



**Wahkiakum County Health & Human Services  
ADVISORY BOARD**

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** January 16th, 2025  
**Call to order:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Adjourned:** 3:55 p.m.  
**Location:** Hybrid in-person and Zoom virtual meeting

**PRESENT**

**Board Attendees:** Bobbie Stefan, Erica Zink, John Mason, Justin Helms, Keven Going, Mariane Brightbill, Mark Schmidt  
**Staff Attendees:** Chris Bischoff, Duncan Cruickshank, Michelle Collupy  
**Ex officio Attendees:** Lee Tischer  
**Guest Attendees:** Chala Gray  
**Absent Members:** Beth Hansen, Brent Freeman, Dan Bigelow, David Olsen  
**Absent Staff Attendees:** Julie Johnson  
**Next meeting:** February 20th, 2025, at 3:00 PM

**I. INTRODUCTIONS** Chair

**II. BOARD BUSINESS** Chair

- A. Meeting minutes— Bobbie Stefan moved to approve the October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 meeting minutes. Kevin Going seconded. Approved – unanimous.
- B. Board Members were elected for 2025. Bobbie Stefan volunteered to remain Vice Chair. Marianne Brightbill volunteered to remain Chair. Erica Zink moved to approve the elections of Chair and Vice Chair. Kevin Going seconded. Approved – unanimous.

**III. GUEST SPEAKER(S)**

- A. NONE

**IV. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Justin Helms announced that their Provider is back in the office at the Family Health Clinic and is seeing patients. Family Health Center has had challenges keeping the clinic

fully staffed with a provider which has created a backlog in patient care, but with one of the Providers back in after medical leave, patients are able to be seen again in town.

## **V. DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

### **A. PUBLIC HEALTH**

Bischoff

- Chris Bischoff is working on getting approval from the Board of Health for existing Board Members to be reappointed to the HHS Advisory Board.
- PH is not expecting to see any new Federal funding for the next several years. Programs that could be affected are WIC and Medicare as those two programs are Federally funded.
- A new Governor was elected in Washington state. This new Governor wants to see more emphasis on Behavior Health.
- HHS does not expect to cut any existing positions unless the State budget cuts are very deep.
- The Kiosk located at the former Community Building will still be in operation and funded by the State until March of 2025. The kiosk is still being stocked with COVID and Flu test kits, feminine products, fentanyl test strips and date rape drug test kits. HHS is working on coming up with a solution to keep a kiosk operational through internal funding.
- Our region has a new Deputy Health Officer, Dr. Desilva Battia. The Board congratulates and welcomes Dr. Desilva Battia and she will be able to join the HHS Advisory Board meetings soon.

### **B. COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Bischoff

- REAP funding has all been used in 2024. HHS is hoping more community members will donate to the REAP fund. Donation is an option when you pay your PUD bill. REAP funds are used to help keep the electricity on for our most vulnerable community members.
- PIT (Point In Time) count is coming up on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Wahkiakum HHS will be conducting the PIT count at 2 locations in our county. Johnson Park in the west end and at the Hope Center in Cathlamet between the hours of 10am – 1pm. Fresh, hot soup will be available as well as give-aways for the patrons who come visit these locations.
- HHS is working on the 2025-2030 housing and homeless plan for Wahkiakum County issued by the State Department of Commerce. The first Housing and Homeless Advisory Board meeting will be held on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 3pm.

Members include a vast array of community members, leaders, property owners, real estate agents and HHS staff.

C. CHA/CHIP Zink

- Shannon Hoskins and Erica Zink will be conducting a presentation tour all over the county to help engage community members with the CHA results and to help mobilize some groups who would like to help take action in the CHIP process. Presentation dates and times will be posted publically for those who would like to attend.

C. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH Cruickshank

- Public Health is still in the process of hiring a new BH Therapist and Peer Counsellor.
- Staff has moved back into Building 1 on the Elochoman Campus which was remodeled providing more privacy for clients.
- SUD is seeing a lot of in-patient care need. There is some anxiety on the Federal level regarding possible cuts in Medicaid funding which would impact the SUD program.

D. BUDGET AND FINANCE

- HHS goals for 2025 are to reduce the amount of spending. If something can be postponed, then it will be postponed.
- 3 different grants expired in December of 2024. The COVID-19 Reimbursement Grant helped promote vaccines and supplied funding for the freezer for the vaccines. The DOH Workforce Grant which helped supply employee safety and well-being has expired, however, funds that were not used for that grant can be amended and rolled over into 2025. The PHIG (Public Health Improvement Grant) which was a workforce grant the paid for employee training has expired.
- HHS has identified a way to fund helping people to get their vaccines.
- The Tire Take Back event funding might be cut in 2025 so there may not be a tire take back event in Wahkiakum County this year.

**VI. GUESTS UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Duncan Cruickshank – Emma Diffendal is the Environmental Specialist for Wahkiakum County.

Brandi Beedle is the County LERC (Local Emergency Response Coordinator) and she is updating the Emergency response of communicable disease prevention plan for Wahkiakum County.

Chala Gray – Chala works for Wellpoint and is looking for local tabling and funding opportunities in Wahkiakum County. Currently Wellpoint is launching a \$50 fuel voucher for wellness visits, \$120 voucher for youth to access swimming lessons and a \$75 voucher for individuals who are 18 and younger to access feminine hygiene products.

**VII. NEXT MEETING**

Date & Time: February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.

Location: Hybrid in-person and Zoom meeting