



PHT Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2026, 8:30-10:30 am

Chinook Meeting Room

Members: Claudia Avendano-Ibarra, Patty Codd, Sonia Garza, Jeremy Hiatt, Julie Merriam, Maureen Pettitt, Lyndie Simmonds, Dean Snider

Community Stakeholders: Kas Church, Sarah Hinman, Monica Negrila

Ex-Officio: Howard Leibrand

Guests: Kelli Baker, Neil Panlasigui

Welcome

Monica welcomed the group and provided an overview of the day's agenda. Lyndie shared updates from the most recent Steering Committee meeting.

Public Health Budget and Staffing Overview

Sarah delivered a presentation on the essential functions of public health, changes to the budget because of reduced funding, and reductions in staffing. The budget reductions have occurred at the federal, state, and local levels with future deficits likely. Given this, public health is focusing its efforts on cross-training staff and evaluating current programs to ensure that essential work is maintained. There is some limited staff support available for the Trust, but capacity has been lost to recent reductions.

Discussion- Aligning Current Capacity with Trust Activities

Members stressed the importance of data as an essential function of the Trust. Several members cited how they have used the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to apply for grants and to make strategic decisions within their organizations. Members agreed that having a coordinated, strategic plan, like the CHIP, has yielded funding and that it has elevated Skagit among other counties in Washington. Maintaining these efforts is an important part of the Trust's work in the community moving forward.

Trust members discussed the possibility of taking more of the lead on a CHIP, recognizing the Public Health staff would not have the same ability to support the work this year. Members recognized that not everyone could commit additional time to the Trust, so an important next step would be fully understanding the CHIP process and time expectations for that scope of work. Trust members also noted that with a self-directed CHIP, they would need some Public Health oversight and support from the Board of Health for the work.

CHA Theme Area Prioritization

Youth behavioral health was identified as a priority theme for Trust members in attendance. Reasons cited were,

- The long-term public health benefits of upstream/prevention work
- Staff capacity for the issue (outside of Public Health)
- The Trust has already collected good data on this issue as part of the CHA
- Several Trust members are working in the youth-serving organizations
- The BOH has expressed interest in youth and prevention

Adjourn

Steering will meet on Monday, February 9th to continue the conversation on next steps for the Trust. The full group will meet again on March 5th.