

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH  
MINUTES

Thursday, August 17, 2017

Jefferson County Public Health, 615 Sheridan Street, Port Townsend WA 98368

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**Board Members**

Kate Dean, County Commissioner District #1  
David Sullivan, County Commissioner, District #2  
Kathleen Kler, County Commissioner, District #3  
Catharine Robinson, Chair, Port Townsend City Council  
Sheila Westerman, Citizen at large  
Jill Buhler, Hospital Commissioner, District #2  
John Austin, Vice-Chair, Citizen at large

**Staff Members**

Thomas Locke, Health Officer  
Vicki Kirkpatrick, Public Health Dir  
Stuart Whitford, Env. Health Dir  
Veronica Shaw, Public Health Deputy Dir  
Michael Dawson, WQ Manager  
Jenny Matter, Clerk of the Board

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Chair Catharine Robinson called the August 17, 2017 meeting of the Jefferson County Board of Health to order at 2:32 p.m. A quorum was present.

**Members Present:** John Austin, David Sullivan, Jill Buhler, Kathleen Kler, Catharine Robinson

**Members Excused:** Kate Dean, Sheila Westerman

**Staff Present:** Vicki Kirkpatrick, Stuart Whitford, Jenny Matter, Thomas Locke

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Robinson asked for approval of the Agenda of the August 17, 2017.

**Member Jill Buhler motioned to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Member John Austin. No further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Robinson asked for approval of the minutes of the July 20, 2017 meeting of the Jefferson County Board of Health.

**Member John Austin motioned to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Member Kathleen Kler. No further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.**

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

## OLD BUSINESS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

### 1. Jefferson Healthcare Update

Jill Buhler reported that: (1) the Oncology program at Jefferson Healthcare received a three year commendation accreditation from the Commission on Cancer at the American College of Surgeons, (2) the Cancer Committee Prevention Program focus for this year will be HPV immunizations, (3) nine new providers (MDs and Mid-Level) will be hired over the next 6 months, and (4) the new Port Ludlow clinic opened on Monday and there will be a block party to celebrate on August 18<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm.

## NEW BUSINESS

### 1. 2017 Food Safety Achievement Awards

Stuart Whitford announced the 2017 Food Safety Achievement Awards. Each recipient was named and recognized for their service to the community.

### 2. Discussion of State and Local On-site Sewage System Regulations: Application and Enforcement

Philip Hunsucker, the chief civil deputy prosecutor for Jefferson County, reminded the Board of their legal obligations under the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine. Dr. Tom Locke, health officer, explained the process of appeals for the Board of Health, and their authority as it relates to the state and local on-site sewage code.

Stuart Whitford summarized sections of the local on-site sewage code that can be contentious and other issues around adequate sewage disposal.

Linda Atkins gave a brief history of the on-site sewage code in Jefferson County. Since 1990 the code has been modified as a result of increased permanent residences (versus recreational use), population density, and development pressures. It has also been modified to incorporate recommendations made by watershed action plans and in response to the identification of fecal contamination in shellfish beds. Ms. Atkins also explained why the county chose not to adopt the grey water rule and misconceptions about composting toilets and grey water treatment.

Ms. Atkins provided examples of some of the issues they face on a routine basis. One of the issues is the conversion of barns or sheds to accessory dwelling units without upgrading the septic system, leading to code violations and system failures. Another issue is obtaining a permit with the intention of a small expansion, but building a significantly larger addition in which the septic is not adequately sized.

Ms. Atkins and Mr. Whitford stressed how they try to work with people to meet the intent of the code. Instead of denying a permit, they try to offer alternatives or waivers with mitigations. There are very few cases where a permit is outright denied.

The Board had questions and comments about grandfathered-in systems, effects of the new O&M policy, permitting outhouses/ privies, holding tanks for food establishments, availability of installers and designers, etc. They also asked why it is rumored that designers and installers won't work in Jefferson County due to an excessively stringent code. Dr. Tom Locke explained that there are not many differences between the state code and local code. Differences between the two have been primarily made to account for local conditions, such as extensive shorelines and primitive cabins. Mr. Whitford said that speed of issuing a permit is an issue, but due to some recent changes by Ms. Atkins, the turn-around time has been reduced to a few weeks. Board members and Philip Morley, county administrator, stressed the importance of examining the permit process to determine how to either negate the rumor or improve the process.

The Board and staff also discussed issues surrounding sub-standard housing and lack of sewage disposal and/or treatment for people with limited finances and/or substance abuse issues.

**3. Opiate Epidemic Response Update: National Emergency Declaration and Regional Activities**

Dr. Tom Locke reported to the Board that there is strong bipartisan support for a national plan to address the opiate epidemic. The plan was drafted by the President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis and has similar recommendations as those issued by the CDC. Dr. Locke also reported that responding to heroin overdoses is starting to compete with other emergencies where EMS crews are needed. In Snohomish County there were 37 overdoses in one week.

**4. Olympic Community of Health Update**

Dr. Tom Locke reported that the three workgroups (prevention, treatment, overdose prevention) of the Three County Coordinated Opioid Response Project (3CCORP) are implementing projects to address the opioid epidemic. Although medically assisted treatment is acutely needed in Jefferson County, it isn't expanding as rapidly as it is in Kitsap and Clallam counties. Dr. Locke said he will give a status report at next month's meeting.

**ACTIVITY UPDATE**

There was no activity planning.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**AGENDA PLANNING CALENDAR**

Vicki Kirkpatrick said that, due to Kate Dean's absence at this meeting, they would be discussing immunizations at the next Board meeting.

Stuart Whitford said they would be discussing changes on how scanning fees are applied at the next Board meeting.

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

The next Board of Health meeting will be held on Thursday, September 21, 2017 from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. at Jefferson County Public Health, 615 Sheridan Street, Port Townsend, WA.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Catharine Robinson adjourned the August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Jefferson County Board of Health meeting at 4:17 p.m.**

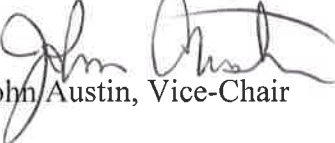
**JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**

*Excused*

Kate Dean, Member

  
David Sullivan, Member

  
Catharine Robinson, Chair

  
John Austin, Vice-Chair

  
Jill Buhler, Member

*Excused*  
Sheila Westerman, Member

  
Kathleen Kler, Member

Respectfully submitted  
J. Matter