

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
WEBEX
SPECIAL MEETING**

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Board members present: Commissioner Brett Wachsmith; Commissioner Laura Osiadacz; and Commissioner Cory Wright.

Others: Taylor Crouch, Administrative Assistant; Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Steve Panattoni, Jail Superintendent; Ed Buntin, Corrections Lieutenant; and approximately 14 members of the public.

SPECIAL MEETING MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TAX PROPOSAL COMMISSIONERS

At 2:00 p.m. Chairman Wachsmith opened a Special Meeting to receive a presentation regarding a Mental Health/Behavioral Health Tax proposal.

Rich Elliot, Deputy Fire Chief of Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue gave an overview of the presentation for the meeting and gave statistics from around the state on which other counties had passed the tax.

Greg Aubol, Therapist/Team Leader at Comprehensive Healthcare spoke about Goal 1, which focuses on corrections centers and inmate mental health. Steve Panattoni, Jail Superintendent also spoke about concerns with mental health in corrections facilities, and re-entry after release.

Dede Utley, Nursing Director, Emergency Services at KVH and Robin Read, Executive Director at Kittitas County Health Network spoke about Goal 2, which focuses on warm handoffs for people from corrections facilities and from emergency rooms. Ms. Utley also spoke on Goal 3, which focuses on resources and time spent on mental health issues in the Emergency Room.

Michelle Cawley, Registered Nurse Program Manager at Community Health of Central Washington spoke on Goal 4, which focuses on children and youth and mental health. Mr. Elliot spoke about the increase in mental and behavioral health impacts on primary family care.

Kevin Martin, Kittitas Valley Healthcare Chief Medical Officer, Medical Director for Community-Based Care Services and Family Physician spoke on the need for more mental health care in primary care. He said this profession was not designed to handle mental health, but are needing to fill in due to strain on the mental health care system.

APPROVED
3/16/21

Presenters spoke about the community outreach done up to this point.

Doug Fulp, Project Specialist at Kittitas County Health Network spoke on the budget for the tax and where they saw the needs broken down.

Dr. Martin recapped by saying this was a local problem and needed a local solution.

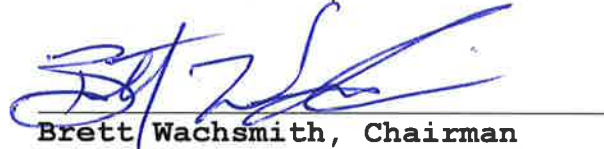
The Commissioners were able to ask questions of the group. There was direction to Staff to set a public hearing, for the largest available space for an audience, to consider passing the 1/10 of 1% Mental Health tax.

Meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD


Taylor Crouch

KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Brett Wachsmith, Chairman