

**Orcas Island Health Care District**  
**Board of Commissioners - REGULAR Meeting Minutes**  
**REMOTE BOARD MEETING**  
**Tuesday, November 17, 2020**  
**5:00 – 7:00 pm**

**Commissioners Present (via Zoom):**

Art Lange  
Diane Boteler (arrived 5:28pm)  
Patricia Miller, Secretary  
Pegi Groundwater  
Richard Fralick, President

**Commissioners Absent:**

Diane Boteler (arrived 5:28pm)

**Staff (via Zoom):**

Anne Presson, Superintendent  
Melissa Mahar, Admin

**Guests (via Zoom):**

Jen Taylor, UW Clinic  
Aaimee Johnson, OFHC Clinic  
Patty Codd, Island Hospital  
Elise Cutter, Island Hospital  
Laura Moroney, Island Hospital  
Charles Hall, CEO Island Hospital  
Debra Gussin, UW

**I. Call to Order**

President Fralick called the 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of 2020 of the OIHCD to order at 5:00 pm, noting that 4 of the 5 Commissioners were present, as well as the District's Superintendent. Comm. Boteler was still in clinic.

**II. Public Comment**

Supt. Presson reported there were no Public Comments received via email prior to the meeting, and Pres. Fralick invited live public comment, without reply.

**III. Consent Agenda**

a. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes** – November 3<sup>rd</sup>

Comm. Groundwater had offered substantial changes to the draft minutes, and Comm. Miller had not yet had a chance to review them. President Fralick proposed postponing to the next meeting, and asked Comm. Groundwater to circulate her copy with the changes so far.

b. **AP Voucher Report** – November 15, 2020 - \$5,581.79

President Fralick entertained a motion to approve the AP Voucher Report.

**MOVED by Comm. Groundwater, seconded by Comm. Lange to approve the AP voucher report. No further discussion. VOTE 4:0:0. MOTION CARRIED.**

**IV. UW Clinic Update**

Jen Taylor presented on behalf of UW Clinic on several topics, and noted that Dr. Fleming was still in clinic.

**COVID testing:**

The UW Clinic is offering COVID testing 4-5 days per week with emphasis on symptomatic, pre-procedure, and known exposure patients. The number of pre-procedure tests needed could be reduced if there is an upcoming change to elective surgery schedule by UW. They are also re-evaluating protocols regarding PCR follow-up tests to confirm a nasal swab positive test result, to rule out a false positive. They are currently using nasal swab tests with very high accuracy, so they have not been re-testing positives so far.

**Flu vaccines:**

Have administered more than 800 adult flu vaccines to-date, with 104 patients scheduled in the coming weeks. Planning to order more flu supply later this week. Have administered 56 child doses.

Comm. Lange asked if they expect a decrease in demand for flu shots, and whether the supply and the process are meeting demand. Jen replied that yes, December clinics have been decreasing to 15-20 signups per clinic, and that some patients are getting the vaccine off island. They do not have a waitlist right now.

**Clinic visits/telehealth**

Visits to-date are 7.4% over budget, WRVs are 3.5% below budget, incoming phone calls were 2,115 (high volume), and the electronic basket was 2,381 for October. They are anticipating a shift to possibly 70-80% TeleHealth due to Governor Inslee's most recent order. They will continue to limit in clinic visits to people who have a condition that can't be addressed via telehealth, those with same day/acute care needs..

**V. OFHC Clinic Update**

Aaimee Johnson presented on behalf of OFHC Clinic on several topics, as follows.

**COVID testing:**

Rural Health Care funds of \$49,000 received.

The clinic purchased a BD Veritor device that does rapid test, and ordered 300 tests. They are self-nasal swabs with 90% accuracy, tested on-site in 15 minutes. Ideally they would get the Abbot ID Now, which is an in-clinic rapid test for influenza, RSV and COVID, but it's not currently available to new customers due to a backlog of orders. This is the testing method used by Island Hospital.

Max tests = 720 (including associated staff wages & materials). Could have \$20,000 left after that and could potentially add 500 more tests, hopefully using the Abbot ID Now (if it becomes available, as noted above). The \$49,000 could provide 800 tests total, if done for free. They are considering requesting a donation of \$20 per test, or split costs with the patient \$20/\$20 (\$40 is the average cost for each test). They perform a PCR follow-up confirmation for positive results, or for negatives but with known exposure.

OFHC is organizing mobile testing sites 3 days per week, but locations and timing are not yet confirmed. They are aiming for Tues/Wed/Thur at each of 3 island locations – Deer Harbor/West Sound, Eastsound and Doe Bay. The plan is for 16 weeks, through the end of March.

Pres. Fralick asked how the cost of the PCR tests is covered. Aaimee replied that OFHC is currently waiving the \$44 nurse/admin fee, and splitting the lab fee of \$135 with the patient if they are not symptomatic. If they are symptomatic, then testing is covered by insurance. The patient submits their payment to the lab, then the clinic reimburses them with a check for \$67.50.

Comm. Lange asked whether supply is meeting demand for COVID testing, and if it's possible that demand could exceed supply as the spread continues. Aaimee replied that a few weeks ago OFHC was meeting demand, but anticipates that it will increase, and hopefully by creating mobile sites they will be able to reduce exposure of both patients and clinic staff. Aaimee stated that Dr. James expressed, in his recent update, that even the contact tracing team is being pushed to its limits, so yes it's possible that demand could exceed supply.

She also mentioned that she will attend a Webinar Q&A with the Association of RHC's and HHS on 11/18. She is hopeful for more information then. For example, they can't bill insurance and use the COVID RHC \$49,000 funds, so what happens once funds are exhausted, and what does insurance billing look like for mobile testing?

**Flu vaccines:**

OFHC exhausted their supply of flu vaccines, and purchased 20 high-dose from the Health Department. Their supplier, McKesson, didn't receive as many doses from the manufacturer as anticipated, so OFHC got only half of the quadrivalent and 20% of the high dose ordered. They have a small waitlist, but the pharmacy is now administering, so they are referring there. However, the pharmacy only offers the quadrivalent, and not the high dose. The pharmacy had 70 doses left yesterday, and ten patients were referred there today. They will order more vaccine if they see big increase in demand.

Comm. Groundwater asked how many patients are not getting the high dose vaccines that they might need. Aimee replied that so far all needs are being met. Pres Fralick asked why the pharmacy is not administering the high-dose, and Comm. Miller stated that they can't get the high dose from their supplier due to high demand. ,

**Clinic visits/telehealth**

Total clinic visits are 15-17% below last year. Given the current COVID outbreak, they are triaging on a daily basis to shift patients to telehealth visits when possible.

**VI. IH Clinic Transition Update**

Supt. Presson offered a summary of the progress and collaboration among all parties over last couple of weeks, including the close daily coordination between her, Charles Hall, Patty Codd, Elise Cutter, and Laura Moroney. She reiterated that the IH team is joining the monthly Ops Call with UW and the bi-weekly meetings with Debra Gussin and her leaders. Patty Codd has put together a detailed project plan with her directors, and will present that to Charles. Some delays are anticipated due to the spike in COVID, and therefore some key dates will be forthcoming after the plan is revised accordingly. Supt. Presson also reported that other progress includes having both the lab supplier and the X-ray vendor onsite a week ago, and that IT is exploring options about how to create a plan to access EPIC via Care Anywhere. She then introduced IH CEO, Charles Hall to present.

**A.** Charles expressed gratitude to everyone involved, especially Debra and Anne, for all their hard work. He requested if he could offer a **brief segue to discuss the implications of Governor Inslee's recent order.** Washington state is in its third wave, and spiking twice as many new cases per day than August – now at 1,800 new cases per day. The Governor's restriction did not include limitations on health care, but may do so as the COVID spike continues. IH has partnered to share resources and services with other regional care systems, including Peace Health, Skagit, Providence, and UW. He invited Debra Gussin from UW to comment on their level of concern. She agreed that they too are in a full-court press, and that the biggest concern is keeping the work force safe so that the clinic can continue to operate. One strategy is shifting more to telehealth, and improving screening methods. She anticipates the challenges to continue at least through March. Charles reassured that they are better prepared than they were last March, and have plenty of PPE and test kits, and are watching the vaccine situation closely. They have created a scaled plan to ensure safety of providers, including telehealth also. He anticipates the work force will be impacted, and they have continued to support staff to work from home, especially the 10% who are working parents. According to the Anacortes school district, grades K-3 will be back home soon, and grades 4-6 are delayed and still not back in school yet, as is the case with high school also. He affirmed his support and collaboration with UW and OFHC in sharing resources and information as this process unfolds.

President Fralick invited the Commissioners to ask any questions about the COVID situation. Comm. Groundwater asked about whether the March timeline for the transition is still realistic. Charles replied that he is discussing that frequently with Debra and Supt. Presson, and they are focused on developing triggers for when to speed up, and when to slow down. Many of the internal steps can proceed as planned, including EMR/IT systems, and the staffing and interviewing process. He acknowledged that the hand's-on

aspect may be delayed, depending on the health care restrictions in place at that time. Debra Gussin added that the primary focus is caring for the community, and that anything that distracts from patient care is not helpful. Important to remain flexible and work together, and stay focused on as much of the behind-the-scenes as possible without straining the health care staffing. Comm. Miller commented on a discrepancy she noticed between the recent Ops call that indicated a staffing and supply shortage for the (COVID) testing process, versus today's clinic update which presented a brighter picture. Supt. Presson replied that she is meeting the next day with Patty Codd, Aimee Johnson and Jen Taylor to discuss this exact topic of inter-clinic collaboration, in part as a result of that Ops call. Supt. Presson agreed to update the board next week with the outcome of that meeting.

#### **B. IH Clinic Transition Update (continued)**

Charles introduced Patty Codd, Elise Cutter, and Laura Moroney – Marketing and PR Expert – who visited Orcas a couple weeks ago, and together they created a Marketing/Communications Plan for the Transition. They presented slides from a PowerPoint, as follows –

**Patty Codd:** Patty C. Offered an overview of accomplishments in November and what is planned for December. So far, progress includes the Lab director and x-ray vendor onsite last week to assess and take next steps. Patty C. is planning to be on-island tomorrow to meet with small groups of staff and managers to begin discussion of FTE's by role and job descriptions, with the goal to bring the teams together and hear their hopes. Positions will all be posted by this Friday, including for the Clinic Manager. Charles is continuing discussions with providers and hoping that they will all apply for hospital privileges with IH. The lengthy process has also been initiated on the Rural Health Clinic application.

Goals for December include staff and provider interviews, review of current employment agreements, and preparation of employment offers. They will also begin monthly Community Leadership Briefings, which Laura elaborates on in her presentation that follows. They will assess facility modifications and furnishing needs, complete IT equipment purchase, initiate the build of EMR system, and develop a strategy and timeline with the Health Information Management director for Orcas resident record transition. Finally, the old x-ray until will be removed and the room prepared for the new equipment.

Pres. Fralick invited Commissioner questions, including his own inquiry about the plan for the old x-ray machine, encouraging looking into a group who can repurpose it. Patty C. agreed that she would discuss options with the vendor and get back to the Board. Comm. Miller asked about the x-ray at OFHC, and Supt. Presson confirmed that both machines have been evaluated for repurposing or donation, and added that minimal remodel work is expected for the UW x-ray room. Comm. Miller also asked for more information on the strategy and timeline for patient record transition. Patty C. replied that she has already been in contact with UW, and will talk with OFHC soon to gain better clarity about options, and get back to the Board.

**Laura Moroney:** Laura shared the highlights of the Marketing/Communication Plan. She shared the goals, key messages to external and internal audiences, tactics, venues, and evaluation of the Plan, as follows.

The three main goals include building awareness, confidence and trust in the new clinic; highlight the focus on quality care and expanded services; and exceed expectations and care standards.

The key message to external audiences is that IH offers best-in-class rural healthcare with a community-based, patient-first approach, while highlighting their award-winning care (Top 100 Rural Hospital and 4-star Medicare Rating) and community educational offerings. The key message to

internal audiences includes the combining of two clinics into one to continue offering primary care on Orcas Island, as well as providing hiring opportunities, a great culture with opportunities for regional growth and development, and also highlighting that IH is local, allowing the community's voice to be heard.

The Tactics of the Plan include creation of a webpage by Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, providing monthly Community Leadership Briefings from December through March, creating printed and online ads and press releases over the same time period, as well as clinic signage and provider bio cards. Then, beginning in 2021, they will provide quarterly offerings of Community Education online, using their current resources. Orcas patients may also be able to begin accessing those existing resources even sooner.

The Venues planned for print and online advertising include local newspapers (Orcasonian, The Islands' Sounder, and The Weekly), as well as other publications with a regional audience such as the Anacortes American, The Journal, Whidbey News Time, Facebook, and Nextdoor. They will evaluate the effectiveness using digital and social media analytics.

Pres. Fralick invited Commissioner questions. Comm. Miller asked about the timing of communication about clinic specifics to Orcas residents such as the appointment scheduling process, a local phone number, and whether new patient visit be required, etc. Laura replied that once the staffing is in place that will be good timing to make those decisions. Supt. Presson added that she and Laura have discussed adding a Q&A document on the new webpage, with the ability to continue adding items as new questions are received from the public. Comm. Miller also expressed concern that a recent patient had a new appointment with UW clinic that got cancelled and could not be rescheduled, because the patient was told that they did not know who the providers would be. Patty Codd (IH) replied that she will work with Debra (UW) and clinic managers to work out a mechanism so that does not happen, but the exact timing is not known.

Comm. Lange inquired about the status of both the content and the timeline for press releases. Laura explained that she will meet with local reporters to assess relevant interests, and tailor the content and timing to that. He also offered to compile a list of questions to share with Laura, and Comm. Miller and President Fralick both agreed with the importance of being proactive about communication with the public. Comm. Groundwater also noted that the newspapers may not be the best venue for the public, and that a useful tool might be a FAQ sheet posted at the pharmacy, in the clinics and grocery stores. Laura affirmed that will be part of the marketing materials they develop.

Comm. Groundwater asked Patty Codd when IH will know which current providers have hospital privileges so that patients know who to schedule with. Charles replied that they hope to begin the 2-3 week interview process with interested candidates in Dec/early Jan. Signing up with the payers will take 3+ months so Charles is in the process of asking the providers to start that process now. It's possible the timeline could be affected by COVID.

Charles expressed gratitude to the generous donor for the x-ray machine, and commented that they enjoyed her company and were fascinated by her strength as an individual. Comm. Lange thanked everyone for the work that they've done to get to this stage, and that it's very exciting. Comm. Miller extended her appreciation for the clinic team's efforts, apologized for the additional stress, and expressed gratitude for their service to the community. President Fralick also extended his gratitude and appreciation for everyone who has contributed to this process.

## **VII. Committee and Work Group Reports**

### **a. Negotiations Committee**

#### **i. Lease Agreement with Island Hospital**

Comm. Groundwater spoke with Katherine Deets, OIHCD attorney, who reported that IH's legal counsel didn't think there was a legal issue to be dealt with. Charles replied that there was a delay to the agreement, due to minor edits recommended by Don, so he doubts there will be any issues. Comm. Groundwater and Miller asked for clarification about a couple of unresolved issues, and Pres. Fralick suggested that those be revisited outside this meeting.

#### **ii. Island Hospital Foundation – Board Seat**

Comm. Lange suggests that a (District) Board member or the Superintendent be the representative on the Foundation. Charles expressed that IHF has its own Executive Director and President of the Board (Shirley), as well as their own process for selecting new members. He suggested scheduling a meeting with them and a point-person from the District to clarify next steps. Comm. Groundwater concurred with Comm. Lange that it is important to distinguish between the fundraising efforts of the Foundation and those of the District. Comm. Lange agreed to be the point-person to begin conversations with IHF, and either invite them to a Board meeting or just have a separate meeting.

### **b. Building Committee**

#### **i. HVAC – updated project/costs**

#### **ii. Roof – updated project/costs**

Pres. Fralick expressed thanks to the clinic staff for their patience with the construction project. The next and final step is the gutter installation, which will be a 2-day process the week of Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>. There are two change orders that will be brought forward once the work is completed, and hopefully by the next Dec 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, in order to approve payment. He shared about conversations with the HVAC installer and the service contract they proposed for \$2,400/year. He inquired how the Board would like to proceed. Comm. Groundwater emphasized that the District's procurement policy requires that services meet the criteria of "fair price", which means that we should ask other vendors for similar quotes. Seeing no disagreement from other Commissioners, Pres. Fralick concluded that the Building Committee would do that, and report back to the Board at the next meeting. Comm. Miller asked about steps regarding RFP's for the painting and the generator, and Supt. Presson replied that Admin Melissa will review the procurement policy and RFP's, and take ownership of that process.

### **c. Finance Committee**

President Fralick invited any updates from the Finance Committee, and Comm. Miller only reported that she is waiting for the equipment information.

### **d. Communication Committee**

Comm. Lange reported that Laura (IH) has been very supportive and enthusiastic about hearing District perspectives, and he appreciates that. Together they are continuing to develop the Plan and will keep the Board apprised.

**e. Legal Committee**

Comm. Groundwater referenced a memorandum that was circulated with the recommendation that Don be asked to start helping with any legal issues around the transition with UW, and what may be an early termination of their agreement – dependent on how COVID proceeds. President Fralick also requested guidance from the Legal Committee about any policy regarding the use of public funds for gifts to recognize people for extraordinary tasks that benefit the District. Comm. Groundwater offered to ask Don about this, and get back to the Board.

**f. Staffing Committee**

Comm. Groundwater reported that she and Comm. Boteler have met to begin identifying possible measures for evaluation of the Superintendent’s potential bonus, but realize that they are awaiting clearer identification of what her role will be in assisting IH with the transition. She suggested that Patty Codd and Charles might want to be thinking about the Superintendent’s role. Charles elaborated that as they develop their partnerships, he sees her as his counterpart in Operations and assessing the needs they see in the community. Comm. Miller recommended strong roles in communication, and coordination between the clinics. President Fralick shared past experience of meeting with his management to identify potential milestones, and suggested that maybe Charles and the Supt. Presson could take a first pass in that process. Comm. Groundwater agreed.

**VIII. Old Business**

There was no Old Business to revisit at this time.

**IX. New Business**

There was no New Business presented at this time.

**X. Operations Report**

**a. Monthly Financial Reports through October 31, 2020**

Supt. Presson reported that the levy paperwork has been filed, and the auditor forms are also complete regarding the FY '21 budget. Comm. Groundwater asked for clarification of the receivables report from the Treasurer, and the Supt. replied that there is a glitch in their system and it’s not pulling 2020 levy numbers. However it does report how well the District is doing in property tax receipts through October, with collections ahead of budget. While the Supt. will want to study this longer, initial results suggest actual property tax collections are coming in around 97 – 97.5% of the actual levy. As such, the District can continue to watch what discount rate they would like to use in the budget process. Comm. Lange asked for clarification of whether the District would benefit from taking a less conservative approach in estimating the Revenue number in the budget. Supt. Presson responded that they are two separate items, as the District did ask for the maximum levy allowed, less the banked capacity, and that is what the Assessor will collect. The Assessor bases his collections on the amount that was certified. Whereas the discounted number is used in the budget and is a conservative way for the District to assume Revenues and Expenses. The Revenue report also shows that not all property tax revenue is paid in the taxable year, and the Treasurer goes back for up to three years to collect what was due. For that reason, it can become complicated to tie revenue with the appropriate year and will take three years of collections to determine the final amount and any resulting bad debt.

**b. COVID Travel Advisory and New Order from Governor Inslee**

c. Letter from SJC PHD#1 re: Hospice of the NW

Supt. Presson announced her conversation today with Charles Anderson, a SJI citizen who was instrumental in raising funds and bringing PeaceHealth/PIMC to SJ. He reached out to talk about the possible sale of Hospice of the NW, and asked the Supt. To join a county-wide group discussing possible scenarios.. She queried whether any of the Commissioners would be interested in being a part of that discussion. Pres. Fralick asked Comm. Miller if she has any interest in being that person, but she expressed concern about what value would be added, though she agreed to consider it. Supt. Presson to continue bringing info to the Board, as appropriate.

d. PIMC Community Health Funds

Supt. Presson shared a document from PIMC that summarized a grant they are awarding to the County’s Vulnerable Populations Work Group. That group is doing good work and will likely help inform the work of the Long Term Care projects getting underway via the HRSA 1-year Planning Grant and the 3-year Care Coordination Grant. The Lopez Island Hospital District is leading the former, and they will have their first meeting following the intro call scheduled for 12/1 with HRSA. She will continue to bring information to the Board.

**XI. Public Comment**

There were no emailed Public Comments submitted, and no chats, however there was one raised hand in the live meeting. Pierrette Guimond expressed her thanks to the Commissioners and all involved in this transition, honoring their professionalism and level of attention to the issues.

**XII. Upcoming Meetings**

a. Regular Meetings for remainder of 2020:


- December 1<sup>st</sup>
- December 15<sup>th</sup>

**XIII. Meeting adjournment**

President Fralick offered final words of gratitude and appreciation to all the guests in the meeting – from UW, OFHC, and Island Hospital – for all their hard work during these difficult times. He then entertained a motion to adjourn.

**MOVED by Comm. Miller, seconded by Comm. Groundwater to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 pm. VOTE 5:0:0. MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes approved this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

DocuSigned by:  
  
 4D7623BD7620417

**Attest: Patricia Miller, OIHCD Board Secretary**

12/9/2020

**Date signed**