

# Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC)

## Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2023

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**ATTENDING:** Sonja Ackman, Rachel Arnold, Madhavi Bharadwaj, Robin Bousquet, Nicole Bowles, David Eppelsheimer, Commissioner Nafisa Fai, Jennifer McElravey, Afam Okoye, Hemi Pariyani, Julie Scotland, Dick Stenson, Larysa Thomas

**ABSENT:** Eileen Derr, Andrea Lara, Annie Paulsen

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS:** Larry Boxman, Lucia Pajuelo, Michelle Williams, Ainsley Fancher

**STAFF PRESENTERS:** Dr. Marie Boman-Davis, Alex Coleman, Zakir Khan

**STAFF:** Lainie Clem, Kathleen Rees

### WELCOME

Jennifer McElravey started the virtual meeting with a welcome and introductions to those attending, followed by a review of the agenda.

### APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The November 2022 minutes were reviewed, and two follow-up questions (below) were raised.

**Q:** On page three, under the section entitled, Overview of Washington County Public Health Organizational Structure, the minutes state, *“To achieve [and reapply for] National Public Health Accreditation, we must adhere to Standards & Measures set forth by PHAB, the Public Health Accreditation Board [...].”* Is the accreditation assessed or awarded for the whole state or just the county?

**A:** National Public Health Accreditation is assessed on a county-by-county basis and is voluntary. Washington County is currently in the cycle of reaccreditation; we have submitted the necessary data to the PHAB, and now await their determination.

**Q:** *How often do we need to update our bylaws?*

**A:** Bylaws are typically updated every 3-5 years. We update bylaws about every 5 years. Internally, work is underway to review the expectations of boards and committees, as we are coming due soon.

With no further questions, Larysa Thomas motioned to approve the minutes and Hemi Pariyani seconded the motion. All were in favor, and none opposed. The motion was passed.

### 2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PHAC members received an overview of the upcoming legislative session and had the opportunity to vote to advocate for proposed public health legislation. The Oregon State Legislature begins its 2023 Session on January 17, 2023. This year will be a long session.

- Odd years = Long Session + Budget for next biennium
- Even years = Short Session
- Maximum length of session = 160 days

The Board of County Commissioners adopted their legislative framework on [December 13, 2022](#). Informed by a set of Guiding Principles (see slide 4, 2023 Legislative Session Updates), the following key priorities were identified for Washington County:

- Secure stabilized and sustainable funding for services that the state requires the county to provide
- Secure State investments supporting local government investments in economic development and job creation
- Develop policies to enable the county to recruit and retain the talent necessary for our communities to thrive

- Support funding to initiate the planning process for replacing the county’s almost 100-year-old Courthouse, which will improve how the public safety system serves our growing community
- Support state funding for the development of the Center for Addiction Triage and Treatment (the CATT) and additional behavioral health infrastructure

The Public Health Division also identified the three Primary Legislative Issues for 2023, which are outlined below.

- Fund Public Health Modernization at \$286 million
- Pass a \$47 million Public Health Workforce Incentives Package
- Pass a restriction on the sale of flavored tobacco and nicotine products in Oregon (LC1731)

Washington County’s Government Relations Manager, Zakir Khan, took time to describe for PHAC members Three to Thrive, as set of legislative concepts (HB2651, HB2977, and HB2652) aimed at addressing the health and human services workforce crisis in Oregon.

- Incentives Packages are being proposed in the form of three legislative bills. One includes replenishing the original Behavioral Health fund, another aims to develop the Pathways Model to support our schools, and the third aims to stem the shortage of workers in the human services space, allowing counties to declare a workforce labor shortage within the public health arena.
- Mr. Khan explained that town hall events are an excellent method of drawing attention to issues when rolling out bills. Inviting legislators to visit and learn the narratives surrounding relevant cases in the county—and answering the question—why does this issue matter to us? Utilizing personal stories that illustrate need or highlight deficits is a strong tool in terms of what people will relate to and remember.

## **QUESTIONS**

**Q:** When there is an *ask*—for a particular program, bill, or increased revenue to support one—are we adjusting the funds that support other programs to meet that need, or does it raise the bottom-line level of funding, i.e., general operating funds?

**A:** It depends on the need or the specificity of the bill. Bills can include a tax or payment method to fund it. A budget is a moral document; you weigh opposing or similar priorities and decide where the greatest need exists. How do you maintain the level of service to meet the needs of the community/public? Dr. Boman-Davis added that PH Modernization is the one funding source from the state legislature to offset the General Fund. It is constant and does not replace General Funds. PH Modernization funding gets renewed every biennium, and an increase equates to a sustained increase in our public health system.

**Q:** You mentioned that one of the bills proposes funding for education. How is this a county initiative? Does the language of the bill specify how much would be dedicated to training for teachers, or used for curriculum, etc.?

**A:** The County’s nexus is that it maintains numerous regional and community-based relationships. We shape where we feel the focus should be or where we want to spend. For example, we may have enough public health counselors, but we really need more therapists. With regard to the specificity in Bill 2652, it allows for monies to support incentives for career paths in all fields that have shortages and is intended to be broad enough to suit each county. It can include rules or guidelines for rulemaking. If you are involved in the process, you can help to shape the product.

## **VOTE TO ADVOCATE FOR PROPOSED PUBLIC HEALTH LEGISLATION**

*Will PHAC members vote to advocate or support the Proposed Public Health Legislation?*

Motion made by Robin Bousquet to engage in the 2023 Legislative Session by providing verbal or written testimony for the proposed modernization funding package and for some of the discussed house bills. Hemi Pariyani seconded the motion. All were in favor, and none opposed. The motion was passed.

## **BUDGET UPDATE FOR FY 2023-2024**

PHAC members received an update on the budget planning process for fiscal year 2023-2024 and were provided with an opportunity to vote to support a proposed cost recovery model for Environmental Health fees as a way to reduce general fund subsidy within the Public Health Division.

Jon Kawaguchi, Program Supervisor for Environmental Health (EH) shared slides with PHAC members that had been modified from the January 3, 2023, BCC Work Session. The slides outlined data that support a proposal to increase EH program fee rates for the fiscal year 2023-2024. The fee rate increases are in line with a plan to move to a Program Cost Recovery model, a response—in part—to a shortfall between revenues and general fund expenditures the County faces next fiscal year.

**Note:** additional explanation pertaining to the County’s anticipated shortfall can be found on page 3 of the revised agenda for this meeting, and links to relevant supporting documentation are located on page 1. You may also view a recording of the [January 3, 2023, BCC Work Session](#) on YouTube.

- The Environmental Health program supports the LPHA with its statutory responsibilities (OAR 333-014-0550) with a combination of fee revenues and General Fund subsidies. Each year, fees have increased incrementally by a small percentage (3-5%). This fee increase has not been enough to keep up with actual costs.
- Three Cost Recovery options were considered:
  1. 100% cost recovery
  2. 95% cost recovery
  3. 90% cost recovery
- For FY23-24, HHS staff recommend budgeting for a 100% cost recovery model which estimates a General Fund subsidy savings of approximately \$260,000.

## **QUESTIONS**

**Q:** In reference to the average cost increases (slide 11), Restaurant fees would increase by \$119?

**A:** This number refers to the average increase to most restaurants, approx. 11%. It varies because each fee is assessed by the amount of time it takes to perform a specific function, and not all venues require the same functions. An equity component was also used to calculate these fees; a method similar to “targeted universalism” approach to cost-recovery was employed. Some fees may not increase depending on venue size, etc.

**Q:** Businesses were hit hard during COVID-19 lockdowns, but they were still required by the state to pay fees annually. Are they required to work with the LPHA, or can they select other certification providers?

**A:** LPHAs in Oregon are required to offer licensing and certification services, but these services can be obtained by other providers, if they are available. We operate under guidelines that specify we must not exceed X% above or below the recommended fees. Additionally, we cannot charge or increase fees for any purpose other than cost recovery (however much we spend on performing the service). Any fee revenue generated must be spent in the same program that earns it.

## **VOTE IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED EH FEE INCREASES**

*What cost recovery model does the PHAC support for Environmental Health Regulatory Fees for fiscal year 2023-2024?*

PHAC members expressed the need for more information and time to consider the data before voting on supporting the proposed fee increases. A decision was made to move to a vote outside of the meeting. Members of the PHAC were sent an email outlining the issue, which contained a link to vote. The email contained the following information.

General Funds will continue to subsidize EH regulatory fee categories that are unable to generate as much revenue as they expend. However, Public Health is still faced with reducing the total General Fund dollars budgeted for the next fiscal year. If we are unable to move toward a cost-recovery model for the EH services we provide, general fund subsidy will need to be reduced from other areas of the Public Health Division budget, and there are a limited number of places where cuts can be made that do not impact staff employment. In order to better illustrate potential tradeoffs between the ‘buckets’ subsidized by General Funds, Alex offered to send a follow-up email to include the following:

- Environmental Health Fee Proposal Slides
- Links to the [January 3, 2023, Board of Commissioners Work Session](#) video and accompanying materials

- Survey link. The question on which you will vote will be reframed as follows: *which cost recovery model you would like PHAC to support for each of the fee categories?* (There will be an option to abstain from voting under each category as well, if you would prefer not to vote on this issue.)

After the survey closes, we will follow-up and let you know what the members have decided. There will be space to provide additional feedback or comments when you respond with your vote. As always, we appreciate your and active engagement and value the feedback this group provides to our work.

The email containing the link to vote was sent to the group on January 12<sup>th</sup> and members had until 10 am on January 17<sup>th</sup> to submit their vote.

11 members submitted votes, which is enough to meet the quorum requirements. The votes were as follows

	Restaurants	Pools & Tourist	Other Food
100%	7 (70%)	8 (80%)	5 (50%)
95%	2 (20%)	1 (10%)	2 (20%)
90%	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	3 (30%)
Abstain	1	1	1

The results of the vote were included in the memo that went to the Board and the CAO for a follow up presentation at the February 7<sup>th</sup> work session.

**UPDATES** – *delayed until next month due to lack of time*

- PHAC members will receive an update on the PHAC application revisions
- New member appointments and Boards & Commissions recruitment
- Feedback on November hybrid meeting

**CLOSING**

Alex acknowledged that today was Dick Stenson’s final meeting as a PHAC member. Dick was thanked for his participation, time, support, and personal investment in PHAC. Jennifer McElravey closed out the meeting. February’s meeting is a hybrid meeting, with the option to attend in-person or online.