

Carolyn Edmonds, *Board of Health Chair*

BOH Members:

Richard Conlin
Dow Constantine
George W. Counts
Jan Drago
Carolyn Edmonds
Ava Frisinger
Larry Gossett
David Hutchinson
David Irons
Kathy Lambert
Frank T. Manning
Bud Nicola
Margaret Pageler
Alonzo Plough

BOH Staff:

Maggie Moran

**KING COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

**May 17, 2002
Seattle City Council Chambers**

Roll call

- Dow Constantine
- Carolyn Edmonds
- Ava Frisinger
- Larry Gossett
- David Hutchinson
- David Irons
- Kathy Lambert
- Margaret Pageler
- Kent Pullen
- Alvin Thompson
- Karen VanDusen

Members absent: Richard Conlin, Jan Drago, Joseph Pizzorno

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Board Chair, Carolyn Edmonds.

Announcement of Alternates

No alternates in attendance.

Approval of April 19, 2002 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of April 19, 2002. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

General Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Chair's Report - Carolyn Edmonds

A. Eastern Division Board Meeting - Washington Association of Counties

Chair Edmonds advocated that public health funding be identified as a priority item for the '03 Legislative Session. Chair Edmonds indicated that there was not a groundswell of support and attributes this to the hesitation of the WSAC Board to separate public health funding from other county funding.

B. Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials [WSALPHO]:

Chair Edmonds attended the WSALPHO Legislative Steering Committee meeting in Olympia. Two topics of conversation dominated the discussion - the food service bill and public health funding. Chair Edmonds commented that tension exists due to the fact that public health funding is in the General Fund and Legislators for the most part probably feel that cutting public health funding is not something that they want to do. For local health departments there is the insecurity of not knowing what will actually happen up until the budget is signed by the Governor. Planning and capacity building is difficult under those scenarios. Chair Edmonds stated that WSALPHO intends to take a two-pronged approach in the next session---focus on assuring funding through the existing budget and a focus on seeking a long term solution to secure more stable funding through a dedicated revenue source.

C. Meeting with Mary Selecky, Secretary, State Department of Health

Chair Edmonds summarized a meeting she and Dr. Plough held with Secretary Selecky and John Pennington the new FEMA Director for Region X. Focus of meeting was on opportunities to engage first responders in discussion and planning for disasters. Message conveyed to Mr. Pennington, by Chair Edmonds and Dr. Plough was that public health should be considered a first responder and that planning efforts needed to be integrated from the federal agency down through to state agencies.

D. State Board of Health meeting

Chair Edmonds provided opening remarks to the State Board of Health at their May meeting held in Shoreline at the State Public Health Lab. Chair Edmonds commented that the King County Board of Health had a member on the State Board of Health ---- Board Member Margaret Pageler. Chair Edmonds stated that she had invited the State Board to consider a joint meeting with the King County Board of Health. She noted that the Board's respective staffs would be coordinating the scheduling of the joint meeting in December to coincide with the State Legislative conference held in SeaTac.

Board Member Pageler provided a brief overview of the State Board's deliberations on childhood immunizations and the concern relative to the shortage of DPT vaccine. It is anticipated that the State Board may have to write a waiver for school entry, in light of the shortage. Board Member Pageler also summarized the State Board's work related to newborn screening.

E. Board Meeting Evaluations

Chair Edmonds raised the issue of whether or not to dispense with the formal evaluation given the few responses each month. The decision was made to dispense with the written evaluation. Chair Edmonds called upon each Board Member to communicate directly with her relative to meeting process, agenda, and areas of interest.

F. **Budget Workshop [item not on published agenda]**

Chair Edmonds announced that a budget workshop was being planned for the Board of Health - date and time to be announced.

Director's Report - Alonzo Plough

A. **King County Health Action Plan - Community Benefits Program**

Susan Johnson and Susan Thompson of the King County Health Action Plan provided a brief update on the achievements of the Community Benefits Program. Eight programs are currently under the umbrella of the Action Plan. The following people were recognized for their participation and their institution's commitment to the Program:

Susanne Hartung SP, VP, Mission, Ethics, Community Relations, Swedish Health Services

Suzanne Petersen, Director of Community Government Affairs and Advocacy
Children's Hospital and Medical Center
Cindy Davis, Manager of Care Management, Virginia Mason Medical Center

Susan Somers, VP of Medical Management, First Choice Health Network

Kris Hildebrandt, Director, Grants and Community Programs, Group Health Community Foundation

Ann Pearce, Community Relations Specialist, Premera Blue Cross

Melicent A. Whinston, Medical Director and Chief Medical Officer, Community Health Plan of Washington

Chad Richardson, Quality Improvement Coordinator, PacifiCare of Washington

B. **King County Health Action Plan - Kids Get Care Program**

Susan Johnson, Director of the King County Health Action Plan and her colleague Lisa Podell [KCHAP-Kids Get Care coordinator], Anne Shields [Associate Director of Community Health Centers of King County] and Greg Vigdor [President and CEO of Washington Health Foundation] provided a briefing on the Kids Get Care program.

Ms. Johnson noted that the characteristics of the Kids Get Care project includes a focus on adequate services and early preventive care interventions; where the mouth and the mind are joined to the body; and kids from 0 to 5 receive holistic treatment and coverage in order to arrive at school ready to learn. Mr. Vidgor described the discussions leading up to the evolution of the Kids Get Care concept and funding. Ms. Podell provided an overview of the program including the services provided, the location of hub sites, the training of staff in oral and developmental screens, and the outreach undertaken to connect children with a health care home. Ms. Shields provided specific examples of how the program has been implemented at each of the three sites.

Discussion: Board Members discussed the effect that reported vaccine shortages would have on the projections of children with incomplete immunizations and the dynamics at play in the pharmaceutical industry that contribute to said shortages.

Board Member Lambert asked for additional information on vision and hearing screening to which Ms. Shields indicated that vision and hearing examinations were part of the standard approach to well child care.

Board Member Thompson inquired as to whether any analysis had been done regarding the reasons for the inordinate number of African-American children in foster care. Dr. Plough responded that the review of data on children in foster care suggested that it was an entry point to understanding high-risk kids and families. He noted one figure that indicated that 70% of the kids in Washington State in foster care were there because of their parent's drug and alcohol problems, and the inability for the parent to secure access to drug and alcohol treatment.

C. Emergency Preparedness Update

Dr. Plough noted that the Department received the initial installment of funding from the State. He stated that they expected to receive the balance of the allocation in another couple of months pending the final approval of the State plan by the Federal government. He added that they were working with City and County officials to coordinate efforts related to bioterrorism, with overall emergency preparedness efforts.

Public Hearing - OSS Fee Package

A. Briefing on OSS Fee Package

Barbara Wright [Manager of Community Environmental Health Section], Ellen Marson [Operations and Maintenance Program Coordinator] and Mark Allen [Senior EH specialist in the Waste Water Program] provided an overview of the relevant WAC [Washington Administrative Code] and the required elements of the operations and maintenance program including the development and distribution of educational material and periodic monitoring of onsite sewage systems. Ms. Wright updated the Board on progress made to date in bringing the OSS program into compliance. She noted that to date the following had been undertaken:

- a. development of a "Notice on Title" element that requires a property with an onsite systems to have a notarized statement by the new owner acknowledging that an OSS system is on the property and an acknowledgement of their responsibilities to maintain said system.
- b. implemented certification program for maintainers,
- c. published three brochures,
- d. purchased and installed a scanning system to help collect and interpret data,
- e. researched programs throughout the region and other parts of the country and,
- f. started the program organization to develop goals and identify funding for this unfunded mandate.

Ms. Wright described community meetings that were held and the findings derived from the community input process. An overview of revenue and expense projections for the program were outlined and discussed. Ms. Wright outlined the steps to fully implement the program pending the Board's passage of the amended regulations. These steps include: notification of the industry - designers, installers, and realtors---
-implement ongoing public education campaign with brochures, general press information, newsletters, public meetings and direct mailings; two fees charged, collected and transferred to the County; and the collection of new owner name and address with information about their on site system.

Ms Wright concluded the briefing by stating that staff, with community input, had designed a fee structure that charged those who would derive benefit from the program.

General Public Comments

[Verbatim transcript follows. Blanks in the testimonies below indicate that the recording device was unable to pick up inaudible words.]

Peter Primeau:

I will keep my comment to three minutes. I had a couple of questions for the Board. In December 31, 1999, the King County Health doubled all permit fees - \$100 fees went to \$200; \$200 fees went to \$400. I'd kind of like to ask what's happened to that money? That's a lot of money. The last public meeting we discussed these \$40 fees and I get this green letter in the mail that we're raising, severely raising many of the other fees. And _____ maybe just a little _____ almost _____ people that are on, in the onsite systems. One example of these new fees that really gets to me is the fact if the Health Department for some reason or another calls you in to explain what you're doing or complains about the work you have done on your license and basically the license people are going to want _____ control and they don't bother people that aren't licensed. But my understanding is not enough money in prosecuting people who are doing jobs without permits. But it's a \$150 fee if he gets called in to explain itself. I think it's kind of outrageous.

Also, each one of these little forms that _____ just passed out, that hasn't been added into the fees up there. It's a \$10 charge for each one of those forms when we send it in for _____. We have friends who were talking about having what they call the \$10 for the customer, but or some of my customers have refused to pay that fee. And what do you do? What do I do? _____, I just don't care to pay for it _____. Also we're required to inspect _____, am coming through okay?

We're required to inspect _____ treatment units every three months, four times a year. National Sanitation Foundation says twice a year is adequate. King County Health and Eastgate has apparently on their own decided that they need more inspections. Kind of reinventing the wheel. I respectfully would like to talk to really look at these fees. I think that most of them are deserving. We need to do _____, it's very important I feel, but I don't think we need to go at it this hard and this expensive for the public.

And the other thing, you talk about pamphlets to the public. Frankly, I've got a _____ pamphlets that I'm sending out to my customers. They're wrong. There's one severe mistake in them that we, and I got a letter from Ellen that says, "Well, cross those out." Am I _____? So now we have thousands and thousands of pamphlets in King County Health stock that they're wrong. So, and we're being told, "Oh no, there's too many of them, we can't throw those away." I feel that the staff they're going to do the people on the job, that the people that are working in the industry and help make these out, we wouldn't be in this fix right now. But right now my _____ through with the _____. Okay. I guess that's about all I got. I've been in the industry for 45 years and I'm concerned _____. Thank you very much for time.

Dave Lowe:

Good after, good morning still. My name is Dave Lowe. I live at 20011 - 75th Avenue N.E. in Kenmore. I come today to speak in favor of the two fee increases - the one

for the title transfer of \$40 and increase of \$40 installation permit fee. I speak here today with several hats on. One as a homeowner within King County that is serviced by an onsite sewage system. I'm also a State licensed designer. I am also a dealer for a proprietary system. Operations and maintenance of onsite sewage systems provides a number of benefits. One that we pretty much concentrated here is public health. I'd like to just real briefly mention another benefit, and that is, over the last, if you look at various codes in the last 10 to 15 years, we have been able to through technological advancements being able to develop properties where in the past we have not been able to. And we have been able to do this at the same time protecting public health. One of the key components of being able to implement new technology is just to insure that operation and maintenance can be done on the systems. Once we know the known level of treatment we can make and guarantee or at least with a known level of assurity that systems will continue to function in the future. We can't sustain continued growth in areas where soils were marginal in the past as well as maintain public health. Those are my comments for this morning.

Randy Bannecker:

Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Board. My name is Randy Bannecker. I'm representing the Seattle/King County Association of Realtors, 12015 - 15th N.E. in Kirkland, 98034. We certainly recognize the need to comply with the State law and support system safety. As the gentleman just mentioned, we're also very supportive of new systems, new technologies which enable properties to be developed that hadn't been able to be developed before. I wanted to thank Barbara Wright and her staff for taking the time to help educate us about this issue, and also explore alternatives. We certainly look forward to options like classes, things like that. And we see ourselves as a resource to disseminate the information for buyers and all these OSS. I'm here because our members are extremely uncomfortable at the \$40 fee at the time of transaction. We believe this is a very difficult time to pay one more fee. It's tough enough already to buy a home in King County. While \$40 isn't going to break any deals, it's more the notion that it's one more fee. Even for buyers with excellent credit, people who are getting zero down, no points, no loan fees. Cash to close is still a tremendous issue. You're paying title insurance, flood certification, home inspection, credit reports, escrow closing charges, recording fee, reserves, etc. It's tough, it's a tough time to pay anything else out-of-pocket. For people with poorer credit, it's all the tougher. I ask you not so much as Board of Health members, but in your roles as Councilmembers looking at the bigger picture. King County, this metro area is the second worst on a national insurance homeownership rates. And that's something that is extremely important to us and of tremendous concern to us. And the _____ is that home prices have been rising faster than personal incomes making it, making that transaction tougher, we don't think it's in the community's best interest. And I just for you to consider that as you debate this issue. Thank you.

Richard Ludwig:

Most of you know me. Richard Ludwig, 23422 S.E. 158th in Issaquah. And I've _____ most of you many, many times. I might have a surprise for you today Dr. Plough. We have had a meeting here, I think it was last month, with Barbara over on the Eastside. And I'll have to say this, it's hard to say. We're not opposed to this fee. _____. But we take that very reluctantly, as we are generally opposed to fees as a substitute for things that should be coming out of the general fund like Public Health. While we more or less accept this particular fee as more appropriate than some of the proposals that have been made earlier, we still are waiting, still waiting two years, from 1999 until 2002, for that review we were promised on all of these fees.

And we were promised again earlier this year that there'd be a full review of OSS and these fees that this gentleman spoke about. Instead of getting review we kept getting new statements out with lines crossed out and fees increased. We object to that strenuously and I respectfully hope that this Board will see that we get that review and get it promptly. In closing my remarks, I'd like to thank Barbara for her efforts on this particular issue. And she is a credit to you Department, Dr. Plough. And I hope that this statement of my behalf does not put an albatross around her neck. And we do look forward to working with the Department, with Barbara, particularly more than this \$40 fee, it's all of those fees and all the restrictions that are in there that we were promised two years ago. I'm also thankful to Barbara for helping us resolve a problem on the Small Well Owners Association recently, and where were able to avoid a systems evaluation _____. Again, thank you very much, Barbara, and I hope you continue on the job if they don't shove you somewhere else.

Pam Otteson:

My name is Pam Otteson. I live at 1408 S. 372nd Street, Federal Way. I am in favor of maintenance and monitoring. I think it's very important. I think this will be a fair fee that is assessed to buyer, which is going to be the one owning the system at the time of the sale. I think that's wonderful. I have talked with several other people within the industry and collected some data from, unscientific data. About 80% of the systems in our estimation in this County are now _____. A lot of what we're talking about here with the O&M program doesn't really _____, and they're paying the fee as well. And I think it's important that this money be spent properly to benefit of all the septic system owners, not just the owners that have the _____ for someone else. I also would really like to have the brochures be educational versus rule oriented. What do you do and what don't you do? And why do you do it and why don't you do it? Not this is what you have to do _____ our rules. I'd also like to address an error, which may or may not have circulated around. In the brochures it indicates, does not say a pumper and evaluates the gravity system every three years, which they _____, and that's the glaring error that costs us I'm told _____ business, and it needs to be corrected now. And I would also like to say Barbara's wonderful. She's a breath of fresh air in the Health Department and I called one day because I couldn't get somebody else to call me back, so I called her and got her voice mail, it was a quarter to five. And before 5 o'clock I had a call back. And I didn't expect that and I just _____. Thank you very much.

Jim Stormo:

I'm Jim Stormo from Issaquah, 9227 - 240th Avenue S.E. outside of Issaquah. And I want to address the folks and congratulate the Chair on thinking about the budget now, as I really want to address this business about fee. Fees and the WAC versus the RCW, I agree. It doesn't matter who you elect down there _____ and what your point of view is. The basis summary of fees is that it has a specific thing and it can only be for that cost. It cannot run a program because the program is for all, and you can't have individuals paying for all. So that's the basic summary of the fee system. Don't get carried away with it. I'm educated to the fact that you won't have the general fund next year. Well, _____ general has to step in on that then because you're going against not only the RCW but the WAC. And I can cite them for you if you want. The other thing that we in 1998, Small Well Owners Association, the body out there who looks after wells, was _____ King County Council to look into Title 13 with OSS system and you gave a great deal of _____ and input into it. We, in addition to the real estate problems we have, we estimate \$20,000 to \$40,000 is added to a house from the rules that come out of this body. And you can

go to Spokane and look at their reduction of their rules and how much they save the homeowners. The homeowner not only puts in the septic system but pays taxes for operation of the community sewers. And the idea that we got 200 _____, I've lived there 40 years, I have a Bradley system, and about 20 years ago I had some problem and I opened it up and I had another line that was never used and I hooked it up. The idea of having it inspected every three years is ludicrous. But the failures of the sewer system throughout the County probably outweighs the 200 more times than that per capita. I mean, the relationship is not there. So we're not only paying to install the thing, but we have to pay for the general sewer system. The idea of, well, let's see, what else I got. I think that really covers it. The idea of these increases in the septic systems I must tell from our observation in the County rural area there's a lot more septic systems than you guys know about. And the County doesn't have any control over it. I mean, some of the people out there in the outback want to shoot your head off if you're going on their property. This is the real world and we work with these people trying to calm them down and trying to get them in compliance with the rules that you're putting out, but it's a different world than downtown Seattle. Thank you very much.

J.R. Inman:

Good morning, I'm J.R. Inman. I'm with Northwest Cascade, P.O. Box 72399, that's in Puyallup. Really what I'm doing here is we are a certified installer, maintenance and pumping company. And I've been involved since, Board meetings here, and back in November I guess the _____ when the fee originally came out and was very opposed to how the fee was going to be, to appear to happen. The group over on the Eastside, Barbara and her group have done a pretty good job, or actually a great job _____ everyone whose _____ in the situation. And ultimately as an installing group we're opposing to any great fee increase because it causes _____. But the reality is, is you have to support programs. And probably the way that this fee is set up is at least gives it the right points or people or places so that the program that is necessary is mandated and be funded to operation. If everybody walks away from the table feeling like they got a little bit, probably it's the right thing to do. And in this particular case that's kind of how _____. I do support it because the program does need to happen and I think they've done a great job facilitating, getting that done. One of the things that I would encourage now that we have gotten _____ and I've gotten some great questions asked by some of the Board here today in regards to the forms and the way that the system's laid out and how the program could happen. It is definitely a comprehensive program. Potentially a costly program in some cases to some homeowners that may not be necessary. It can probably accomplish the same thing and similar things by looking at how we implement the program. And I'm not suggesting stop and don't do anything. I think you go forward but would encourage the same format that Barbara and her group have used in the last five or six months, eight months. That they continue that every few months, quarterly, whatever basis and review with industry, manufacturers, community, etc. Is what we're doing the right thing, Are we really getting the information we want? What is this information? If you look on some of those forms I've filled out a lot of operation and maintenance and I've done a lot of maintenance on systems personally. That form will about wear me out. I think there's great information on it but you got to pat attention to what is the information good for, at least at the County level. It's private information in most cases so does the County really need it _____. Yes the job's been done and there's people that are certified out there doing the job. I thank you for your time. I would encourage you to go forward and get this fee passed, be done and move on.

Ted Cowan:

My name's Ted Cowan, 14222 Hobart Road, Issaquah, former neighbor of a _____. Anyway, you know, good septic systems are great. If they work, fine. It's no concern of any of us because they're doing what they're supposed to do. And I think they do better than a sewer because it'll take our ground water and run it out to Puget Sound, they recharge your aquifers, and that's great. But you concern and our concern is failing septic systems. Well, the tanks if they're not working right, a pumper can come out and clean them out and replace the _____ if necessary, and then the tank is great again for another, well, I think five years at least. But that doesn't do anything for the drain field. Now if a drain field doesn't work, the whole septic system doesn't work, well, until it filled up the first time. We don't, in the first place, you don't have a recommended system of inspection of a drain field other than does somebody drive over and break the tile and is it surfacing? Well, of course that's obvious. But many mortgage companies want a systems check of the drain field or the septic system. Well, if it isn't, if they can't smell something and it's not, there isn't excess growth over where the drain tile would be, they say, "Yeah, it's probably okay." Well, a windshield inspection really isn't an inspection. Now education is of course seems to me to be the only answer. Maybe there's other answers, but I think it should be looked at further. The Department has recently published brochures concerning septic systems, and that's fine. The only thing is they also refer to them as onsite sewer systems, and I suppose technically they are, but that puts the word "sewer" in there. Now we have a lot of people that have moved from the city out to the country and to them a sewer system is a hole in the drain where they can dump anything. If you read some, well, cans of antifreeze, they say when you drain your antifreeze, they say you're supposed to do it every two years, don't let the animals drink it because it's poison, dump it down the sewer. Well, they don't say don't use onsite sewer, they just say sewer. And it suggested you clean out your brushes on water-based paint, _____ run it down the sewer. Well, that sort of thing is pretty hard on a drain field. If it gets into the drain field, it's likely to seal it and if it seals, it's not working right. It's not disposing of the water and letting it get down to our aquifers. So I would suggest that maybe you contact some of the people that have repaired drain fields, you've got a number of them. What caused them to fail and what could they do, what could the homeowner do not to let that happen again? You allow garbage disposals, but I'm not sure the ground up bones are good for a drain field or a septic system. But they say you don't put chicken bones down there, that's fine. I would, I question the allowance of garbage disposals on a septic system. It seems to me that's an additional burden that it doesn't need to be there.

Terry Hull:

Chairman Edmonds, members of the Board. My name is Terry Hull. My address is 2249 _____ Road N.W. in Olympia. I am the onsite sewage program lead for the Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of increased funding for your onsite sewage program. I also thank you for the opportunity just to be here and listen today as a long time local Public Health employee sitting on that side of the table. It's really nice to be on this side of the table I guess. I know you fight some rough battles.

Just in background, the Action Team serves 12 counties as watersheds or tributary to Puget Sound, and our mission is to help governments and citizens to protect and restore water quality, biological health and put diversity in Puget Sound. We produce the Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan and support action to implement it. We recently published this document called "Puget Sound's Health 2002." I come

here today to applaud you for taking action to get owners more involved in the maintenance of their onsite sewage systems. And also to encourage you to provide the financial resources necessary for the staff in Public Health to get the job done. Public Health's operation and maintenance program provides essential public health information to owners and helps achieve an important element in the Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan.

As Barbara Wright mentioned earlier, Chapter 246.272 of the Washington Administrative Code adopted in 1995 established the requirement for local health jurisdictions to undertake non-_____ system performance and provide operation and maintenance information to owners. This requirement reflected foresight at that time, now enhanced monitoring and education is proposed for Public Health is even more important for two reasons. The 1997 report to Congress by the U.S.E.P.A. documented a paradigm shift in thinking about onsite sewage systems. It ended the idea that onsites are temporary devices to be used only until centralized sewage facilities are expanded along with the practice of limiting regulation to just construction and use _____. Onsite sewage systems are now seen as potentially being long-term components of community infrastructure. Secondly, during the last decade advances in technology, some of which has been talked about here today, brought to the market a variety of component devices designed to improve system performance. That process is continuing and many of these projects are highly effective, but only when they're given periodic maintenance. It wasn't the case with an onsite gravity-type systems.

These two developments in functional concept and in equipment mean that henceforth onsite sewage systems must be managed, not just regulated. And in a management system that will likely need to be a public-private partnership, owners must better understand both the importance of these systems that helps protect community infrastructure, and also just how they work. On the public side, management as opposed to regulation, will involve strengthening and adding program elements. Surveys and monitoring, data processing, evaluation, planning and system support are areas that will see more activity and that's what _____'s proposal is headed for. The proposal before you will allow Public Health to take a firmer step in this direction is a needed and valuable step. In many settings onsite sewage systems are going to prove to be a cost-effective and environmentally superior alternative to onsite sewage as one of the speakers mentioned. Funding Public Health's operation and maintenance program through the proposed fees is a community investment in preserving existing infrastructure and insuring that new infrastructure is properly maintained. It is a good approach for Public Health and it is a good way to protect Puget Sound's water quality. We support it _____. Thanks.

Dave Monthie:

Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Board. I'm Dave Monthie with King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks. I prepared some written comments, although I haven't run through them, and then I have some copies that I thought I'd leave with you in case you want to take a look at them.

I'm here today speaking on behalf of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, which was designated by the County Council last fall as the lead agency for the County's newfound groundwater protection program that the Council adopted by ordinance. As the lead agency we're charged with developing and strengthening cooperative relationships with other agencies including Public

Health in order to have a comprehensive and adequately funded groundwater protection program for the people in this County. We strongly support the Department of Public Health's plans to have a strong onsite septic operation and maintenance program for the benefit of King County citizens and for an adequate funding base for such a program as an important element of our comprehensive groundwater program. Assuring that onsite septic systems in King County are properly designed, installed and maintained is important both for protecting public health for people in the County and for insuring that the County's natural resources and environment are protected for the benefit of fish, wildlife and their habitat as well.

The environmental connection is relatively simple but often forgotten. Discharge from onsite septic systems becomes groundwater, groundwater almost always becomes stream flow, and stream flow ultimately needs to be protected in both quantity and quality. The County also has many areas of special concerns such as shellfish growing areas, sole source aquifers, critical for recharge areas, for groundwater sources of drinking water, wellhead protection, natural swimming areas, wetlands and the like, where special attention must be paid for _____ to help and the environment from improperly operating onsite systems. The public recognizes that proper operation of onsite systems is a topic that must be a priority for local government. For example, all four groundwater management plans that have been adopted for four specific groundwater management areas in this County identify concerns about septic systems, particularly high levels of nitrates produced from them, as a focus of attention for each of those areas. The one Groundwater Protection Committee we have up and running, the one on Vashon Island, has specifically asked that Public Health to have come and make a presentation to them on the public health impacts from failing systems. _____ the presentation that Ellen Marson provided which _____.

Because of reductions of various funding sources local governments including King County have had to become both efficient in their use of funding and creatively carrying out their responsibilities. I think that's been true of our work so far with Public Health. Give me one more minute. For example, Barbara mentioned to you the grant from King County D&R that helped provide it some interim funding for the OSS program. As a result of that, we've been able to help develop a County-wide database for OSS systems that helped us for regional wastewater planning. In addition, over the past six months we've worked with them to discuss various _____ concerns like OSS, _____ hazardous waste, and have brought in State agencies as well in both discussions. Having a strong program will allow us to link with the Groundwater Protection Program in several areas such as data correction and management, public education and investigations to provide more efficient and better service to the public.

And in conclusion, I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk with you. I look forward to coming _____ you in the future as we continue to work with Public Health _____ areas _____. Thank you.

JoAnna Buehler:

Madame Chair, members of the Board, good morning. My name is JoAnna Buehler. I live at 4129 - 185th Place S.E., Issaquah. And I'm here today to speak in support of this fee and program. I'm the President of Save Lake Sammamish, which is a non-profit organization, all volunteer. And we are focused on protecting water quality in Lake Sammamish. I'm also a member of the _____ 8 Steering Committee, which

is dealing with the salmon. It would have been listed. And this is for the greater Lake Washington basin. In the past I was a member of the King County Surface Board Management/Citizen Advisory Committee, and therefore have been very concerned over the years about water quality in Lake Sammamish obviously. The reason that I want to support this is that we had the Lake Sammamish Water Quality Management Plan done in 1989 and it was updated in '95 as a _____ study and yet another one in '96. And one of the issues that was causing the increase in nutrients in Lake Sammamish was failing septic systems within the basin. So we would very much like to see more education. It's important that homeowners who have these systems really do understand, just as another gentleman said, what kind of system they're dealing with. I have run across people who did not realize that they were on septic systems, and that's an appalling realization for me _____ too actually _____ because they've got to be maintained otherwise they're not working. And I know you're running behind schedule, so I'll be very brief. Thank you very much for your attention and this opportunity to _____.

Discussion

Chair Edmonds noted that staff had distributed to Board members a folder containing written testimony from Fred Darnell of Kirkland, Washington and from Emma Amiad, a real estate broker from Vashon Island.

Board Member Pageler made a motion to move the legislation. Board Member Hutchinson seconded. Moved and seconded that the Board of Health of Seattle/King County adopt the revised rules and regulations for the establishment of onsite sewage system operation and management program fees and increasing the onsite sewage system construction permit fees for new onsite sewage systems installation.

Board Member Lambert: Agreed that education was very important. Also important to look at ways to think outside the box because asking for more money all the time is not the answer. Focus on non-punitive ways to help people insure against incurring long-term costs due to septic failure. Guard against placing an unfair burden on people in the community. Suggested more time to scale back the ideas advanced thus far.

Board Member Van Dusen stated support of the plan

Chair Carolyn Edmonds commended staff for their work leading up to the proposed amendment and the information provided to the Board. Chair Edmonds stated her support for the proposal. She noted member's reservations about a number of bugs that needed to be worked out but expressed confidence in Department staff to address ongoing questions and concerns. Chair Edmonds commented about member's expressed hesitancy in raising fees but reminded the Board that they needed to be cognizant of the fact that they were coming up against a tight budget year and that raising fees was something that they would need to address again.

Chair Edmonds requested a roll call.

Board Member Conlin Absent
Board Member Constantine Absent
Board Member Drago Absent
Board Member Frisinger Aye
Board Member Gossett Absent
Board Member Hutchinson Aye

Board Member Irons Absent
Board Member Lambert No
Board Member Pageler Aye
Board Member Pullen Absent
Board Member Thompson Aye
Board Member Van Dusen Aye
Board Member Edmonds Aye

The motion passed: 7 members present - 6 in favor/1 opposed

KING COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

Carolyn Edmonds, Chair