

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**

**July 26, 2023**

**8:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.**

**Commissioners  
Present**

Jim Distelhorst, MD, President  
Karianna Wilson, Commissioner  
Deana Knutsen, Commissioner  
Carolyn Brennan, Commissioner

**Commissioner  
Excused**

Bob Knowles, 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  
Humaira Barlas

**Guests**

Leonard Jackson Jr.	Monika Star
Stewart Sinning	Rich Robinson
Scott Rossiter, VOA	Steph Vonnahme
Carl Zapora	Tom Laing, LETI
Lourdes Diaz Monroy	Cherish Hart, AHA
Amit Singh	Carole Wilson
Jorge de la Torre	Ms. Annie
Kit Massengale	Alicia Guy
Deborah Brandi	Ania McCleary
Jenni McCloughan	

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Hospital District No. 2, Snohomish County, was called to order at 8:00 a.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:46:23)

1. Approval of Minutes:

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a. June 28, 2023 Regular Board Meeting  
2. Superintendent's Discretionary Request

**Resolution  
2023:06  
Renaming Kruger  
Clinic as Frederick  
P. Langer Building**

Commissioner Knutsen read Resolution 2023:06 to formally rename the Kruger Clinic as Frederick P. Langer Building, effective August 1, 2023. There will be an official ribbon cutting after the clinic is remodeled in 2024, which will showcase the new name.

***Commissioner Knutsen made a motion to approve RES 2023:06, Commissioner Wilson seconded. Motion passed.***

**Public Comments**

Carole Langer: Fred Langer's mother. She is incredibly honored on behalf of her family and wishes everyone peace.

Scott Rossiter, Volunteers of America: He spoke about the food products they have distributed between July 2020 to July 2021. Their distribution center has sent over 6 million pounds of food. The health implications for food insecurity are staggering. There are impacts on physical and mental health because of food insecurity. He thanks Verdant Health for their generous support of food security for our community.

Carl Zapora, Edmonds: He worked with Fred Langer for 6 years. Mr. Langer was instrumental in 2010 to negotiate the deal with Swedish Edmonds. Mr. Langer helped envision the Verdant Community Wellness Center as well, as a gathering place for resources for South Snohomish County.

**Executive  
Committee Report**

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

**Food Pantry  
Community  
Discussion**

Ms. Silverman welcomed the panelists for today who then provided brief introductions to who they are and the communities they serve.

Ms. Silverman asked Mr. Leonard Jackson of Millenia Ministries "What are some similarities and differences between a food pantry and a food bank?"

- Mr. Jackson answered there is no documentation required, such as, family members do not have to bring in a piece of mail to verify their address is in the county. They used to hand out a bag of food to clients, however they noticed half the bag of food was discarded in the parking lot. To reduce food waste, they decided to switch

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to the pantry model to allow clients to pick what they wanted. The reason behind the reluctance of immigrants to provide documentation when receiving food bank benefits is a notion that it may impede their path to citizenship if it is known that they are receiving free benefits. To lower these barriers to food access, they can increase the utilization of food pantry. They see 600-800 people per month at their Bistro to receive a free meal. Local and ethnic churches are sometimes a "town hall" or resource point where Millenia can get the word out about food pantries. He feels the issue in our state is not the lack of food but instead the lack of access to food.

Ms. Silverman asked Mr. Stewart Sinning, Edmonds College Foundation, "What unanticipated challenges have surfaced that you are currently addressing?"

- Mr. Sinning answered that some students may not know how to *cook* the food that we provide, or students may have dietary restrictions, homeless students may only have access to a microwave. They are trying to move from a shelf-stable pantry to one that can provide more refrigerated items which are typically healthier than shelf-stable ones that have more preservatives. The biggest unanticipated challenge is simply the growth of the amount of people they need to serve.

Ms. Silverman followed up with Mr. Sinning to ask "what are some examples of collaborations among food pantry programs and other community partners –be it nonprofit, businesses, county, schools, etc.?"

- Mr. Sinning, Edmonds College Foundation, answered they have a partnership with a dental office for toothbrushes and toothpaste and the Lynnwood food bank brings their truck to distribute some refrigerated items. They have some collaborations on campus where they recently had students table to request donations in the courtyard to fund some food access. They have students working to create recipes they actually use so students can share with each other some simple recipes for cooking on their own.
- Mr. Pa Joof, WA West African Center, added they work with the Islamic Center of Puget Sound to distribute food and collaborate with other ethnic communities to provide food. WAWAC's priorities for 2023 are food justice, housing justice, and mental health.

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- Mr. Jackson, Millenia Ministries, added that they include a list of community resources in their food bags. He feels that it is one thing to provide food, but until we can address the underlying causes of food insecurity, we will continue to have the need for food banks and pantries.

Ms. Silverman asked the panel "What advice would you have for any organization interested in starting a food pantry?"

- Mr. Jackson, Millenia Ministries, answered you will have to assess the need in your community that is not being addressed with other food security initiatives, then you can tailor your pantry to fill this gap.
- Mr. Joof, WAWAC, answered to research what the people want who are going to food banks and pantries, so you are not wasting food because your customers will not eat it. Having the human resources and manpower to support the food pantry will be important to keep it going.
- Mr. Sinning, Edmonds College Foundation, agrees about researching the issues you wish to solve and learning from other networks.

Commissioner Knutsen asked Mr. Sinning from Edmonds College Foundation how they have been able to provide outreach to these families on campus who are getting food benefits.

- Mr. Sinning answered that they have the Triton Student Resource Hub which has resources for students and a 2-1-1 Community Resource Advocate onsite to assist with other resources. They sometimes help students with laundry, grocery vouchers, housing, etc.
- Mr. Jackson, Millenia Ministries, offers a free diaper bank at their pantry. This year in 2023 they have given out ~4,000 free diapers. Their customers sometimes must decide to either buy food, diapers, or medication, for example. If their pantry workers are trained to gather information from the clients to assess their needs, we can better provide resources to help them. They also provide feminine hygiene products with their food.
- Mr. Joof, WAWAC, provided gratitude to Millennia Ministries for their continued partnership in this mission. WAWAC is a "one-stop-shop" to provide a wealth of services. If they don't have the resource, they will go out and find it. They create visual and video materials for their community who don't speak English.

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President Distelhorst thanked the panelists for providing their insight on this issue.

**Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Edwards thanked the panelists for attending as well as Fred Langer's mother who showed up today. There will be two tenant open houses for Kruger Clinic on 7/28/23 and 8/11/23 to inform tenants about the remodel and renaming. The RFP for the remodel of Kruger Clinic is now under legal review and will come through board committees and to the Board for approval at the August Board meeting. We are working with KMD Architects on the RFQ for the Swedish Edmonds hospital engineering study. We are awaiting for a written purchase agreement for the Value Village property from South County Fire.

**Program Committee Report**

Conflicts of Interest None.

Fall 2023 Timeline Ms. Silverman provided a status update to Commissioners on the current status of our Fall 2023 timeline (E:47:23).

**Finance Report**

Introductions Ms. Simpson introduced Ania McCleary who was recently hired as a project manager to provide support for the facility projects related to Kruger Clinic refresh. Ms. McCleary looks forward to helping in any way related to architecture and construction management. She is familiar with the Kruger Clinic campus and is grateful to lend support.

Ms. Simpson introduced Verdant's new Fiscal Specialist, Humaira (Nomi) Barlas who was recently hired after three rounds of recruitment. She is training with our current accounting consultant, Filo Fajardo, to learn our processes. Nomi has 30+years of experiences working with non-profits who were on the receiving end of funding and now she works with a public entity who provides the funding to these organizations.

Review Financial Statements & Cash Activity Ms. Simpson presented the financial reports for June 2023 (E:48:23), noting any transactions out of the ordinary, compared to prior month periods.

Authorization for payment of vouchers and payroll:

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Authorization of  
Payments of  
Vouchers and  
Payroll

Warrant numbers 16104 through 16147 and J2168 through J2204 for June 2023 for total warrant payments in the amount of \$264,989.05 were presented for approval (E:49:23).

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

6-Month YTD  
Financial Review

Ms. Simpson presented a detailed 6-month financial report to Commissioners (E:50:23). In summary, expenses are underbudget by \$264,966 YTD as of June 30, 2023. The biggest variance right now is that we are underspending on salary and benefits as we and planned to hire the fiscal specialist by January 1, 2023 but that was delayed until June 2023. This expense was offset by paying for an accounting consultant during this time. Purchased services are high as this includes the consultants we use in place of hiring full-time staff members.

Commissioner Knutsen thanked Riene Simpson for her hard work in preparing this report.

**Public Comments**

Carl Zapora, Edmonds: Volunteer from My Neighborhood News Network (including my Edmonds News). He reads the news early in the morning, often just a few hours after a meeting may have ended at 10pm the night before. He asks Verdant to embrace this outlet as we get information out in the community. He encourages Verdant to invite the My Neighborhood News Network Board or publisher to their meeting to speak about what they are doing. This network is owned by the community and is the only place we can get our local news as Seattle simply can't cover it.

**Commissioner  
Comments**

Commissioner Knutsen thanked the Verdant staff and is happy to be in person and meet the new staff members. She is happy to see Carl Zapora who was here at the beginning of Verdant. She was very proud to read the resolution for Fred Langer Building.

Commissioner Brennan thanked all who participated today. She was happy to hear about past Commissioner Langer's hard work for our community. She thanked Commissioner Wilson for her time on Finance Committee and Commissioner Knutsen for her guidance on Program Committee.

Commissioner Wilson thinks this is the perfect way to honor Fred Langer to rename our Kruger Clinic building in his honor.

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President Distelhorst added that he is happy to sit in for other Commissioners on their committees if they are unable to attend a committee meeting. He would like to try and reschedule as few meetings as possible.

**Executive Session** President Distelhorst moved the meeting into executive session at 10:00 a.m. to consider the legal risks of a proposed action of the district. Executive session will end at 10:30 a.m. and no action will be taken during this time.

**Open Session** President Distelhorst returned the meeting back to open session at 10:30 a.m. No action was taken.

**Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m. by President Distelhorst.

**ATTEST BY:**

DocuSigned by:  
*JSDistelhorst*  
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President

DocuSigned by:  
*Karianna Wilson*  
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Secretary