

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 26, 2022, with Peter Browning, Chair, and Ron Wesen, Commissioner present. Lisa Janicki, Commissioner excused.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Browning called the proceedings to order at 1:32 p.m.

II. AGENDA:

a) *1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Board of Health Quarterly Meeting:

1. Approval of the March 24, 2022 Record of the Proceedings

A motion was made by Ron Commissioner to approve the March 24, 2022 Record of the Proceedings. No seconder was required.

The vote passed unanimously. Connie Davis, MD, Aaron Katz, CPH, and Lisa Janicki, Commissioner's absences were excused.

2. Population Health Trust Update

Public Health Director Jennifer Johnson explained a new requirement for the Board of Health: the provision of an update from the Chair of the Population Health Trust (PHT). PHT Chair Maureen Pettitt discussed their work on the Community Health Plan and the COVID Recovery Plan. The Trust recently concluded an equity assessment and saw the need for shared understanding and diversity in staff and leadership across multiple organizations. Many organizations were currently engaged in equity work and DEI: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion. Ms. Pettitt said the Trust would be working on an action plan for DEI.

The Board thanked PHT Chair Pettitt for the update.

3. North Star Project: Multi-Phase Design Process Transforming Behavioral Health and Homelessness

Director Johnson informed the Board that work had been started in partnership with City Mayors to address homelessness, housing, and the provision of behavioral health services. She said the cities and county recognized that the best chance at solving homelessness and behavioral health issues in the community was to align and collaborate resources and establish a vision, priorities, and methods.

The most recent project that had been completed through city and county partnership was the low barrier shelter in Burlington: Skagit First Step Center, and with the recent availability of new funding streams, Ms. Johnson believed the cities and county would be able to complete additional housing and support projects.

The North Star Project shifted the focus of solving homelessness from helping to survive to helping to thrive and the vital conditions necessary for thriving. The community-wide issue of homelessness required a community-wide response with support from neighbors through all levels of business and government and developing a shared vision was the first phase in work that the group was starting with Tenfold Health.

PowerPoint:<https://www.skagitcounty.net/CountyCommissioners/Documents/AgendaPackets/04252022.zip>

4. Community Health Advisory Board Discussion

Public Health Analyst Kristen Ekstran led a discussion and asked PHT members how they saw their role in the work to transform homelessness and behavioral health through the North Star Project.

PHT members Chris Johnston, John Sternlicht, and Maureen Pettitt shared that they felt PHT would be an integral part of providing a united and coordinated path for supporting the complex endeavor.

Chair Browning and Commissioner Wesen agreed and suggested clear goals be made with measurable impacts.

5. Skagit County Medical Reserve Corp Update

Senior Public Health Analyst Julie de Losada provided an overview of the Skagit Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) that was volunteer based and provided an overview of the type of work they had been doing during the pandemic and in other emergency preparedness and response situations.

The consistent training received by MRC volunteers made for a robust and capable force when a coordinated response to emergencies for community resiliency was needed. The Skagit MRC only had one paid position: the Volunteer Coordinator.

Ms. de Losada informed the Board that the Skagit MRC would be 100% official once some legal, risk and liability issues were resolved. Skagit MRC was registered with the National Association of County and City Health Officials which, through the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness Response, was registered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The financial value provided by volunteers of the Skagit MRC in the 2020-2021 COVID response was staggering. 227 volunteers provided 20,719 hours of work that equated to \$606,859.51. MRC volunteers greatly benefited the community.

Discussion was held about a youth division of the MRC and support for the Skagit MRC.

Interested members of the public who had questions about volunteering for the MRC could contact Rosemary Alpert at 360-416-1500.

PowerPoint: <https://www.skagitcounty.net/CountyCommissioners/Documents/AgendaPackets/04252022.zip>

6. Health Officer Update

Health Officer Dr. Howard Leibrand discussed the COVID-19 pandemic and the volunteer force, moving from a pandemic to an endemic, immunity in the community, vaccines, the convenience of home testing, the availability of antiviral pills, and masking etiquette.

7. Public Comment

Director Johnson read an email from Dr. Connie Davis who left the meeting but wanted to comment on an earlier question regarding PHT's role in the work to transform homelessness and behavioral health through the North Star Project. Dr. Davis believed the PHT played an important role and would be able to provide support to government leaders for the North Star Project. She agreed that metrics would need to be defined and the provision of mental health data would be important.

III. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Browning adjourned the proceedings at 3:33 p.m.

*Note, to obtain an audio or video recording of this meeting; please contact the Skagit County Commissioners' office.

**BOARD OF HEALTH
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Ron Wesen, Chair

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

Dr. Aaron Katz, At Large Board Member

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Board