

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**

**August 23, 2023**

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

**Commissioners  
Present**

Jim Distelhorst, MD, President  
Karianna Wilson, Secretary  
Deana Knutsen, Commissioner  
Carolyn Brennan, Commissioner  
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, Fiscal Specialist  
Sandra Huber, Community Engagement Manager  
Leslie Silverman, Interim Director of Community Impact & Grantmaking  
Erin Boehm, Interim Grants Manager

**Guests**

Michael	Cynthia Gahan
Gary Renville	Levi Van Dyke
Jenni McCloughan	Rich Robinson
Rich Robinson	Jenny
Patty Schultz	

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

Consent Agenda (E:51:23)

1. Approval of Minutes:
  - a. July 26, 2023 Regular Board Meeting
  - b. August 3, 2023 Special Board Meeting
  - c. August 21, 2023 Special Board Meeting

**Public Comments** None.

**Executive Session** President Distelhorst moved the meeting into executive session at 8:04 a.m. to review and consider proposed sale of real estate. Executive session will end at 8:34 p.m. and no action will be taken during this time.

Executive Session was extended five minutes to 8:40 a.m.

**Open Session** President Distelhorst returned the meeting back to open session at 8:40 a.m. No action was taken.

**Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Community Discussion** Ms. Silverman introduced Levi Van Dyke from Volunteers of America Western Washington. He is a part of the behavioral health unit of VOAWW and heavily involved in the implementation of the 9-8-8 Crisis Line. He spoke about the legislature involved in creating this hotline. Washington state has implemented a fee to support the 9-8-8 hotline which has really helped run the hotline. Washington is the only state that has a 'press 4' specifically serving native American and tribal members.

Gary Renville, Executive Director of Project Access Northwest, spoke about their program to provide access to appropriate healthcare services. The reason they got involved in behavioral health is similar to why Verdant decided to make Mental Health one of their priorities. People are feeling isolated, they don't trust the healthcare system, they are struggling to provide basic needs. They found too that there are a lot of students waiting to become an approved licensed mental health counselor due to the number of supervised hours they have to have in order to be licensed. They are partnering with the Inside Institute who is serving Snohomish County. Their goal is to grow their program statewide.

Cynthia Gahan from Heart art Healing offers artistic healing programs for free and open to the public. Their programs promote self-healing by encouraging self-expression. She was inspired to create this program due to lived experience with her own mental health as well as a parent to a daughter with lived mental health experience. The population they work with ranges from youth to aging adults. The trends she sees for aging adults are feelings of loneliness and fear of death. For youth the feelings are related to depression and anxiety related to school expectations and social expectations. They host an art journaling workshop at Verdant a couple times a month, which is a collage-based art class. Participants are given a chance at

the end of each art journaling class to share their artwork with the group. Self-expression is a powerful tool for these individuals to get their worries out of their system.

Ms. Nancy Budd, Verdant Community Social Worker, told attendees about a suicide prevention workshop on September 16<sup>th</sup> at the Lynnwood Event Center. The workshop will include three panels related to youth, adults and veterans, and resources. Kevin Hines, Golden Gate bridge jump survivor, will be our keynote speaker for the event.

Commissioner Brennan is inspired to hear about the collaboration of these behavioral health organizations to serve the needs of our community. She asked Mr. Renville, Project Access NW to expand on the 30-40% no-show rate of individuals living below 300% of the standard living wage.

- He answered, in the past few months, their no-show rate has been as low as 1% at times as Project Access Northwest is working diligently to address the underlying issues that are causing these people to miss their appointments (transportation, childcare, etc.).

Commissioner Knutsen is excited to tour the VOAWW 9-8-8 Crisis Hotline on August 30<sup>th</sup> with the rest of the Verdant Commissioners. She asked Mr. Renville if they can provide other wrap-around services with their programming.

- He answered yes, they have strong partnerships to be able to refer their clients to all sorts of resources to address their needs.

Commissioner Knutsen asked if Ms. Gahan has ever thought about expanding her classes within the school districts.

- She answered, yes, and she would be very excited to be able to do that.

### **Executive Committee Report**

President Distelhorst reported that Executive Committee met on August 16<sup>th</sup> to approve the agenda for today's meeting. No action was taken at the Executive Committee meeting.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Edwards spoke about the busy month Verdant staff has had with community outreach, including the Edmonds School District Back to School Fair and the Woodway Town Fair. She reminded Commissioners about Verdant's first annual block party event tomorrow, August 24<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00-8:00pm. On August 30<sup>th</sup>, she and the Verdant Commissioners will be touring the 9-8-8 crisis hotline with VOAWW in Everett. She thanked

Verdant’s Kirk Mathis, the UW Bothell Digital Scholars interns, and our Social Media Intern for all their marketing and outreach for our events. She thanked Ms. Leslie Silverman and Ms. Erin Boehm for their hard work in preparing the grant funding review for the Fall 2023 cycle.

**Program  
Committee Report**

Conflicts of Interest     None.

Fall 2023 Funding Cycle Allocations     Commissioner Knutsen reported that the Fall 2023 funding awards were determined at the August 21 Special meeting. The majority of the funding allocations were approved today in the consent agenda which included the minutes of the August 21 special meeting.

**Edmonds School District, Move60:** Commissioner Knutsen reported at the August 21 special meeting there was a split vote 2:2 whether to fund this program or not. There must be a majority of three to approve the funding, so their application rolled forward to today’s regular meeting for discussion with the full board.

- Commissioner Knutsen added that she was one of the two in support of funding the program as physical activity, body image, and feeding children within the program are important to development.
- Dr. Edwards provided a summary of past funding for this program. Verdant has funded this program for over 10 years. The Edmonds School District submitted a grant application related to our Mental Health priority for \$485,000.
- Commissioner Brennan had concerns about this application around its alignment with the Mental Health priority. It was the highest request within this priority area. She has concerns about the health equity component of this program, the high expense of the program, and the impact reporting of this program (attendance numbers only). She would be comfortable partially funding this program so that other funders would provide their match funding, which is contingent upon Verdant’s support.
- Commissioner Knowles doesn’t think this program aligns strongly to our Mental Health priority area and would prefer to support programs providing more direct services for behavioral health services. He also feels there are

other avenues to distribute food to students. He is not interested in funding this application for the full amount requested.

- Commissioner Wilson shares the opinions of Commissioners Brennan and Knowles. Verdant has funded millions of dollars for this program over the past ten years. She feels Verdant can strengthen the partnership with Nourishing Network to distribute food versus providing food security within this Move60 program. She wants to provide funding for direct services. She would be more supportive to fund a program working to reduce or eliminate the waitlist of students seeking behavioral health support.
- President Distelhorst disagrees with the comments from other Commissioners that this program does not directly support mental health. There is a direct link between physical activity and mental health. He also feels the application directly supports another of Verdant’s priority areas of Food Security in that it provides meals to the children participating.

***President Distelhorst motioned to partially fund the Move60 program for \$387,850, Commissioner Knutsen seconded. Motion Failed.***

***Commissioner Knutsen motioned to partially fund the Move60 program for \$100,000, Commissioner Brennan seconded. Motion passed.***

**Superintendent’s  
Discretionary  
Fund**

Commissioners requested to discuss the budget and purpose of the Superintendent’s Discretionary fund. Dr. Edwards mentioned it was discussed to potentially utilize this fund to support projects that may not directly align with one of Verdant’s priority areas but have been identified as an essential service.

Commissioner Wilson would like to discuss amending the budget for this line item to increase the spending amount for the Superintendent’s Discretionary fund. She is interested in increasing the budget by \$50,000 for the rest of 2023.

- Dr. Edwards added that to support the emergency dental programs we have been discussing, we would need to increase the fund by an additional \$100,000.
- Commissioner Knowles asked if there is a maximum funding amount for each organization receiving

Superintendent’s Discretionary funding, such as each request is under \$25,000.

- o Ms. Simpson clarified that there is not a maximum award amount for organizations receiving Superintendent’s Discretionary funding, but that there is typically an average amount awarded between each recipient.

**Commissioner Knutsen made a motion to increase the 2023 budget for the Superintendent’s Discretionary Fund by \$100,000, for a revised budget line of \$200,000 for the 2023, Commissioner Brennan seconded. Motion Passed.**

### Finance Report

Review Financial Statements & Cash Activity

Ms. Simpson presented the financial reports for July 2023 (E:52:23), noting any transactions out of the ordinary, compared to prior month periods.

Authorization of Payments of Vouchers and Payroll

Authorization for payment of vouchers and payroll: Warrant numbers 16148 through 16174 and J2205 through J2236 for July 2023 for total warrant payments in the amount of \$262,704.46 were presented for approval (E:53:23).

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

Langer Clinic RFP

Ms. Simpson walked Commissioners through an itemized list of all the changes that have happened for the Langer refresh project, which have impacted the estimated total cost of the project (E:54:23). In Fall of 2022 the approved estimated cost for this project was \$5,939,865. Due to a handful of additional projects and contractor price adjustments, the project must be re-approved for the updated estimated cost for the total project. Ms. Simpson noted that the amount required for approval today is minus \$30,000 from what is provided at the bottom of page 28 of the Board meeting packet.

**Commissioner Wilson made a motion to approve the estimated cost of the Langer Clinic refresh project for \$8,476,676, Commissioner Brennan seconded. Motion passed.**

Commissioner Knutsen asked if we should expect any future surprises related to this project.

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- Dr. Edwards answered we have built in a 10% contingency to cover any extra costs as well as building in multiple cost alternates that are optional and can be removed from the total project if needed.

The goal is to begin construction on the clinic in Spring 2024. Most of the disruptive work will be after-hours, and we will provide regular communication with tenants to notify them of the work and maintain operations.

**Public Comments**      None.

**Commissioner Comments**      Commissioner Knutsen thanked everyone for the work in getting through the Fall 2023 funding cycle and the constant work related to the Langer Clinic RFP.

President Distelhorst thanks the staff for continuing to provide ample data for them to make informed decisions.

Commissioner Brennan is inspired to see all the applications come through and their amazing programs for our community. She thanked Ms. Leslie Silverman and Ms. Erin Boehm for their heavy lift with the grantmaking.

Commissioner Wilson thanked Ms. Leslie Silverman and Ms. Erin Boehm for their service as our grantmaking team.

**Adjournment**      The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 a.m. by President Distelhorst.

**ATTEST BY:**

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President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary