

PUBLIC HOSPITAL DISTRICT NO. 2 OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASHINGTON
VERDANT HEALTH COMMISSION

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting

Hybrid: In-Person at Verdant Community Wellness Center and via Zoom

June 28, 2023

5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

**Commissioners
Present**

Jim Distelhorst, MD, President
Deana Knutsen, Commissioner
Carolyn Brennan, Commissioner
Bob Knowles, Commissioner

**Commissioner
Excused**

Karianna Wilson, Commissioner

Staff

Dr. Lisa Edwards, Superintendent
Riene Simpson, CPA, Director of Finance
Kaysi Caballero, Executive Assistant/Office Manager
Nancy Budd, Community Social Worker
Kirk Mathis, Digital Marketing & Communications Manager
Zayna Jawo, Social Media Intern

Guests

Nicole Picknell, South County Fire
Dr. Jeremy Hammel, Swedish Edmonds
Shannon Smith, Sound Pathways
Jason Biermann, Snohomish County Executive's Office
Tom Laing, LETI
Asiya Inraham
Samantha Murguia
Katie Gillian
Kristina Brown
Zayna Jawo
Monika Star

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Hospital District No. 2, Snohomish County, was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Distelhorst.

**Land and
Enslaved People's
Acknowledgement**

President Distelhorst read the acknowledgement.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Knutsen made a motion to approve all items included on the consent agenda, Commissioner Brennan seconded. Motion passed.

Consent Agenda (E:41:23)

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1. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. May 24, 2023 Regular Board Meeting
 - b. June 20, 2023 Special Board Meeting
 - c. June 23, 2023 Special Board Meeting
2. Grant Modification Requests
3. Superintendent's Discretionary Requests

Public Comments

Lynn Sordel, City of Lynnwood Parks and Rec Director: He came to thank Verdant for continuing to support the drowning prevention initiative. The City of Lynnwood will be matching funding of \$10,000 with Verdant to continue this program. The City looks forward to provide water safety for many, including adults who couldn't otherwise afford swim lessons, as well as people with disabilities.

Kristina Brown, Public Affairs Director of Kindering: She reported that Kindering has recently completed a 1 year engagement process to determine their strategic goals. They have an infant mental health therapy program which works directly with parents to give them the tools to provide support for their children throughout their life. Kindering provides these sessions at the parents' home, or wherever they can meet them. Early support services for pre-term infants, like this program from Kindering, can help these babies provide optimal support and early mental health care. Parents say they "become a little more patient" after working in the program, which helps with their parenting overall.

Ms. Caballero read two public comments submitted in writing:

- Audrey Tanberg: "I wanted to let you know how much my family appreciates the Move 60 program. We really hope that it continues next year. Both of my kids have benefited from it greatly. It's really good for them to get their wiggles out in the morning before school. They are very motivated to be active because of Move 60. They love earning the little feet charms from running the miles. I think this program has helped them both in their fitness and academics. My 10-year-old says 'Move 60 is such a fun thing. It really gets my energy up. It makes it so I'm not so sleepy in class. It's fun because you get to test new games and sports. The equipment is really fun to use, and you basically get extra time to do PE. I think it really has improved me. Please do it again next year.' My 12-year-old says 'Move 60 is fun and I like it. I have done it for years. Even though I'll be too old for it next year, I think it should go on next year for the younger kids.'"

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- Tiffany Fritchman: "I wanted to send along a note of thanks for making the Move60 program available at our school. My son Jude (8) started participating in it for the first time this year in January. We are about to complete our 2nd session. Our youngest son Wyatt (6) gets so jealous every day that he can't go. I have to listen to him ask me for 10 minutes why the rules are that 6-year-olds can't go. One time Jody allowed him to participate as long as I was there. I stayed for the entire thing and loved seeing all the kids be active, interact, and got to walk a few loops around the track and see the symbols of feet on all the kids' necklaces. They were so proud to show me! Of course, the aftermath of that is that Wyatt wants me to go everyday so he can participate. On another note - Jude is a sweet kind kid but has some learning disabilities. Move60 allows him a chance to be special and be a part of a group of kids who get to start their day burning off some energy and setting them up for a great day of education. It has really changed how he feels about wanting to come to school everyday. Move60 days he always looks forward to. I hope that this special program gets funded again! It means a lot to these kids and especially to my Jude."

**Executive
Committee Report**

President Distelhorst reported that Executive Committee met on June 21st to approve the agenda for today's meeting. No action was taken at the Executive Committee meeting.

**Opioid Epidemic
Panel Discussion
Panel**

Dr. Edwards introduced the experts speaking at today's opioid panel discussion:

Dr. Hammel, Swedish Edmonds, spoke about the opioid abuse activity he sees in the emergency department at Swedish Edmonds. They have services at the hospital to work with getting people started using Suboxone and Narcan kits are provided to patients who were admitted due to an opioid overdose, or who may be at risk of an overdose.

Mr. Jason Biermann, Snohomish County Executive's Office, presented slides (E:42:23) showing data of fentanyl overdoses in Snohomish County. Since the pandemic, there has been a huge increase in the abuse of opioids, fentanyl in particular. Heroin use has remained relatively flat over recent time, but the use of fentanyl has continued to increase. Snohomish County has an average of 5 deaths per week of overdose, the majority of which are from fentanyl. Majority of substance users are taking 2 or 3 drugs at the same time. In May 2023, Executive

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Sommers introduced a new directive related to this opioid epidemic. The short-term strategies are underway and over the next few months they will continue to fine-tune the long-term directives for Snohomish County. Snohomish County and other eligible cities will be receiving an abatement of \$24 million as part of a refund from pharmaceutical companies. They have active steps in place right now to make sure this money is spent properly.

Joe Hughes, Deputy Chief EMS with South County Fire, provided thanks to Verdant in our continued partnership to support emergency services. He shared some data on 9-1-1 calls related to overdoses. In 2023 the County had 1,127 overdoses (60% increase), most of which are related to fentanyl. This stat does not include those which were not reported, or where the person did not survive the overdose. In 2022 there were 221 administrations of Narcan and so far in 2023 there have already been 174 administrations of Narcan. In 2022 there were 14 administrations of Narcan to children under 14 and so far in 2023 there are already 5 Narcan administrations for age 14 and under 14. In 2022 there were 96 Narcan administrations delivered to our senior population over age 60. Shawneri Guzman reported that their ACT Program ("Antidote, CPR and Tourniquet") has trained thousands of people on how to administer Narcan.

Captain Nicole Picknell of South County Fire added that they have been running the ACT Program for quite some time but what they haven't had is the ability to hand out Narcan at these trainings. She is interested in improving crisis intervention and partnerships with detox facilities and beds. She added there is sometimes a block in getting people a treatment bed when it comes to getting medical clearance from the emergency department. Police and Fire often meet people where they are at, finding them at their home, and they may not necessarily go to the Emergency Department. Providing this clearance would allow patients to get into a treatment bed quicker when they are ready.

- Dr. Hammel added that the Emergency Department wants to create a bridge clinic to introduce patients to detox before they can actually join a detox program.

Shannon Smith of Sound Pathways reported that the majority of the naloxone that they get and use in the field is injectable, not the nasal spray. The injectable is a little more reliable and you can use just two injectable naloxone kits whereas you may have

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to use four Narcan kits of the nasal spray to bring a person back from an overdose. Sound Pathways provides wrap around services in addition to syringe exchange, such as providing food, clothes, safe smoking devices, etc. The abuse of Xylazine (also known as "Tranq") has increased the danger of opioid use and makes it harder to get a person stabilized before they can get help. Heroin is harder to get and more expensive so that's why people are using fentanyl now.

Dr. Edwards asked the panelists about capacity, such as whether there are beds available for these patients and where they get sent for treatment.

- Dr. Hammel, Swedish Edmonds, answered that for the uninsured and underinsured there is not capacity to help them. The most their social workers can do sometimes is to ask a patient to call a number a few times a day to try and get added to their detox program. Swedish Edmonds prefers getting patients setup with Suboxone instead of Methadone.
- Mr. Biermann, Snohomish County Executive's Office, added that the number of beds is incredibly short. They are working on expanding the number of beds, especially for youth overdoses. The price of fentanyl in our area is as low as \$0.05 whereas in other counties it is \$5-\$10. The price and availability are there, which increases the use of fentanyl.

Captain Picknell, South County Fire, talked about the local support program "Courage to Change" and that the leader of this group can sometimes tell the fire department where there is an open bed.

Commissioner Knutsen asked how the abuse of the horse tranquilizer Xylazine is affecting the emergency department and adding code grey for the psychological component.

- Dr. Hammel isn't sure if anyone is tracking the abuse of Xylazine but methamphetamine is still heavily used. The use of Xylazine is in its early stages. He continued that meth can create so much psychosis and combativeness which often comes across as mental disorder so this can add strain to the psychology department.

Commissioner Knutsen asked South County Fire if they see an increase in the use of opioids in the senior population because they are underinsured and trying to self-medicate because they can't find medical help.

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- South County Fire agreed this is what is happening, unfortunately, and that the senior population on palliative care is often prescribed opioids as pain reliever.

President Distelhorst asked why Snohomish County has the highest rate of opioid overdose.

- The low price and availability of the drugs in our area play a role in the increased rate.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Edwards showcased four design boards displayed in the room for the upcoming Kruger Clinic redesign. There will be two open house events at Kruger Clinic to showcase the new design to current tenants and the public. Verdant has begun working with a property consultant who can help Dr. Edwards and Ms. Simpson manage the additional work related to ongoing property projects.

We had a very successful Juneteenth event with numerous community leaders and partner organizations.

She provided thanks to the Verdant team in their hard work to get out in the community and share what Verdant does.

Marketing Update

Mr. Kirk Mathis provided an update on Verdant marketing outreach and goals for 2023-2024 (E:43:23). He told Commissioners about upcoming summer events now and through the Fall. He introduced the new Digital Scholar Interns Samantha Murguia and Asiya Inraham and Social Marketing Intern Zayna Jawo who are helping set us up with Twitter, Tik Tok, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. There is a new digital reader board sign to be installed at the Verdant Community Wellness Center which will increase outreach and announcing programs to the community.

Mr. Mathis asked Commissioners how they want Verdant to be known?

- Commissioner Knutsen answered that she likes to hear the stories and how Verdant has made an impact. Verdant started the 3rd grade swimming lessons as a community outreach and this is how many people remember us.
- Commissioner Brennan wants to keep talking about this question with Commissioners during the strategic planning meetings in September.
- Commissioner Knutsen wants to include more of our unincorporated areas of our district which may not get

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the same amount of outreach as Edmonds and Lynnwood.

If we are successful, then what will that look like?

- President Distelhorst looks forward to seeing the dashboard showing our impact.
- Commissioner Knutsen thinks of success when we mix communities that don't normally interact with each other. To break down the barriers that keep different groups separated. For example, we once had a cooking class with cops and juvenile youth.
- Commissioner Knowles would like to see that people in the community can answer the basic question of "who is Verdant?" with a simple one-line answer. He also wants people to see all the different places we're putting our money in the community.

**Program
Committee Report**

Conflicts of Interest None.

Fall 2023 Timeline Dr. Edwards gave an update on where we are in the timeline of our Fall 2023 funding cycle. Commissioners were recently provided with a bulk packet of all funding applications to read as they await assignments for scoring.

Finance Report

Review Financial
Statements & Cash
Activity

Ms. Simpson presented the financial reports for May 2023 (E:44:23), noting any transactions out of the ordinary, compared to prior month periods. In May the lower income figure is mostly due to the decrease in our investment value and not related to an increase in expenses. She presented a new bar graph showing the breakdown in revenue the District receives and the amount of money we expense for programming for the community.

Authorization of
Payments of
Vouchers and
Payroll

Authorization for payment of vouchers and payroll:
Warrant numbers 16071 through 16103 and J2130 through J2167 for May 2023 for total warrant payments in the amount of \$334,118.55 were presented for approval (E:45:23).

Motion was made by Commissioner Knowles, seconded by Commissioner Knutsen and passed unanimously to approve the warrants.

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Value Village Site
Remediation

Dr. Edwards reported that she and Ms. Simpson met today with District Attorney Brad Berg and another attorney who specializes in environmental matters. We still need to know who is responsible for paying for the site remediation, Verdant as the seller, or South County Fire as the buyer?
Dr. Edwards proposed having Verdant Commissioners have a conversation with the Snohomish County Executive's Office about a potential partnership to combat the opioid epidemic.

Public Comments

None.

**Commissioner
Comments**

Commissioner Knutsen is happy to be here in person for the first time since the pandemic. She is thankful for the staff working so hard and doing amazing work.

Commissioner Brennan thanked Dr. Edwards and the team for organizing the opioid discussion today.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. by President Distelhorst.

ATTEST BY:

DocuSigned by:
JSDistelhorst
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President

DocuSigned by:
Karianna Wilson
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Secretary