in solving a community problem. The MacQuarrie's thanked the Board for the opportunity to present.

Mr. Warnock addressed the Board commenting that unlike high profile deaths, suicide deaths do not make the media coverage.

#### **5) The News Tribune and The Olympian Independent Contactor Freelancer Agreement**

Interim Director Art Starry described and provided a background of the Independent Contractor Freelancer Agreement between Thurston County through Dr. Rachel Wood and "The News Tribune and The Olympian" which allows Dr. Wood to submit materials for publication. Dr. Wood receives no compensation for publications. **Vice Chair Hutchins moved to approve and authorize Health Officer Dr. Rachel Wood to sign "The News Tribune and The Olympian Independent Contractor Freelancer Agreement for the duration of January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

#### **6) 2017 Legislative Update**

Mr. Starry provided a summary and update of Foundational Public Health Services and other key public health and social services coming before the legislature this year.

#### **7) Board of Health Members' Health Related Activities (optional items)** – none

#### **8) Director's Report**

Interim Director Art Starry reported on the following:

- CIP - Retreat held in February
- Triage Center – 100+ diverted to receive proper treatment instead of incarcerated in jail
- Grow Smart Grow Safe a gardener's guide to choosing safer pesticides and garden products – Website has gone live
- Commissioner Edwards commented about the Talking Trash publication article about prescription drug collection program noting the City of Olympia was not listed as a participant in the program. Mr. Starry explained this city chose not to participate. Commissioner Edwards recommended their participation be pursued noting his willingness to support the request. Mr. Starry stated he would check with staff to determine the status of current efforts already in progress.

**9) Health Officer's Report**

Dr. Rachel Wood reported on the following:

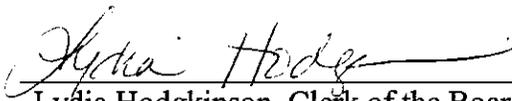
- Influenza – this year's strain is more violent than last year's; recommends everyone be vaccinated.
- Mumps – recommends everyone be vaccinated for MMR.
- Tuberculosis – continue to work with health care partners to manage and take care of current TB cases in the county.
- Emergency Preparedness and Response – a 5 county area emergency response planning meeting was held; workshop on personal protective gear and transporting patients.

**10) Adjournment** – Vice Chair Hutchings moved to adjourn the meeting of February 14, 2017.  
Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
Thurston County, Washington

**ATTEST:**

  
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BUD BLAKE, Chair

  
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Lydia Hodgkinson, Clerk of the Board

  
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JOHN HUTCHINGS, Vice Chair

Date: April 11, 2017

  
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GARY EDWARDS, Commissioner

**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.