

LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

August 9, 2021

1:30 p.m.

The Board of Health for Lewis County, Washington met in regular session on Monday, [August 9, 2021](#), at 1:30 p.m. **COMMISSIONERS LINDSEY R. POLLOCK, DVM, and GARY STAMPER** were in attendance; **COMMISSIONER SEAN SWOPE** joined via ZOOM. **CHAIRMAN POLLOCK** determined a quorum, called the meeting to order, and proceeded with the flag salute. Sandi Andrus read the ZOOM guidelines. **COMMISSIONER STAMPER** moved to approve the Minutes from [July 12, 2021](#), **COMMISSIONER SWOPE** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

**ATTENDEES:**

**County Staff:**

JP Anderson  
Dr. Steven Krager  
Amber Smith  
Sandi Andrus

Lindsey Shankle  
Alison Puckett  
Meja Handlen  
Sara Sons

**Community:**

Reporter (The Chronicle)  
Nic (KELA)  
Dr. Dana Shepherd

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE**

**JP Anderson** stated there are interviews scheduled tomorrow for the Administrative Assistant, Sr., position. Interviews for the Accounting Specialist position will be on Wednesday.

**JP** reported that a water line in the Public Health building broke over the weekend. About one fourth of the offices are now unusable and may be for the next couple months. JP stated his appreciation for his staff for how hard they work and have been working the past 18 months. This weekend shows how the staff steps up and does what needs to be done. **Commissioner Pollock** added that it was an impressive response by the PHSS Department on a Saturday afternoon. They are an amazing team!

**JP** introduced Lindsey Shankle, new Health Educator-Community Wellness. Lindsey was hired August 1, for an 18-month project. She will be addressing the impact of COVID on kids and will be working with local pediatricians and groups. Lindsey was joining via ZOOM but having technical difficulties so she was unable to speak to the BOH.

**JP** gave an overview of the Department's work around COVID. We continue to see an increase in cases. These are probably associated to the Delta Variant that is incredibly transmissible. More information will be given at the COVID Update tomorrow.

**Dr. Krager** shared some slides with the BOH showing some of our spikes with a significant increase in cases of more than 50 per day. We do not have as many cases as we did during the winter but it is alarming that we are increasing so quickly. The Delta Variant is attributed to the rates going up. Restrictions being lifted, people not wearing masks, and coming together in more relaxed group settings are also contributing to increased rates. We are seeing more transmission than we have in the past. Lewis County hospitalization rates are increasing with a current spike. The State is also seeing a spike in hospitalization rates.

**Commissioner Swope** asked about the cases from UNFI and whether they are being attributed to Lewis County or to counties where employees live. **Dr. Krager** replied they are being reported to the counties where people live.

**Dr. Krager** stated that people who have not been vaccinated have a much higher rate of hospitalization than people who have been vaccinated. Hospitalization is pretty rare in people who have been vaccinated. He recommends people get vaccinated to reduce the spread. Currently, we are seeing the highest rates of the disease to be in the younger population.

**Dr. Krager** stated that healthcare partners are reporting they are already short-staffed and crunched without a surge in COVID-19 hospitalizations. There is a sense of urgency to slow the spread down. Vaccinations is the best option with wearing masks indoors as the next best option. We are seeing a lot of spread by people mixing with those who are unvaccinated.

**Commissioner Swope** asked why Israel has probably the highest vaccination rate and they are still seeing a surge of the Delta Variant. **Dr. Krager** explained the virus still spreads in areas with high population of vaccination rates. There is still a large number of people who are susceptible and can be infected. We are also seeing more breakthrough (people who are fully vaccinated but being infected) cases happen. That is part of the reason the CDC is changing the masking recommendation. Breakthrough cases are not a large portion of the cases we are seeing and are usually milder. Vaccinations will slow the spread down and help prevent hospitalizations. **Dr. Krager** shared the possibility of needing a booster in the future.

**Commissioner Swope** asked about the efficacy of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. **Dr. Krueger** replied there is not enough data to determine rate of prevention but those with that vaccine have a reduction of getting COVID, severe symptoms, and being hospitalized. Data also shows that people who had COVID and then were vaccinated, were less likely to get reinfected with COVID.

**Dr. Dana Shepherd**, Pediatrician at NW pediatrics, stated they are now seeing illnesses that are generally considered as winter illnesses, among their pediatric patients and as a national trend. There is an increase in those illnesses since June that are generally seen in November through March. Children are getting ill with COVID as well as other respiratory illnesses such as RSV, croup, different types of viruses that trigger respiratory complications in children, and gastrointestinal illnesses. This becomes a great concern in terms of caregiver availability in hospitals and emergency departments. They have a concern about

how many overlapping things are happening at once and will be moving into the flu season when school begins.

**Commissioner Pollock** stated we have other things going on in life that are compounding the need for medical care in the community and our ability to serve that population is reduced due to overwork in the medical community as well. We need to do what we can to reduce the load on our medical community.

**Commissioner Swope** stated that today, Governor Inslee officially mandated that all State workers will be required to get the vaccine. **Dr. Krueger** stated he has no plans to issue a mandate like that for Lewis County. We need more discussion as to what that would entail before even considering it.

**Commissioner Stamper** moved to adjourn. **Commissioner Pollock** seconded, **Commissioner Pollock** adjourned.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at [2:18 p.m.](#), on Monday, [August 9, 2021](#). The next public meeting will be held on Monday, [September 13, 2021](#) at 1:30 p.m.

Please note that minutes from the Board of Health meetings are not verbatim. A tape of this meeting is available.

**BOARD OF HEALTH  
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM, Chair

ATTEST:

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Sean D. Swope, Vice Chair

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Sandi Andrus, Clerk of the BOH

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Gary Stamper, Member