

**Okanogan County Board of Health (BOH)
January 12, 2021**

Regular Members of Board of Health:

Jim DeTro (JD) - BOH Chair (absent), District 3 County Commissioner
Andy Hover (AH) - BOH, District 2 County
Chris Branch (CB) - BOH, District 1 County Commissioner
Marianne Williams (MW) member, BOH
James Wright (JW) - Member, BOH
Patricia Stanton (PS) - Member, BOH
Kris Erlandsen (KE) - Member, BOH

Administration:

Lauri Jones (LJ) - Director, Okanogan County Community Health
Dave Hilton (DH) - Director, Okanogan County Environmental Health
John McCarthy (JH) - Health Officer, Okanogan County Public Health

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note taker's comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://www.countywatch.org/> and are not the official county record of the meeting. For officially approved minutes, which are normally published at a later time, see <https://okanogancounty.org/ocph/BOHMinutes.htm>

Summary: Cmr DeTro elected to another term as BOH chair, along with Maryanne Williams as Vice -Chair. Upcoming BOH retreat and inclusion of public discussed. Public comment involving septic on a possible short plat involving a home with septic installed before permitting procedures existed. New state and federal approaches to vaccinations & new county groupings review. Hospitalization statistics have changed, with 92% of ICU beds filled; success stories shared. Covid-19 had large effects upon Enviro Health permits.

NO TIME STAMPS ARE AVAILABLE FOR THIS MEETING BECAUSE THERE IS NO RECORDING OF THE MEETING. A COMBINATION OF WINTER STORM, INTERNET PROBLEMS, AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES MAKE THESE NOTES LESS COMPREHENSIVE THAN USUAL.

Meeting called to order: (Branch is absent but returns after election.)

Cmr. DeTro opens the meeting and solicits nominations for Board officers.

**There is one person nominated for each position of Board Chair and Vice Chair:
Each nominee is elected:**

Chair of BOH - Jim DeTro

Vice Chair: Marianne Williams

Discussion of BOH retreat: There is positive discussion regarding this, and it is decided that this will be taken up at the next meeting. It would be to look at the next 5-10 years (mission, vision, what the public wants from Public Health, etc.) LJ wants to be sure public is included, wondering how best to do that.

Public Comment: An individual named Don is here to request that the BOH review the decision of Environmental Health Director Dave Hilton regarding requirements for on-site septic permit on a parcel of land he is considering buying from an aunt and uncle who are considering moving and doing a short plat. The property already has one home with a septic system, but it was built before there was a permitting requirement. He questions DH's decision that if the existing septic system does not have a permit on file, Don would be required to dig everything up and install a new septic system on the basis that (*quoting DH*) "This is the way we (*Okanogan County*) have always done it." Don claims he cannot find this in state law. Before considering a purchase and subdivision on the lot, he needs to know whether this would actually be required. He wants to know if he could apply for a variance. Hilton states that he can apply for a variance, but that a variance is limited to situations for which there are no other options and that he would not approve it. Both DH and AH state that it is "8.01.04" (*apparently a County Public Health ordinance?*) that they are looking at. Don has to decide whether to buy the whole parcel or just one lot, which would be about the same price accounting for the work that would need to be done. No firm decision seems to be reached at this time as to what will occur. Don assures BOCC he just needs to understand the correct requirements and be able to figure out the relative costs of the options. Someone mentions changing the laws as an option to think about.

Lauri Jones (LJ) - Community Health update.

County has done over 1400 vaccinations. Brief discussion re the confusion as to what the federal government is now going to do. Discussion over governor's new grouping of counties, placing Okanogan County in with Grant, Chelan, and Douglas County. This will make our region "look better."

What has changed is hospitalization statistics - (*assuming regional hospitals?*) - We are at 92% ICU beds. So they have, as of last night, 11 on ventilators, down from 13, and 33 total Covid patients. This is 90% of their "cap" for Covid patients. They are sending "swing-bed" patients out, doing a swap so they can maintain more Covid beds. There are multiple plans. They had enormous plans - a standing pool of a system that they were going to do. There were plans for people who didn't have a place to recover - nursing homes, etc. It was elaborate and well-thought out. But the limitation was in staffing.

CB - Do you think the vaccinations will help?

LJ - Hopefully. Hopefully it will start this coming week, with vaccination of older people. Our other exciting news is that we, with some of the CARES act funding, were able to purchase some PCR machines We can actually run other tests besides Covid. We will not have to pay \$100 apiece to Seattle. We're thrilled to be part of this. We purchased one freezer for Three Rivers.

We will be seeking additional funds for North Central Community Health for health checks. EMS can do a health check. We've had many success stories - one Saturday they made a call and someone else in the home was at 74% on room air (*referring to oxygen saturation level*) with a temperature over 103 degrees, in their 50's. ER had been asked to check another family member that had tested positive. They did an antigen test on her which immediately turned positive; she was really in trouble. We were fortunate to be able to get her to care.

AH - Interjects that the three Commissioners have to be back at commissioners' hearing room at 3:00.

LJ - Reminds AH that BOH meetings are supposed to last until 3:30. She cuts her presentation short at this point due to the time restriction today.

Dave Hilton - Environmental Health Update: States that Covid -19 effects were pretty severe if you look at the permits.

Note taker has to leave at this point. BOH meeting ends not long after, with Board of Commissioners resuming at 3:00 PM at Commissioners' Hearing room.