

Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC)

Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2023



ATTENDING: Jennifer McElravey, Afam Okoye, Larysa Thomas, Lucia Benavides, Ansley Fancher

ABSENT: Sonja Ackman, Rachel Arnold, Madhavi Bharadwaj, Robin Bousquet, Nicole Bowles, Eileen Derr, David Eppelsheimer, Commissioner Nafisa Fai, Andrea Lara, Hemi Pariyani, Annie Paulsen, Julie Scotland, Dick Stenson

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: Larry Boxman, Shawn Baird

STAFF PRESENTERS: Dr. Marie Boman-Davis, Alex Coleman, Genevieve Ellis

STAFF: Lainie Clem

WELCOME

Jennifer McElravey started the virtual meeting with a welcome and introductions to those attending, followed by a review of the agenda. The number of Council members attending was insufficient for a quorum.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Without a quorum for this meeting, the vote to approve the January meeting minutes will be postponed until March.

PUBLIC HEALTH MODERNIZATION - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLANNING, presented by Genevieve Ellis, MPH

Genevieve Ellis serves as the Community Partnerships Supervisor for the Public Health Division. PHAC members were invited to provide input on community engagement. *(Please refer to slide presentation for detailed information.)*

- The Modernization group is preparing to release an RFP to select a consultant to assist Public Health in creating an overarching development plan for Modernization and the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Ideally, the new consultant would start work in April.
- Public Health Modernization (PHM) is a phased plan to modernize Oregon’s public health system.
 - PHM legislative framework was introduced in 2015; Local Public Health Modernization Plans are due on or before 12/31/25 per [House Bill 2965](#).
 - Initial priorities and mandated work are attached to funding.
 - Internal and external engagement are vital to inform and support a plan for modernization and its implementation.
 - Washington County’s Health Equity Action Plan, Climate and Health Adaptation Plan and All-Hazards Plan will be integrated to inform the overall Modernization Implementation Plan.



- Community engagement work will include these phases:
 - Literature review and development of a Community Engagement Plan
 - Implementation of the Engagement Plan, including surveys, listening sessions, etc.
 - Data analysis and development of key takeaways and recommendations

QUESTIONS

Q: A relevant consideration or question to ask as part of your search for a consultant would be if they have worked at the patient or public level. Will their questions, materials, and methods of engagement be in simplified language to communicate with the public-at-large? Can public-facing literature be adjusted to the public including those who speak English as a second language?

A: Yes—that is a great suggestion and an important element to include. The language and the methods we use with the community during the engagement phase must be accessible, too. Accessibility of content is an important aspect of equity.

Q: How will the unhoused community be included in engagement?

A: We reach out to our unhoused population through community partners who are already working with this population. We do need to call-out and name the organizations that work with the unhoused. We also need to be where they go for services, so we can meet them where they are. We would also like to work with and better align our services with populations who reside in Public Housing, as well, as they also have a place at that table.

Q: Does Washington County have affordable housing for refugees in our community? Specifically for refugees and asylees?

A: Alex stated that we have an affordable housing network but was not aware of any housing for refugees specifically. Alex will follow-up to see what is available for this population.

Q/A: Another very vulnerable population we would like to hear from and engage with are the individuals who speak English-as-a-second language (ESL) who are struggling with mental health issues. There are not enough specialists who can address mental health needs in the languages needed, preventing ESL populations from getting assistance. This issue has recently been identified in the CHIP report as well. How are we reaching these folks and what are the right questions to ask? One suggestion was to seek out organizations like *Lutheran Community Services Northwest*, who is offering support to local refugee and asylee communities. They assist with resettling/housing, legal assistance, mental health, and other needs.

UPDATES

Legislative Budget Update for FY 2023-2024

The Governor's budget includes \$50 million to support current modernization efforts, this falls short of the \$286 million that was sought to support continued implementation of the modernization plan. The group voted in January to provide testimony related to legislation including public health modernization. The PHAC will submit written testimony to the legislature for the **March 15th** Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services meeting. Alex will be sending out a draft of that testimony, and anyone who is interested in providing verbal testimony (virtually or in-person), please contact Alex.

Public Health Budget Update

In January, PHAC members were surveyed on their level of support for the Environmental Health Program's cost recovery proposal. The results were included in a memo to the Board of County Commissioners and the CAO and were reviewed at a follow-up presentation at the February 7th work session. Thank you for your participation in this valuable process. On February 21, the Board will adopt a resolution and order related to the Environmental Health Program fee setting methodology. We will then receive official direction from the Board on this subject.

Washington County Board of Commissioners would like to encourage more involvement at public gatherings. They have expressed the desire to hear what community members need and want. Likewise, Dr. Boman-Davis would like to foster engagement and meaningful discussions with community members. To provide more opportunity for participation, the Board will be adjusting its meeting format to be more like a Town Hall meeting. Members of the community (including PHAC members) are encouraged to attend these meetings, where individuals can provide feedback on relevant issues about which the Board is making decisions.

The BCC routinely provides direction to our County Administrative Officer (CAO), and to the four Assistant County Administrators. We continue to develop our budget packages, cuts, etc., but the Commissioners do not see them until the executive leadership, the CAO and CFO finalizes and approves them.

The commissioners will soon be reviewing the ARPA Tranche 2 funds, and in April, they will be deciding what they need to do with the \$50 million budget. Until then, however, no final decisions have been made; they will make their final decisions on this budget in April.

QUESTIONS

Q: I thought ARPA was mostly intended to support infrastructure. Is there any chance of getting public health funding through it?

A: Yes. We have Tranche 1 investments estimated at \$4 million that could be carried over into the next fiscal year. They can choose to reallocate this remaining balance to other areas. We have asked for an additional \$6 million for public health from the Tranche II funds, but they may choose to allocate that differently, too. If you are interested learning more about this and some of the current ideas being proposed, here is a link to the [presentation materials](#).

COUNCIL ELECTIONS

This is the last meeting in which Jennifer McElravey will preside as the PHAC chair and **Larysa Thomas** will serve as vice-chair. Jennifer will be stepping away from the group after four years of membership. PHAC members offered their sincere thanks to Jennifer and Larysa for their time and commitment in guiding and engaging with the council, especially through a tumultuous pandemic.

The vote for a new chair and vice-chair for the next year will occur at the March meeting. Please contact Alex if you are interested in serving as chair or vice-chair for the next year.

OTHER UPDATES

2023 Volunteer Appreciation Event – *please RSVP by Wednesday, April 5*

Please join us as we celebrate you and other amazing volunteers! This annual volunteer celebration will be held at the **Wingspan Event & Conference Center in Hillsboro on Thursday, April 13th from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.** Free parking in the south lot on Veterans Drive.

What: Annual Volunteer Appreciation Celebration

- ✧ Food, entertainment, gift basket raffle
- ✧ Greetings from County leaders

When: Thursday, April 13, 5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

- ✧ Welcome and introductions begin at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Wingspan Event & Conference Center, 801 NE 34th, Hillsboro

- ✧ Free parking in the South lot off NE Veterans Drive (parking lot accessed from NE 34th is not free!)

Who: All active Washington County volunteers

Please reserve your spot by Wednesday, April 5 by clicking: www.eventbrite.com/e/volunteer-celebration-tickets-536244340257

National Public Health Week Proclamation (*please refer to memo entitled Agenda Item*)

Requested action

Will PHAC members vote to proclaim March 2023 as *COVID-19 Remembrance and Resilience Month* in Washington County

Summary of Proclamation

Monday, February 28, 2023, marks the three-year anniversary the first case of a highly contagious and deadly new strain of coronavirus (SARS CoV2) – causing the disease named COVID-19 – was identified in Oregon, here in Washington County. We have worked in partnership across government, business, community-based organizations, education, faith communities and community members to address health inequities and improve the health and well-being of our community throughout response and recovery phases.

Proclaiming March 2023 as COVID-19 Remembrance Month allows us an opportunity to recognize the impact the ongoing pandemic has on the lives of our friends, family members and loved ones, and allows us to envision what it means to move to the resilience phase as we expand our understanding of how to live with COVID-19.

QUESTIONS

Q: How does the Board make a proclamation?

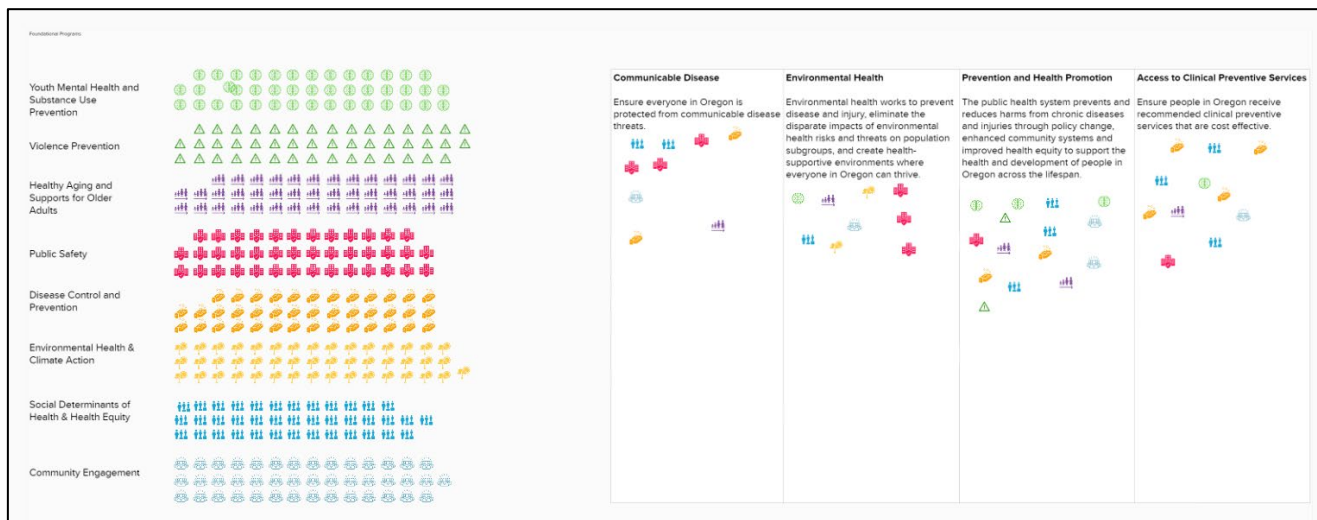
A: During the board meeting, the Board will make an announcement to state the proclamation. There is a section on the agenda item for community support where we would indicate if PHAC supports the proclamation. Once the proclamation is put forward and read, the Board then makes a motion and vote to enact the proclamation. This Agenda Item is scheduled for the February 28th BCC meeting.

Due to the lack of a quorum for this meeting, this would be an informal vote. Members were asked if any were opposed to putting forth an informal vote for this proclamation. There were no opposing votes, and a majority of those present supported uplifting the proclamation at the February 28th meeting.

If you are willing to volunteer to read this Proclamation at the February 28th Board meeting, please contact Alex or Dr. Boman-Davis.

GROUP ACTIVITY

In the summer, members discussed subjects that they were interested in learning more about, and in November, members discussed the foundational programs and values in public health. This Mural activity represents an exercise in aligning interest areas in the most logical foundational program *bucket*. Below is a snapshot taken near the end of the exercise.



MEMBER COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS

In thinking about the un-housed people in Washington County, can we get more information about what or who in Public Health participates in this area and how we can get connected? Alex agreed to invite our houseless population liaison to the March or April meeting to learn more. A new Medicaid waiver for social related health needs can help to pay rent. It would be great to see more efforts put into *preventing* becoming houseless.

CLOSING

Alex will send out follow-up materials to the council in the next week. Jennifer McElravey closed out the meeting.