

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

March 26, 2025

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

**Commissioners
Present**

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

Staff

Dr. Lisa Edwards, Superintendent
Riene Simpson, Director of Finance
Ceil Erickson, Director of Community Impact
Kyla Morgan, Executive Assistant and Office Manager
Chase Toscano, Contracts Manager
David Lee, Interim Digital Marketing & Communications
Manager
Olia Josiah, Community Engagement Specialist
Humaira Barlas, Fiscal Specialist

Visitors

Kara Turner, HR Consultant
Howard Thomas, HT Consulting
Mark Henninger, Cushman & Wakefield

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Hospital District No. 2, Snohomish County, was called to order at 8:02 a.m. by President Wilson.

**Land and
Enslaved People's
Acknowledgement**

President Wilson read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Consent Agenda

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

Consent Agenda (E:15:25)

1. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. February 24, 2025 Special Board Meeting
 - b. February 25, 2025, Special Board Meeting
 - c. February 26, 2025, Board Meeting

Public Comment

Two public comments were submitted and read aloud by Ms. Morgan.

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Kay Noble, Lynnwood 98037:

Dear Verdant Commissioners and Superintendent,
My husband and I are 46-year residents of South Snohomish County. To our dismay, we have witnessed the somewhat unchecked growth and the corresponding increase in crime over those years. We live in an unincorporated area of the county where graffiti and tagging is evident everywhere we walk or drive. Law enforcement confirms that this is a sign of gang behavior. Since your mission is "to improve the health and well-being of our whole community," this concern clearly falls in your domain. Gang activity definitely affects the wellbeing of our community.

I have had discussions with staff from the County Council who are interested in programs that would remove tagging if funds were available but say they do not currently have the budget. Nearby cities like Seattle and Everett have functional programs that allow citizens to identify tagging so it can be removed in a timely manner. Research has shown that prompt removal of tagging discourages more tagging and, thus, gang activity. We are asking you to consider investing in an effort to reduce gang graffiti in our community. It could be as simple as supplying paint for residents to cover tagging on their property or could involve providing a team of painters to be dispatched to areas of concern. This clearly relates to your priority of addressing "adolescent and young adult mental health." While we aren't affiliated with an agency or nonprofit who currently addresses tagging removal, we believe it is important enough to our community for your advocacy and action.

My husband was an Edmonds School Board director for 20 years and I was a Social Worker at Stevens Memorial Hospital and a local ESL Teacher so we both have experience with the need for gang prevention efforts in our community

Jeannine Honey, Edmonds 98026:

I truly appreciate receiving your reports in my mailbox periodically.

Thank you for creating and executing the idea to provide affordable healthcare to the community. I believe that I have received dental care from staff in the mobile dental van. In fact, I donated sunglasses to them to shield eyes from the bright light used to see inside a mouth.

My father was a career civil servant for the Us Agency for Internation Development (USAID), and as his dependent child I grew up in third world countries from 1961-1971. I never expected to see that level of poverty in the US, yet here it is,

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and the current administration is hell bent on creating more poverty, the type of poverty I witnessed as a child.
So, I really do thank you for your kindness and compassion!

**Executive
Committee Report**

The Executive Committee met to approve the meeting agenda.
No action was taken at the meeting.

1. Program Committee Chair Update

2. Conflict of Interest Policy

3. 2025 Board Meeting Calendar
1. The Program Committee chair was switched from Carolyn Brennan to Bob Knowles.

2. Staff are working on updating the Conflict-of-Interest Policy. The updated document will go through committees next month and then be presented to the full board at the April 23, 2025, Board meeting.

3. ***Motion was made by Commissioner Brennan, seconded by Commissioner Knutsen, and passed unanimously to approve the 2025 Board & Special Board Meeting Calendar as presented (E:16:25).***

**Superintendent
Report**

Dr. Edwards reported that the Verdant Partner Roundtable was a success, with feedback from partners indicating that some residents are missing appointments due to fear of leaving their homes due to impacts from the federal level. The event also highlighted the increasing diversity in the community, with over 130 languages spoken in the Edmonds School District. The marketing team was recognized for their work on the community impact report, which resulted in 14 positive responses and new E-newsletter sign-ups. A total of 79,000 impact reports were mailed out. Additionally, it was noted that the Digital Scholar Program will be discontinued, and efforts are underway to bring on a summer intern to support marketing, event promotion, and video production.

1. Marketing Update

2. Facilities Update
1. Mr. Lee, Marketing Manager, provided an update on the marketing consultant search, noting that seven firms were contacted, five have responded, and additional responses are expected. A final decision is anticipated next week, with work beginning shortly thereafter. Additionally, a marketing intern position was posted, with a planned start date of June 1 at \$22 per hour.

2. Cecelia White, owner of the 9,000 sq. ft. building adjacent to Value Village, expressed interest in selling the property after the current lease ends in five years. She purchased the building for \$2.2 million, previously listed at \$3 million, and it is zoned light industrial. Commissioner Knowles was acknowledged, as Olivia—

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who has connections to his family—helped facilitate the conversation.
Facilities issues at the clinic continue, with inspectors and manufacturers scheduled to assess the roofing installation and VAV boxes. The civil engineering phase for the Value Village property is complete, and the architectural study is now underway.

Recognition was given to Olia, who is departing Verdant this week, with appreciation for her outstanding contributions to program support and community outreach

**Program
Committee Report**

- Ms. Erickson provided an update on the 2026 funding process, including the timeline, guidelines, scoring rubric, and ongoing discussions about community convenings. (E:17:25)

1. 2026
Funding
Timeline

2. 2026
Funding
Guidelines

3. 2026 Scoring
Rubric

4. Convenings
Discussions

1. Ms. Erickson reviewed the finalized funding timeline, and all commissioners' calendars have been updated accordingly.

2. The funding priorities have been refined to serve as a communication tool with the broader community, not just previously funded partners. Commissioner Brennan noted an expectation of new applicants, particularly in light of federal funding cuts, and suggested leveraging school districts' broad networks to promote the funding opportunity. However, a challenge remains with high turnover in nonprofit staff, which affects sustained communication.

3. The updated scoring rubric will guide commissioners through the funding cycle.

4. Regarding convenings, the committee is beginning to shape the content and goals. Commissioner Knutsen emphasized the need to focus on areas heavily impacted by federal cuts, such as SNAP and school lunch programs, urging the District to be prepared to respond quickly. She noted that unmet needs at the state and federal levels often result in increased demand on Verdant's resources. Commissioner Distelhorst echoed this concern, referencing the emergent needs that arose during COVID-19. The Board discussed the importance of maintaining flexibility to adjust the budget and collaborate with partners, such as the Snohomish County Health Department, to address potential gaps between federal and state safety nets.

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Finance Report

**1. Review
Financial
Statements &
Cash Activity**

1. Ms. Simpson presented the financial reports (E:18:25) for February 2025, highlighting any atypical transactions compared to previous months. A FUTA tax refund is currently in process, pending communication between the IRS and Paychex. Program funding showed a significant decrease, which is expected, as large payments to CHART and VOA are made in January and June, creating a spike during those months and a relatively flat trend in others. Notable expenses included high elevator repair costs at both the Wellness Center and the Clinic. A contingency charge from a 2023 event at the Lynnwood Event Center was also incurred due to the venue's inflexibility in rolling over deposits under a new management team. Once the Kruger renovation project is completed, the improvements will begin to depreciate. Commissioner Brennan inquired whether it was a trend that operating expenses exceeded salaries. Ms. Simpson confirmed this is currently the case due to increased spending on maintenance, repairs, and professional services, a pattern expected to continue through year-end. Ms. Simpson thanked Ms. Barlas on her hard work and dedication to managing the financial information accurately and efficiently.

**2. Authorization
of Warrants
and Electronic
Disbursements**

2. Authorization for payment of vouchers and payroll: Warrants Reference A, No. 16787 through 16809, no Warrants Reference B, warrants Reference C, No. T125 through T167, and no warrants Reference D, for February in the amount of \$422,162.60 were presented for approval as well as electronic disbursements in the amount of \$1,038,837.71 for total disbursements of \$1,461,000.31 (E:19:25).

Motion was made by Commissioner Knutsen, seconded by Commissioner Distelhorst, and passed unanimously to approve the warrants & electronic disbursements as presented.

**3. Resolution
2025-01:
Asset
Disposition**

3. Resolution 2025-01: Swedish is requesting approval for an asset disposition for surplus property in the amount of \$157,652.47.

Motion was made by Commissioner Knutsen, seconded by Commissioner Wilson and passed unanimously to approve Resolution 2025-01.

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4. Employee Handbook Updates

4. HR consultant Ms. Kara Turner conducted a significant revamp of the Verdant employee handbook to improve clarity, usability, and legal compliance. Kara provided an overview of the updates, which included reorganized sections, updated language, and the addition of key details such as payroll timing and procedural gaps that had emerged over the years. (E:20:25) The handbook was also revised to reflect board-approved changes to designated holidays. Commissioner Brennan inquired about the conflict-of-interest policy, and Ms. Simpson clarified that while it is briefly mentioned in the handbook, it remains a separate document with a corresponding form provided to employees. The revisions were the result of a collaborative effort between staff and the HR consultant to ensure the handbook is comprehensive, user-friendly, and aligned with all applicable legal and state requirements. The updated version will be distributed to employees for review and signature.

Executive Session

President Wilson closed the meeting for executive session to begin at 8:56 am and will continue through 9:45 am. This executive session is to consider the legal risks of a proposed action of the District.

Executive session began at 8:56 am.

Executive session was extended 5-minute to 9:50 am.

Executive session was extended 2-minutes to 9:52 am.

Executive session ended at 9:52 am.

Open Session

President Wilson reopened the public meeting at 9:52 am.

Public Comments

None.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Knutsen thanked the Board for their dedication to Verdant on top of their personal commitments.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 a.m. by President Wilson.

ATTEST BY:

Signed by:

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President

Signed by:

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Secretary