

Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative Meeting

Tuesday, May 16, 2023; 2-3:30 p.m.

Conducted in person at the Norm Dicks Government Center Chambers and virtually via [Zoom](#)

Akuyea Karen Vargas, *Living Life Leadership, etc.*
Anke Smith, *Living Life Leadership*
Cristina Roark, *Kitsap Strong*
Daniel Roseles, *PYA and Mount Zion*
Dionne Deschenne, *KCCHR - Z*
Erica Whares, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Javier 'Spanky' Silva, *L.O.C.O.S. nonprofit*
Jessica Guidry, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Jewel Shepherd-Sampson, *Kitsap BSU-Z*
Julius 'Doc' Blackwell, *DocLovesTheKids-Z*
Karisha Stanley, *Bremerton Housing Authority-Z*
Ken Riley, *New Life Pastor - Z*
Dr. Kimberly Riley, *You Are Beautiful PLLC*
LaShonda Williamson-James, *LLL-Z*
Lindsay Jones, *PCHS - Z*
Lou Baum, *community member*

Maria Fergus, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Marsha Cutting, *KCACAC-Z*
Martitha May, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Marwan Cameron, *G2 and The Conduit*
Melissa Hartman, *Kitsap Public Health District-Z*
Miranda Burger, *Olympic Community of Health*
Pastor Frankie Coleman, *Sinclair MBC*
Ranae Beeker, *Kitsap Accessible Communities-Z*
Tazsiah Green, *Mount Zion PYA*
Sheelan Abdulla, *Islamic Center of Kitsap County*
Siri Kushner, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Stephanie Christensen, *VMFH*
Tony Ives, *Kitsap Community Resources - Z*
Tovi Wilkins, *LMFM & MWC - Z*
Victoria Hilt, *Kitsap Strong*

1. **Welcome.** After welcome and before introductions, Jessica shared the Port Gamble S'Klallam and Suquamish Tribes' Land acknowledgements slide while she acknowledged that we are meeting on their ancestral lands and talked about the National Day of Awareness Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

We gather on lands where Coast Salish peoples have long resiliently resisted the ongoing harms of colonialism. Let us continually ask how we are respecting the tribes' sovereignty, rights to self-determination, and sacred connections to this place. In solidarity, we work with intention toward truth-telling reconciliation. Please center yourself in this context...and in the following words from the Port Gamble S'Klallam and Suquamish Tribes.

PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE
...the Port Gamble S'Klallam and the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribes, of the Point No Point Treaty Area, recognize the responsibility and need to protect and advance the treaty reserved hunting, fishing and gathering rights of [their] Tribes.

[The Port Gamble S'Klallam and the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribes] further recognize that [their] inherent traditional and cultural rights constitute vital and irreplaceable resources for [their] future. These resources are essential for the social, cultural and economic self-sufficiency and well-being of [their] Tribal communities.

[The Port Gamble S'Klallam and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribes] believe that in unity and mutual respect [they] can best accomplish [their] community goals, not only for the benefit of Indian people, but for all people.

dxwsəq'wəb
PLACE OF THE CLEAN SUN, KISSUM
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

"Every part of this soil is sacred to the estimation of my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some soil or happy event in days long vanished."

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is within the ancestral territory of the suq'wəb' (People of Clear Self-Interest) (Suquamish People). Expert fishermen, canoe builders and basket weavers, the suq'wəb' live in harmony with the lands and waters along Washington's Central Salish Sea as they have for thousands of years. Here, the suq'wəb' live and protect the land and waters of their ancestors for future generations as promised by the Point Elliot Treaty of 1855.

SUQUAMISH TRIBE

KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

People's Acknowledgement

506 MMIWG cases were identified across 71 selected urban cities

128 were cases of missing indigenous women

280 were cases of murdered indigenous women

98 were cases with an "unknown status"

29 The median age of MMIWG victims

• May 5th is the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

2. Discussed vision and mission statements, and norms. First, Jessica shared the survey results for the proposed Vision Statements and the edits to the **vision statement** with the most votes:

Vision Statements – Survey Results

1. All people in Kitsap County are safe and healthy, especially those with lived experiences with disproportionate harms and risks. (0)
2. All people in Kitsap County are safe and healthy, especially communities most impacted by systemic inequities, including racism. (8)
3. Everyone in Kitsap County can attain good health and be safe and no one is disadvantaged in achieving these outcomes because of social position or other socially, economically, demographically, or geographically defined circumstances or conditions. (9)

Proposed Edit

Current: Everyone in Kitsap County can attain good health and be safe and no one is disadvantaged in achieving these outcomes because of social position or other socially, economically, demographically, or geographically defined circumstances or conditions.

Edited: Everyone in Kitsap County can attain good health and be safe and no one is disadvantaged in achieving these outcomes.

Although the third vision statement had the most votes, the 2nd statement only had one vote less and a discussion was held about rephrasing the vision statement and whether to include the word racism in the vision statement. Some stated that the word racism might push some people away from the collaborative's work, while others stated that the collaborative was birthed from Resolution 2021-01 declaring racism a public health crisis and the term should be part of the vision statement. Doing the latter would also be more transparent about the collaborative's vision. In the end, the following **revised vision statement** received the most approval:

Everyone in Kitsap County can achieve their optimal health and safety, and no one is disadvantaged in achieving these outcomes because of systemic inequities or systems of oppression, including racism.

It was agreed that this and other options would be provided in future collaborative communication and that time for additional discussion about the collaborative's vision statement would be incorporated into the next collaborative meeting.

Jessica presented the survey results for the **mission statement**, showing that the third mission statement received the most votes:

Mission Statement – Survey Results

1. Promoting health equity for all people in Kitsap County by collectively learning, sharing information, building relationships, amplifying community voices, and addressing systemic inequities. (5)
2. Together, we advance health equity by promoting proequity policies and amplifying the voices, experiences, and solutions of communities most affected by systemic racism. (3)
3. The Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative convenes governmental and community organizations to identify and implement shared solutions and collective actions that address systemic inequities and advance health equity. (8)

Members shared that the use of “governmental and community organizations” excluded community leaders/members and it was agreed to take this part out of the mission statement. It was also proposed to combine the 3rd and 2nd statement as follows:

The Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative convenes to identify and implement shared solutions and collective actions by promoting pro equity policies and amplifying the

voices, experiences and solutions proposed by communities most affected by systemic racism.

At the end of the discussion, it was agreed that the mission statement is more of a work in progress and the following **two introductions to the revised mission statement** received the most approval with an understanding that the last part of the mission statement might need additional work:



The Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative convenes interested parties to amplify the lived experiences and promote solutions to ...

AND

The Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative convenes to amplify the voices, lived experiences and solutions proposed by communities most affected by systemic racism to...

It was agreed that these mission statement introductions and other options would be provided in future collaborative communication and that time for additional discussion about the collaborative's mission statement would be incorporated into the next collaborative meeting.

Jessica then presented the Collaborative Norms and shared that 89% of respondents said “yes” when asked if the provided norms reflect how they think we should act as a collaborative:

Norms	Norms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect – We will use respectful and inclusive language to honor different lived experiences and perspectives, recognize individual biases and systems/ structures of oppression, assume good intent and distinguish that intent doesn't negate impact, and keep sensitive information shared at meetings confidential.• Inclusion and Open-mindedness – We will honor the contributions of all members and seek and value every person's input by ensuring everyone has a chance to comment and by being open to different and opposing perspectives and opinions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consensus – We understand consensus as the decision making process and that disagreement or differing opinions are part of the process, and while majority vote will determine next steps, there will be times that some members feel a sense of non-closure.
	

She then shared the edit suggested for the third norm, consensus:

Norms (cont'd)

- Suggestions (continued on next slide):
 - Consensus – We understand consensus **is desired** as the decision-making process and that ~~disagreement~~ or differing opinions are part of the process, and while majority vote will determine next steps, ~~there will be times that some members feel a sense of non-closure.~~ **those majority decisions will be honored by members with respect, inclusion, and open-mindedness.**

Members did not have changes for the first two norms. The **edited version of consensus** was the most agreed upon and the following edited version received the most approval:

Consensus – We understand consensus is desired as the decision-making process and that differing opinions are part of the process, and while majority vote will determine next steps, the opinions of those in the minority will be honored by members with respect, inclusion, and open-mindedness.

3. Jessica provided the survey results for the top 3 priority barriers to good health:

Top 3 Priority Barriers to Good Health

- The barrier most selected for #1 priority:
 - **affordable housing** (7)
- The next highest selections for #1 were:
 - **accessible mental health services** (6)
 - **accessible medical care** (3)

Before breaking out into groups to discuss the top priority, **affordable housing**, a suggestion was made to change “good health” to “health goals” and this suggestion received approval by most in attendance.

The following two questions were discussed and answered in groups by table for those in attendance and those on zoom all participated as one group:

1. What can the Collaborative do to address barrier (affordable housing), based on the resources, knowledge, skills, experience, and relationships the Collaborative currently has?

- a. Propose/Advocate/Support legislation regarding: rent control; limiting restrictions on ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit); limiting use of dwellings rented out through Airbnb's, since this limits housing available for Kitsap Residents; increasing rental assistance until more affordable housing is built; supporting bond proposals by elected officials; and supporting affordable housing trusts.
 - b. Increase understanding of roots of homelessness, such as mental health and lack of health care; the need for living wage jobs to prevent loss of income or insufficient income to pay for housing; domestic violence situations that result in shelter or couch surfing because wait lists for housing are a barrier; and danger for homeless youth who after they can't couch surf anymore end up on the streets which can lead to them getting trafficked.
 - c. Promote awareness of affordable housing issues and build community that is culturally responsive (language accessible), trauma informed, people oriented (know protective factors to understand the "why"), meet people where they are, and promote compassion within "housing" programs staff.
 - d. Break down barriers between organizations addressing affordable housing so that they can better address gaps / disparities and provide wrap around services, for education, training/jobs, childcare, or other services.
 - e. One group proposed a tiered approach as follows:
 - i. First, speak to people with lived experience and advocate for them at collaborative meetings.
 - ii. Then, ask that: *mental health providers* help people understand how to best advocate for their own needs (self-advocacy); *social workers and community health workers* help people advocate and navigate the systems to meet housing needs until person is able to advocate for themselves; *housing authorities' leaders* to clearly announce rules and regulations and anticipate trends to identify opportunities to shift policies and practices (they know when there might be a higher need for rental assistance, help with light bill, section 8, DSHS assistance; *government leaders* to monitor regulation opportunities around affordable housing so land developers can prioritize economic development with tax credits that put "people over profit" (an example shared was that as a refugee, Sheelan, survived based on charity of community); and *business owners* to give jobs that pay enough to afford basic needs, such as housing.
 - iii. Finally, approach systems change to provide wrap around services to help people transition from one stage to another.
 - f. The following were identified in the notes but are not things the collaborative can do: provide Housing, partner with other organizations to get people into housing, provide property and case management, ensure health needs are addressed so individuals get out of survivor mode, and dismantle barriers related to housing.
2. Who else is working on this issue (affordable housing), who do we need to hear from to gain a greater understanding of available local resources, and/or what other data do we need to move forward?

The following resources/service provider (organizations) were identified as already working on this issue:

Affordable housing 1/10th of 1% tax
Area Churches
Cities in Kitsap (Bremerton, Poulsbo, Port Orchard)
Coffee Oasis
Cold weather shelters
Department of Community Development
Georgia's House
Elected officials for clarification on proposals they have for affordable housing

- Tiny Houses option – Are elected officials aware of this opportunity? This is something they should want people to do in their backyards.

Helpline Bainbridge
Foundation for Homeless & Poverty Management
Housing Authority (Bremerton & Housing Kitsap)
Housing Resources Bainbridge
Increased federal and state funding for affordable housing.
Kitsap Community Resources (KCR) provides:

- Rent assistance.
- Eviction prevention
- One-year transitional housing program
- Area of opportunity for KCR: Outreach

KCAHTF (Kitsap County Affordable Housing Task Force)
KIAC (Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center)
KMHS (Kitsap Mental Health Services)
Landlords
Legislation: Proposed legislation for rent control.
McKinney Vento Act
Salvation Army

The following were identified as people or organizations the collaborative members need to hear from to gain a greater understanding of available local resources: Know what is currently happening in Kitsap County by reaching out to Kitsap County, including politicians and elected officials, Kitsap County Affordable Housing Task Force (KCAHTF), Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Coalition (KCHHC), capture more community voices, reach out to similar communities to see what they are doing, and provide opportunity for rapid networking between/or spotlighting of collaborative members to know what assets collaborative members bring.

The following other data was identified as being needed to move forward:

Information on overcrowded housing, unmet need for section 8 housing (Epi), break down data further by race, region, etc.

4. It was agreed that the July Collaborative meeting will include a potluck and more time for relationship building. There was insufficient time to address the other top two barriers or to agree on 2023 timeline. These, along with further discussion about vision statement, mission statement and agreements will be held at future meetings.
5. Shared information on current or upcoming events, initiatives, or accomplishments related to health equity:

Akueya Karen Vargas shared that Juneteenth is scheduled for June 17th from 11 am to 4pm at Evergreen Park, Suquamish museum will be celebrating its [40th anniversary](#) on Saturday, June 3rd from 11am to 3pm, BIMA will host [Indigenous Strength and Wellness](#) on June 3rd from 1pm to 3pm and a protest regarding racism at NKSD will be happening on Thursday, May 18th at 4:30pm.

Anke Smith shared that Adult & Teen Challenge, a 12–18-month residential program to disrupt addiction with over 200 centers nationwide is looking at coming to Kitsap County.

Siri Kushner shared that there will be an open house at KIAC this Thursday from 5-7pm.

Martitha May shared that [Mama Moves](#), a post-partum group incorporating mindfulness and movement in the form of guided walks, meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays at rotating parks throughout the spring/summer. She also offered to come to organizations to talk about KPHD's Nurse Family Partnership.

Stephanie Christensen shared that a cancer imaging event will be happening this weekend to provide financial assistance for mammograms.

Erica Whares shared that a Mental Health (Suicide) Awareness event in Port Orchard is being held on May 20th from 1-3pm and Jessica shared that a community connections conversation on youth mental health and substance use prevention is happening tonight in the Norm Dicks' Chambers room from 5pm to 7pm.

Victoria Hilt shared that Kitsap Strong will host a [Youth Convening](#) at the Marvin Williams Center on June 13th from 4pm-6pm.

Miranda Burger shared that OCH is convening regional care coordinators on June 7th to bring together the regional health and human services workforce that connects people with resources they need to lead healthy lives, and to empower a larger community of care. You can register [here](#).

Javier 'Spanky' Silva shared that L.O.C.O.S. nonprofit provided a therapeutic art at Washington Youth Challenge Academy and is collaborating with other Kitsap organizations interested in aligning inclusion efforts that are culturally responsive. His partnership with LensCrafters will provide free glasses later this year. He is also working with City of Poulsbo

to foster their relationship with the Latino community living in the Mobile Home Community at 1800 Lincoln.

Dr. Marsha Cutting shared that a ride the Clear Creek Trail guided outing event is scheduled for Saturday, July 22nd by Kitsap County's Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (KCACAC) from 2-4pm where people who use wheelchairs or are sight impaired can explore the Clear Creek trails. The gathering place is the parking lot at the skateboard park.

Participant Compensation

Kitsap Public Health District (KPHD) offers Visa gift cards to compensate Collaborative participants who are not already being paid for their time. Please note that the general Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rule is that any gift is taxable, including gift cards. KPHD does not provide tax advice. Please consult with your tax professional regarding reporting requirements for the receipt of gift cards.