Region 1 – COVID-19 – County Response
Meeting Minutes
Island – San Juan – Skagit – Snohomish – Whatcom Counties

Wednesday, April 22, 2020
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Facilitators: Jaime Bodden, WSALPHO and Mellani McAleenan, WSAC

Counties/Participants in Attendance:

ISLAND COUNTY
Treasurer Wanda Grone, Commissioner Jill Johnson, Commissioner Helen Price Johnson and Commissioner Janet St. Clair

SAN JUAN COUNTY
Councilmember Rick Hughes, Councilmember Jamie Stephens, and Director of County Health & Community Services Mark Tompkins

SKAGIT COUNTY
Commissioner Lisa Janicki, Deputy County Administrator Kayla Schott-Bresler and Commissioner Ron Wesen

SNOHOMISH COUNTY
Administrator – Snohomish Public Health Shawn Frederick and Executive Dave Somers

WHATCOM COUNTY
Councilmember Rud Browne and Councilmember Todd Donovan

LEGISLATORS

LEGISLATIVE STAFF
Mary Clogston, James Crandall, Jordan Kronen, Noha Mahgoub, Travis Sugarman, Liz Weeks and Kellen Wright

LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE

San Juan
The county has been responding on COVID since January
Staff worked hard on getting the community important messaging out to the San Juan residences
Contacted with medical providers on inquiring on who was tested and to stay in contact with that isolated individuals
Big question now – “how do we reopen?”
Successful community/county wide effort in working with great community partners and great leadership with San Juan county councilmembers
**LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE cont.**

**Snohomish**
First county in the United States with first known case
Staff worked hard on coordinating with local partners, emergency management, technology for a unified command Center
Continued work on drive thru testing, will transition to surveillance testing for long term care facilities, county residences, as well as county staff
Challenges looking ahead are the second surge of the virus, staffing and testing
Working well with Snohomish County government

**CHALLENGES AND LOOKING AHEAD**

- Testing
- Need for all proper equipment
- Space for isolation/quarantine – increased containment
- Look at the workforce to maintain systems
- Continue messaging to the community
- How do we pay for such expenses?

**IMPACT ON COUNTY FUNCTIONS**

**Island County**
Working on response to recovery
Trying to anticipate the second wave
Public health role has increased during this pandemic
Reminder to legislators that additional investments will need to be made to fund public health
Local citizens continue to voice their concerns to the Commissioners’ office
Foresee increased challenges for local businesses and county citizens…. what resources are available to them?
Local community volunteers have stepped up in helping
Moving forward, the county will continue to monitor the data, watch for clusters, as well as the second wave and
Focusing on reopening and will be aligned with the Governor’s Orders
Concerns on the long-term effect on Island County

**San Juan County**
Staff is working remotely to slow the infection
Mental health needs are on the increase
The county is currently using funds and contracting with farmers and restaurants to provide and deliver meals to community individuals
Working Washington Funds has been helpful, other funding has been very disappointing for small businesses
Will need guidance for visitors, as well as businesses
With the lack of revenue, the level of county services will possibly need to be cut
Immense revenue loss without tourists and construction projects
San Juan is spending additional on money to keep visitors away
Requests will be made for additional regulatory relief

**Skagit County**
Increased expenses have surpassed $4 million dollars
The county office is learning how to do business differently
The innovation and willingness from various departments have all come to together
Serious concerns with the mental health capacity, the county has seen the increased need for telemedicine & telehealth
With the federal funding, the smaller jurisdictions will need additional funds
Overdose deaths have increased, seeing more stress during this pandemic
Severe revenue loss of $7 million dollars
**Snohomish County**
Activated Emergency Management  
County staff working remotely  
With the current quarantine site will now be looking at transitioning  
Issued housing vouchers for the homeless, moving forward will be a very big challenge  
Coordinate requests for necessary equipment remains a challenge but will continue to work with the Governor’s Office  
Major concerns on how the county will recover

**Whatcom County**
Would like to see WSAC strategize with the other counties on how to save money, reduce expenses and protect the cash flow  
How do counties deal with the court systems backlog  
Asking legislators to be aware that local governments are going to need much needed funding

**Island County**
As with the other counties, there will be tremendous revenue loss  
Anticipating a surge of caseloads for the courts  
Has serious economic concerns – layoffs (Boeing) etc.  
Will need additional funding  
How do we maintain resources to respond to the pandemic moving forward?

**San Juan County**
Need planning – recreation areas and construction (affordable housing project) – need contractors  
Returning to work will need some guidelines  
Ferry transportation – reduced/revised schedule – will need additional funding

**Skagit County**
Upgrades will be required for courtrooms for court hearings  
Increased public health funds will be needed  
High risk homeless individuals’ vouchers will expire on May 4th, additional funding is needed  
Skagit County foresees major budget constraints

**Snohomish County**
The county will implement a hiring freeze  
The general fund forecast will see at least 70% in cuts  
Will need tests kits to get back to normal  
Outstanding requests, health care providers will need supplies of **EVERYTHING**, and the requests will need to be met  
Moving forward with a recovery, the county will bring in businesses for discussions  
Boeing back to work in Everett plant …. possible use of model/template to use for other businesses

**Whatcom County**
The county will put in place a selective hiring freeze to reduce spending  
Property taxes will be delayed  
Sales tax revenues will be severely reduced  
Will work on a plan for economic recovery  
Loss of businesses, construction and tourists are all reduced. What do we do for economic recovery?