



PO BOX 213, Vashon WA 98070  
vashonhealthcare.org

## **SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Date: October 14, 2021

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: ZOOM Meeting, <https://zoom.us/j/94707956113>

Present: Tom Langland, President  
Don Wolczko, Secretary  
Eric Pryne, Position 2  
LeeAnn Brown, Position 3  
Wendy Noble, Position 4  
Eric Jensen, Superintendent  
Jojo Weller, Administrative Director

1. Call to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Approve/Amend October 14 Agenda

Commissioner Pryne motions to approve agenda and Commissioner Brown seconds the motion:

“I move to approve the agenda.”

**AGENDA APPROVED 5-0**

3. Board Report to the Community Presentation

- a. See attached Power Point
- b. Power Point posted on Vashon Health Care District at <https://www.vashonhealthcare.org/minutes>
- c. ZOOM recording meeting posted on the Vashon Health Care District at <https://www.vashonhealthcare.org/minutes>

4. Questions and Answers

Q: Where does Sea Mar’s patient satisfaction data come from?

A: Sea Mar contracts with a third party to perform randomized selection of patients and completes a phone survey with these selected patients.

Q: Does the Outreach Committee use Facebook to reach out to the community?

A: Yes, most postings are done ahead of time to give the community a heads up for upcoming events. For example, tonight’s meeting was posted over a week before on Facebook for adequate notice to the public. In addition, the committee also uses the Vashonites and Vashon for All sites for important developments in the district.



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Q: What is the fiscal impact of the COVID testing?

A: Sea Mar offers the PCR tests by appointment and bills both the appointment and the test to insurance.

Q: How is the district's tax revenue compared to what was communicated during the ballot measure campaign?

A: During the campaign the tax revenue to be collected was expected to be lower than the levy commissioners adopted for 2021. However, when the pandemic hit, all of the potential providers that the district hoped to replace Neighborcare with lost interest.

The clinic's reported deficit kept increasing. In 2018 Neighborcare announced the clinic's annual deficit was \$350K. A year later Neighborcare said the deficit was about \$700K. After commissioners were elected, Neighborcare presented them with a 2020 budget – before COVID -- showing a deficit of about \$1.1 million. After Neighborcare said it would leave, and after COVID hit, Sea Mar said it would need an annual subsidy of \$1.5 million. The district had a choice of meeting this subsidy request or not having a clinic on the island.

One of the district's top priorities is to reduce the subsidy therefore reducing the levy tax rate.

Q: Does the district have the right to raise the current levy rate in the new budget since the community did not vote for the actual levy rate?

A: The district's current levy rate is established at a lower rate than the district's allowable tax rate. One of the district's top priorities is to reduce the levy rate.

Q: Why is Sea Mar's net income so little compared to what they bill?

A: The \$3.3M dollars that Sea Mar has billed are fees that Sea Mar charges to patients and their insurance companies. Different insurance companies have different agreements with Sea Mar on the amount they will pay. The amounts that are paid to Sea Mar are almost always substantially less than what the clinic charges. The differences not paid to Sea Mar are contractual allowances, which along with bad debt and charity care are considered deductions from revenue and are written off. This is not unique to Sea Mar. Every clinic/hospital operates under these types of payment arrangements.

Q: Why does the district think they can offer a subsidy to Sea Mar for a lesser amount?

A: The district's viewpoint is to provide a subsidy that supports a break-even operation. The financial statement shows that it is ahead of a break-even amount. The current contract is reviewed yearly.

Q: Is Sea Mar a short-term solution and is the district is looking for another clinic provider? What is the long-term solution?



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A: The current long-term plan is to stay with Sea Mar. However, the current contract with Sea Mar is on a year-to-year basis, so if there is a need for either both parties to withdraw, they can do so when their contract expires.

Q: When is the clinic going to have a permanent lab technician?

A: Sea Mar is working hard to fill this position with a permanent lab technician. In the meantime, they have contracted with a lab company for this position.

Q: Commissioner Tom Langland had mentioned that he was going to switch to Sea Mar. Has he done that yet?

A: He has not done the formal switch yet, but he has been talking with Dr. Erdmann and the other physician and he will do the switch soon. The other commissioners are patients at the clinic.

Q: What percentage of the charges have the various insurances paid?

A: The district does not know enough information on this but they do know that Medicare pays about \$185 per visit and Medicaid pays about \$200.

Q: How many patients has the clinic served in the last 10 months?

A: They are on track to hit 12,000 patient visits by the end of the year.

Q: Is the clinic turning away L&I claims?

A: Sea Mar does take L&I patients. Patients sometimes get turned away if there are no same-day appointments available.

Q: How many unique patients are there now compared to before?

A: The district cannot answer this question right now but they did ask Sea Mar this question about a month or two ago and Sea Mar had more than 4,000 patients on their panel for the clinic at that time.

Q: The federal government has provided millions of dollars in financial assistance to hospitals and providers of healthcare. Is Sea Mar distributing some of this money or other federally financial assistance to Sea Mar's Vashon Clinic?

A: Very little grant money has been distributed to Vashon since it is based on Medicaid.

Q: How much of the district's expenses are for the Superintendent, etc. in addition to the subsidy for Sea Mar.

A: Of the \$1.88M, \$1.5M goes to subsidy and about \$90k to the Superintendent and Administrative Director. Most of the remaining balance goes towards to reducing the King County loan.



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Q: The patients should be emailed an evaluation form after their appointments.

A: They have different methods for receiving feedback. The district forwards any feedback they receive to Sea Mar. Sea Mar is pretty quick to respond to those issues. If there is a concern about a visit it would be appropriate to ask the clinic manager if they could leave some feedback. The other option is on the Sea Mar website where there is a Contact Us link to submit concerns or questions.

Q: What did Sea Mar do with the COVID funds they received?

A: Most of the money came in 2020 and Sea Mar started on November 2020. The district does not know what they did with the funds.

Q: What is the Parks District's taxes? Can you speak on the housing affordability?

A: Property taxes have gone up a lot and it is the district's goal to negotiate a smaller subsidy with Sea Mar for 2022 that may reduce the district's current levy.

Q: A hospice patient needed to see a consulting doctor for a Death with Dignity option, but the consulting doctor's schedule was full. The patient called every morning at 8:00a for 10 days to try and get an appointment. Why can't there be accommodations for situations like these?

A: The district will dig deeper into this situation with Sea Mar.

Q: When will Sea Mar provide bilingual services?

A: Sea Mar is aware that the district is pushing to have a bilingual physician at the clinic.

Comment: The district's Outreach Committee list does not include publicizing to low-income residents on island. There needs to be ads and flyers in Spanish and the flyers put up in the Mexican Restaurant.

A: The district agrees that they can do more outreach to the Spanish community, however, the list is not a comprehensive list. The district has prepared an FAQ about the clinic both in English and Spanish which were posted on the district's website and hard copies were handed out at both grocery stores. Marcie Rubardt, who speaks Spanish fluently, had been present on the days the flyers were handed out for questions and comments.

Comment: Vashon Youth and Family Services provide medical vouchers that pay for prescriptions.

Q: What is the strategy to service the majority of the island's demographics?

They thank the commissioners for all their hard work and appreciate all the work that has been done to help the lower income people, but the island has an aging population that is in a much



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higher income demographic. There has been no discussion about addressing their needs. Lab results are lost and the service is not very good.

A: The clinic only runs simple point-- care tests, like pregnancy and blood sugar tests, at the clinic. The other more complicated lab tests are sent to another lab off-island. This is why the turn-around time for results is much longer than a hospital or clinic with their own Lab, or located in the city with a Lab close by.

One of the district's wish list items is to have a visiting geriatric medicine specialist who can come to the island to see older patients with more chronic issues and complicated needs.

Comments: Sea Mar only allows outside lab to be done between 10:00am and 11:00am every day. It is a short window and there usually is a backlog of people waiting. Sometimes not everyone is seen. Twice in three months Sea Mar has lost lab works which resulted in repeated phone calls between Sea Mar and a doctor in Seattle to figure out where the labs are.

A: The district will bring this feedback to Sea Mar in their next Clinic Relations meeting. They will ask if there is some way to increase the availability for requests from outsider provider.

Commissioner Tom Langland thanks the Outreach Committee for their work and organizing, preparing and promoting this meeting: Commissioners Brown and Pryne, Superintendent Jensen, Wendy Aman, Debby Jackson and Marcie Rubardt. He also thanks John L. Scott, the Beachcomber, IGA and Thriftway for helping with the various outreach. He thanks the public for attending.

If the public has additional questions or comments they can attend the district's regular meetings on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of each month via online, here's the ZOOM link:

<https://zoom.us/j/94707956113> \

or visit their website at <https://www.vashonhealthcare.org/contact-us-1>

Commissioner Pryne motions adjournment and Commissioner Brown seconds the motion:

"I move we adjourn."

**ADJOURNMENT APPROVED 5-0**

Adjourned at 20:45

The next Regular Board Meeting will be Wednesday, November 17, at 19:00 on ZOOM,

<https://zoom.us/j/94707956113>.



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