

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

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Special Meeting

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

April 15, 2024

5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

**Commissioners
Present**

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

Staff

Dr. Lisa Edwards, Superintendent
Riene Simpson, Director of Finance
Ceil Erickson, Director of Community Impact
Chase Toscano, Grants Manager
Kaysi Caballero, Executive Assistant/Office Manager
Kyla Morgan, Interim Executive Assistant/Office Manager
Olia Josiah, Wellness Center Assistant

Guests

Margot Helphand, Board Facilitator

Call to Order

The special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Hospital District No. 2, Snohomish County, was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by President Wilson.

**Land and
Enslaved People's
Acknowledgement**

President Wilson read the acknowledgement.

Meeting Goals

Ms. Helphand began the meeting by providing an overview of the goals of these next two special meetings on April 15th and April 30th. The commissioners discussed the need to keep focus on why Verdant exists and to make decisions to support Verdant's own narrative.

Commissioner Knutsen wanted to make sure they are centered on the reality that they are elected to their positions and would like some time for the changes made this year to settle in so they can see what the pros and cons are of the updated processes.

Commissioners discussed the importance of maintaining the hospital and ensuring they have the funds to keep the hospital and full range of acute hospital services in the community.

Funding Evolution

Ms. Erickson reviewed the evolution of Verdant funding between 2019-2024 (E:22:24). The chart of funding cycles over time

Commissioners Meeting
April 15, 2024

shows in 2021 Verdant shifted to a quarterly cycle and at the end of 2022 there was another funding cycle shift due to the need of the hospital. At the beginning of 2024 Verdant moved to an annual cycle. There has been a lot of work done by Commissioners to narrow the strategic focus and creating these specific priority areas. She wants to use these conversations to help frame the 2025 strategy. The staff have implemented better tools with Fluxx and other technologies.

Strategic Priority Review and Affirmation

Ms. Helphand walked through a PowerPoint (E:23:24) with each of the priority areas and requested to go through them one by one with the commissioners to see if it still fits what they would like to see. She asked the commissioners to revisit why they created this plan and what it means to have these objectives and strategies.

Before proceeding to each individual priority, the Commissioners shared their opinions on their current framework and why they developed it. Commissioner Knowles shared that it became Verdant's foundational map to figure out what they were going to fund. Commissioners discussed the need for some areas to be more specific based off the community needs assessment, but other priority area objectives still seem to be broader which can lead to confusion.

Discussion of definitions and objectives for each strategic priority

Ms. Helphand started with the strategic priority regarding mental health. Commissioners discussed if they felt like the objectives were still aligning with the funding choices they made and if that objective is actually supporting mental health in the community.

Commissioner Wilson requested they zoom out to discuss the bigger focus areas of mental health, healthcare access, and food security before they get into the strategy and verbiage of each individual objective.

Commissioners had a conversation regarding whether to keep the same strategic priorities to prevent more change and confusion or realigning their goals to fit what they believe should be the areas of focus.

- Commissioner Distelhorst and Commissioner Knutsen are in favor of keeping Verdant's priorities the way they are for the time being to give the Board and the community some time to adjust to the annual funding cycle.

Commissioners Meeting
April 15, 2024

Commissioners discussed in what areas their current model supports direct delivery of services and what is considered a direct service of care.

- Commissioner Wilson wants the Commissioners to discuss how they evaluate programs that apply for funding and their primary role involves *navigation* rather than *direct services*.
- Commissioner Knowles stated, to him, access to healthcare means behavioral health, physical health, and dental access with direct delivery of services. He would like to move forward with funding organizations that provides *direct access* to care and services to support their members' health.
- Commissioner Distelhorst shared that he is in favor of including care coordination, otherwise the community will have difficulty getting direct access to care if they cannot navigate the system.

Commissioners shifted the conversation to how they want to partner with organizations and potentially change the application process to make sure they are funding programs that closely align to their goals.

Ms. Helphand asked Commissioners if healthcare access should be the sole strategic priority, or do they want to keep the three priorities they currently have?

- Commissioner Wilson is in favor of making it clearer and simplifying the goal.
- Commissioner Brennan would like to be able to narrow the focus to healthcare access, being what Verdant is all about. She is in favor of simplifying their goals with clear guidelines and refining Verdant's messaging about its priorities.

**Communications
for Partners
Applying for
Funding**

Ms. Erickson provided an overview of the funding timeline, stating a request for proposal would need to be posted by mid July with a deadline at the end of August 2024. We will have three months to read and review applications and will make funding decisions at the November 2024 board meeting. At this point, any changes would provide 3-4 months' notice for applicants.

Commissioners came together to propose the idea of being more deliberate in communicating to their partners what is going to be prioritized in their funding. They can we work within the three buckets, while also giving a heads up that changes

Commissioners Meeting
April 15, 2024

are coming next year. This would keep things the same for 2025 and prepare and communicate for the changes for 2026. They were in favor of this strategy.

Commissioners did not come to an agreement regarding bridge funding for the 19 impacted partners for the last three months of 2024.

**Preparation for
April 30th meeting**

Commissioners proposed they use the 4/30/24 Special meeting to focus on figuring out what the process is for the 2025 funding cycle. Then they can add supplemental meetings to go into 2026 goal and strategy.

Verdant staff will come to the April 30th special meeting with revised strategic priority language to remove the explicitly stated "strategies" and to re-arrange the "objectives" within each priority area.

**Commissioner
Comments**

The Commissioners discussed their progress made throughout the meeting and their hope to get clarity on their priorities and funding process. They were grateful to have an honest conversation to work towards being explicitly clear about what Verdant will fund. They all agreed they would like to make it a goal to work on community recognition for Verdant's efforts. Ms. Helphand wrapped up the meeting by reminding the Commissioners to envision how they would like to articulate the narrative they would like to be writing.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m. by President Wilson.

ATTEST BY:

DocuSigned by:
Karianna Wilson
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President

DocuSigned by:
Carolyn Brennan
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Secretary