



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

OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 16, 2023
Call to order: 3:01 p.m.
Adjourned: 4:00 p.m.
Location: Hybrid in-person and Zoom virtual meeting

PRESENT

Board Attendees: Amanda Moyer, Bobbie Stefan, Gary Howell (alternate),
Mariane Brightbill, Sylvia Costich
Staff Attendees: Duncan Cruickshank, Chris Bischoff, Heather Odom
Ex officio Attendees: Lee Tischer
Guest Attendees: None
Absent Members: Dan Bigelow, Susan Schillios, Erica Zink, Beth Hansen,
Brent Freeman, Mark Schmidt
Absent Staff Attendees: Julie Johnston, Michelle Collupy
Next meeting: April 20, 2023, at 3:00PM

I. Introductions Chair

No new introductions were made.

II. Board Business Chair

A. Meeting minutes – No vote was taken due to lack of a quorum.

III. DISCUSSION

A. COVID Update Bischoff

- COVID, flu, and RSV numbers are declining.
- The WA State mask mandate expires on April 3, 2023. The State will still have a mask recommendation for clinical settings but no longer a mandated.
- L&I has instated a rule stating that employers cannot refuse clients choice to wear a mask.
- The Health Dept. continues to offer COVID vaccinations. The Federal/State plans to stop paying for the vaccines but the health department will continue to cover the cost, while funding is available.

IV. DEPARTMENT UPDATES

A. PUBLIC HEALTH

Bischoff/Cruickshank

- We moved flyers discussed; retaining two phone numbers because Health Department is required to have a dedicated phone number for people to be able to report outbreaks and public health emergency.
- Tire take back event is not ready to be announced but is one step closer to it happening.
- Temporary Vendors event – McKenna and Chris held a community meeting inviting residents to learn about becoming a temporary food vendor in Wahkiakum. Twelve (12) community members attended the meeting.

B. COMMUNITY SERVICES

Bischoff/Odom

- Guiding Good Choices (GGC) – GGC is a 5-session parenting workshop for adults who have youth between the ages of 9-14. HHS has offered the workshop twice before but due to staff changes, we no longer had a facilitator. Minette Smith, Wahkiakum Community Network Coordinator, and Heather Odom have recently completed the training required to become facilitators and are now certified to offer the workshop. They plan to offer the first workshop starting April 18th.
- BRIC and the community garden – HHS has a grant named Building Resilient Inclusive Communities. There were several options on where to focus of this funding. We chose to focus on social connectedness for seniors and food security for Wahkiakum residents. Heather Odom has been working with the community garden to support their efforts of growing fresh produce for the local food pantries. With this funding, HHS has been able to purchase supplies and materials to expand the number of beds that will be used in the upcoming grow seasons. They also have provided funding to electrify the garden hoop house to ensure that the produce starts would not be delayed due to weather.
- Wahkiakum Community Resource Guide – A resource guide was created years ago that contained information regarding local resources but due to time has become out of date. HHS staff are working to update the guide, to include new resources to help community members. Once the guide is ready, it will be posted on the County website and circulated throughout the area. We are hoping to have it ready to go in the next few weeks.
- Mentoring Program – HHS' Wahkiakum Community Network coordinator, Minette Smith, is working hard on getting the mentoring program up and running. We currently have 6 trained and ready mentors but now need youth participants. We are looking for youth 6-14 who would benefit from a mentor. Minette is working on ad to put in paper. She has reached out to schools, youth-based organizations, social media to get the information out to the community. This is a very different from past. We used to have a ton of youth and no adults.
- Eviction Rent Assistance Program (ERAP 2.0) – HHS continues to administer the ERAP funding. We were awarded \$359,946.00 and have \$265,455.14 left to spend. The funding will expire on June 30th. We will be returning the remaining funds soon. To date, we have assisted 23 households.

- SOAR Program – A SOAR provider helps households that come through our homeless system.

What to Expect as a SOAR Provider

SOAR promotes recovery and wellness through increased access to Social Security disability benefits for eligible individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. SOAR providers assist individuals with complete and quality applications. This is not an easy task, and we want to be sure that you understand the commitment required-it is well worth the effort!

- Community Outreach event – There is a community outreach event scheduled for April 5th at Johnson Park. Kelly, along with many other HHS program staff and other organizations, will be in attendance to share information regarding their programs.
- Transit – We are still waiting to see if we were awarded grant for new busses. The broken-down bus is being put on surplus site this week. We hope to get more money to add to match.
- Developmental Disabilities – We are still in need of representation on our board from persons with a developmental disability or lived experience. This includes family members and caregivers of those with a developmental disability. Any ideas or suggestions for recruitment are welcome.

C. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Cruickshank

- HHS will be presenting a retention project to the BOCC next Tuesday. The initial project would be for two structures to be installed, at the Elochoman campus, that would hold a gym and a Zen space. A future project would be to create a walking trail.
- The mental health and SUD teams are looking for community events to attend.
- HCA will be reviewing all Apple Health recipient eligibility. This will affect some behavioral health clients.
- There is a change coming in prescribing requirements regarding Buprenorphine that could potentially negatively affect our community.

V. MEMBER/GUESTS UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no member updates.

VI. NEXT MEETING

Date & Time: April 20, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

Location: Hybrid in-person and Zoom meeting