

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**  
**September 27, 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**

Brittany Bevis	Sue Yoon
Sarah Borgida	Anna
Chanda Mollenburg	Lisa Wolch
Sarah Borgida	Naz Lashgari
Jenny	Will Crowley
	Esther Riley

**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:61:23)

1. Approval of Minutes:

- a. August 21, 2023 Regular Board Meeting
- b. September 11, 2023 Special Board Meeting
- c. September 12, 2023 Special Board Meeting

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## 2. Resolution 2023:07 Disposal of Surplus Assets

**Public Comments** None.

**Emergency Dental** Ms. Silverman welcomes the panel participants and asked each to briefly go around and say the organization they are with, the services they provide, and what they are seeing right now in terms of dental care.

Sue Yoon, Community Health Center of Snohomish County (CHC) said they are seeing overwhelming need which has been exacerbated by COVID. A lot of adults are just now re-engaging into healthcare. There is an increase in walk-in emergency patients and increase in emergency room admittance. They have hired a dentist who exclusively removes teeth and provides acute dental care which is helpful when regular appointments are booking months out.

Anna Scheglov, Community Health Center of Snohomish County (CHC) said some of the things they see are a fear of dental and utilizing services in America as immigrant residents. The lack of Medicaid providers in Snohomish County creates a lot of impact on the health centers. They have created an outreach program to educate the younger generation including how to brush their teeth, when to mention if something hurts, etc. They are in every elementary school in the Edmonds School District to provide screenings.

Chanda Mollengburg from Medical Teams International (MTI) works with their urgent, free, dental care program. Their patients often have underlying moderate diseases which also impact their care. They have shifted their model to support these underlying diseases and mental health as well. They use a community-based model to provide services at food banks or resource centers to try and meet people where they are and receiving other free services. They also try to help people get insurance if they are eligible. The need for dental care outpaces the availability of services. There are a lot of free or low-cost programs that people often don't know how to access. They try to provide limited root canal clinics to provide this specialty service. It is challenging to connect people to services when the wait times can be up to eight months out.

Naz Lashgari from Sea Mar Community Health Centers (Sea Mar) said that underrepresented communities are on the fringe of healthcare, and they are not able to get care they need. Long waits for appointments and specialty care make it difficult. If

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the patient can't afford the proper care, they may just end up having their teeth extracted which can create further complications. The immigrant population is growing in Snohomish County, and we need to serve these individuals. Children often must have emergency services versus having preventative care. A root canal is around \$2,400 at a private practice. A crown on top of the dead tooth is another \$2,000. We have to accept that the mouth is a part of the body and it should not be seen as "medical" care and "dental" care, they should be one. She thinks they should provide more education in the Edmonds School District to get in front of children for preventative care. Staffing shortages affect their ability to provide free and low-cost services.

Sarah Borgida, Arcora Foundation is the Foundation of Delta Dental of Washington. They are a 501c4 and do a lot of policy advocacy. They provide programmatic grant funding to partners. They support a Medicaid program to provide these services. They partner with health funders to collaborate on investments in dental for the community. The issue is multi-faceted, and you can't just pick one issue and resolve the problem. The Medicaid population often doesn't know they have dental coverage. Outreach and care coordination is huge in making sure this population knows about the benefits they are entitled to. There are some real workforce shortages in dental right now, especially auxiliary staff such as dental hygienists. There is an opportunity to invest in capacity such as these mobile clinics or brick-and-mortar offices. They aspire to have more investment in the whole person care, including providing medical and dental integration.

Ms. Silverman asked the panel if there are any policies or regulations we should be aware of that would impact dental care and access?

- Ms. Borgida, Arcora, answered there are some workforce bills in the legislature to allow hygienists from out of state to get their credentials in WA faster. House Bill 1678 expands the role of the dental therapist. These bills should have a positive impact in dental healthcare in a couple years if they are passed.

President Distelhorst asked panelists how to get more people trained in these dental professions, to remove the bottleneck?

- Ms. Borgida, Arcora, suggested to introduce dental healthcare early as a career path while students are in high school. There are programs that allow a student to

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get a dental hygienist certification in conjunction with their Associate's degree. Show them this is a career that is attainable and can provide a living wage.

- Ms. Scheglov, CHC, works with local colleges to train students and provide them with service hours.

Commissioner Knutsen asked Ms. Moellenberg from MTI how many vehicles they have going out right now? How many people do they see in our area in a day?

- She answered they have three dental vans in Washington and are awaiting a fourth vehicle on its way from Colorado. They see 10-15 people on the days they go to the food bank.

Commissioner Knutsen asked what the average wait time is for getting an appointment?

- Ms. Moellenberg, MTI, answered when they are trying to find a "dental home" for their regular, non-emergency care, the appointment may be 6-8 months out.
- SeaMar's waitlist for specialty care is 3-5 months. Their patients can't leave their job to go to the dentist, so this creates a barrier.
- CHC said wait list for establishing regular adult dental care is a ways out. The more new patients they establish, the further out the appointments get scheduled because each person needs 10-14 appointments before their specialty. With an abscess, they would get it medicated to try and get the size down and try to resolve it within the week.

Commissioner Knutsen wonders about the population of residents aged between children and seniors, and if there is a possibility to partner with the Edmonds College to support these younger or middle aged adults who still also need care.

**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 Verdant's upcoming Community Health Networking Event on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, which will include non-profit resource tables and networking with other funders.

She congratulated the Verdant team on two highly successful free community events. On August 24<sup>th</sup> we hosted a summer block party and September 16<sup>th</sup> we hosted a free suicide

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prevention workshop which we heard was a life-changing event. In 2024, we have plans to host a few larger events versus multiple smaller events to bring more people and resources together.

She recognized Commissioner Distelhorst, Commissioner Brennan, and Commissioner Knutsen who recently attended a tour of the 9-8-8 crisis hotline in Everett.

Ms. Silverman will be leaving the Verdant team and transitioning to a consulting role to provide grant coaching to the community. These services will be available for any organization, regardless of their status of Verdant grant funding, or not.

**Program  
Committee Report**

Conflicts of Interest     None.

Draft Spring and Fall  
2024 Funding  
Timelines     Ms. Erickson presented the two draft timelines of our 2024 funding cycles (E:62:23).

Fall 2023 Funding  
Cycle Survey  
Responses     After each funding cycle, Verdant asks applicants and Commissioners to respond to a survey about the grant application process.

Commissioner Brennan wishes to support every organization who applies. The transition was a big change, and she looks forward to continuing to work with staff on the grantmaking processes.

Commissioner Wilson commented that the Verdant staff has gone above and beyond to provide information about the funding process, and providing office hours and grantwriting training so some of this shortfall does fall on the applicant.

Commissioner Knutsen clarified one of the feedback points stating that Commissioners did not read the applications. The only ones that were not viewed by Commissioners were the ones that were incomplete and did not move forward in the application cycle.

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**Finance Report**

Review Financial Statements & Cash Activity

Ms. Simpson presented the financial reports for August 2023 (E:63:23), 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 16175 through 16217 and J2237 through J2267 for August 2023 for total warrant payments in the amount of \$346,360.55 were presented for approval (E:64:23). ***Motion was made by Commissioner Knowles, seconded by Commissioner Wilson and passed unanimously to approve the warrants.***

**Executive Session**

President Distelhorst moved the meeting into executive session at 9:25 a.m. to review and consider proposed sale of real estate. Executive session will end at 9:55 p.m. and no action will be taken during this time.

Executive Session was extended five minutes to 10:00 a.m.

**Open Session**

President Distelhorst returned the meeting back to open session at 10:00 a.m. No action was taken.

**Public Comments**

Will Crowley, lawyer, represents The Hand Up Project. Sonny Behrends has resigned from the Board of The Hand Up Project and is on leave at the moment. His story is public. He is in recovery and a disbarred lawyer. He disclosed to The Hand Up board in March that he was being investigated. He cooperated in that investigation. The summons was sent to an address that he had no longer lived at. The allegations are from 2018 and have nothing to do with his role with The Hand Up Project and he was not involved in the finances of The Hand Up Project's organization. The funds are protected. Robert Smiley was not protecting the organization's funds and using the money for his own purpose. However, the institution is stable. Esther Riley is acting as the interim CEO and there is a new Board chair.

**Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Knutsen wants to make sure everyone knows that they appreciate all the work that staff does and the long and busy week they had last week.

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**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m. by President Distelhorst.

**ATTEST BY:**

DocuSigned by:  
*JSDistelhorst*  
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President

DocuSigned by:  
*Karianna Wilson*  
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Secretary