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City of Ketchikan & PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center

Healthcare Advisory Committee Meeting

April 24, 2025

1. Call to Order:

The Healthcare Advisory Committee Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Lacey Simpson at 9:00 a.m. This meeting took place in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 334 Front Street, Ketchikan, Alaska. A WebEx option was available at this location and included four participants.

2. Roll Call:

Committee Members Present:

City of Ketchikan

Lacey Simpson - Chair
Judy Zenge – City Council member
Amanda Robinson - City Asst. Public Works Director
Kim Stanker - City Clerk

PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center

Sarah Cook – Chief Administration Officer
Scott Smith – Vice Chair, Director Support Services
Tim Horton, MD – Community Health Board Member
Lori Medvid - Executive Assistant

Committee Members Absent:

Members of the Community:

Ben Watson – Ketchikan Fire Department
Gretchen O'Sullivan – Ketchikan Fire Department

Bob Sivertsen – Community Member
Kate Govaars – PeaceHealth

3. Communications:

None

4. Persons to be Heard:

Mobile Integration Health Update:

Grethen O'Sullivan & Ben Watson provided an update on the Mobile Integrated Health program that launched June 10th last year. To date, they have had over 500 patient contacts, averaging 2 to 3 patients per day. Volume has gone up since they launched a clinic with Salvation Army, partnering with Public Health. MIH operated the clinic every Thursday, providing free wound care, checkups, and education, to a population of patients who may struggle with resources or who are unable to otherwise receive medical care. There are over 90 people signed up, and participating, with the clinic services. They also provide food, basic needs (socks, underwear, feminine products).

Every other week Public Health sends a nurse to provide vaccinations, and SDI testing. MIH also refers people to substance use programs in town, and work closely with PeaceHealth social work team, home health, and other providers to assist with other patient care needs. They have had good luck working with 'high utilization

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population’, folks who call 911 on an average of once per month. HIM was able to identify about 25 individuals and reduced the 911 calls by roughly 80%, getting them the help they need. Mr. Watson is optimistic the remaining population will soon be rehomed, either into an SUD facility, Long Term Care, or with family, to reduce the number high utilization population to zero.

Bob Sivertsen:

Shared a personal experience he recently had with PeaceHealth Emergency Department, stating the staff were courteous, friendly, comforted concerned spouse, and did a fantastic job managing his emergency services. Mr. Sullivan feels Ketchikan community is very lucky to have these services available.

5. Approval of Minutes:

Following a review of the draft minutes from the January 23, 2025, Healthcare Advisory Committee meeting, and there being no objections, the committee unanimously approved the minutes as presented.

6. Old Business:

A. Same Day Clinic:

Sarah Cook, PeaceHealth Chief Administration Officer, provided an update to the committee, noting the Same Day Clinic is transitioning to Priority Care. Only the name is changing, the same services are being offered, and online scheduling is available to established patients. Scott Smith added the availability of online scheduling for screening mammography. Mr. Smith also noted the ability to schedule appointments is based on when the technicians will be in town. Patients can still call the hospital to schedule appointments.

B. Emergency Department Update:

Phase I – Moving the CT scan to the new location:

Sarah Cook informed the committee that construction is ongoing, and the estimated completion date is on track for mid-June. Scott Smith added patient scheduling should begin by end of June, following training on the new CT. The new location will provide consulting space and a formal changing room, which the old location did not have.

Phase II – Lab Design and Renovation:

Mrs. Cook reminded the committee that the Lab Relocation is needed in order to expand the Emergency Department and capital funding for Phase II has been approved, and a contract has been awarded for architecture and engineering. PeaceHealth is in discussion with the State regarding a certificate of need.

Phase III – Emergency Department Renovation:

Scott Smith interjected that the number of rooms for the PeaceHealth Emergency Department is dictated by the State. He wanted the Healthcare Advisory Committee, the City of Ketchikan and the public to be clear that the number of beds will not increase, however, the flow will be better, and the new design should reduce wait time. Eric Blake, PeaceHealth Director of Program Management, is working closely with the State to maximize what the state will allow PeaceHealth to do. Lacey Simpson is wanting to know what exactly the number of rooms in the ED is/should be based on population and given how the “population” or use increases exponentially in the summer with tourism.

Emergency Department Staffing Update:

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Sarah Cook announced negotiations are underway with Apollo MD as the new staffing partner, the transition is in process, and a complete handoff is expected to occur by August 1st of this year. Mrs. Cook informed the committee that there has been consistent 24/7 emergency department coverage by the providers on staff. Lacey Simpson wanted to confirm whether PeaceHealth went through an RFP, request for proposal, process when looking for a new staffing partner, Mrs. Cook confirmed that an RFP process was followed, and Apollo was selected through that process. Apollo MD is new to PeaceHealth.

Community Collaborations Updates:

Sarah Cook shared recent community collaborations with State legislative representatives and on-going collaboration with RISE, True North Recovery, and Ketchikan Indian Community. Mrs. Cook also addressed PeaceHealth's involvement with the emergency operations command center, following the Wolfe Point Landslide, ensuring caregivers were able to get to and from the hospital for their scheduled shifts.

Mrs. Cook shared some events happening throughout PeaceHealth in Ketchikan and Craig. The Craig clinic just celebrated its 15-year anniversary, Ketchikan Medical Center remodeled the front desk, admitting area to be more inviting and wheelchair accessible. The gift shop is getting ready to re-open, and many caregiver recognitions are coming up in May. PeaceHealth will be recognizing caregivers for Nurses Week, and Healthcare Workers Week.

7. New Business:

A. Scheduled Tongass Highway Construction and Hospital Impacts – City

Amanda Robinson updated the committee on upcoming paving projects and the entrance to KIC will be shut down for paving, re-routing traffic through the PeaceHealth parking lot, which will only be a day or two. Mrs. Robinson will update PeaceHealth once they have a better idea on when the paving in front of PeaceHealth will happen. She anticipates lane shifts rather than closing the entrance.

Lacey Simpson did provide an update on the Wolfe Point Helipad that is no longer in service due to the landslide, and she reminded the committee that medivacs are landing at the airport, and patients are being shuttled across. Mrs. Simpson noted this is more of a concern for EMT transport, but noted they are in constant communication with the hospital when transporting patients.

Mrs. Simpson and Mrs. Robinson provided a brief overview of city projects underway. Some of which include the Tongass Avenue paving project, paving between Wolfe Point and Don King Road intersection. Road construction and lane shifts will affect EMT travel time as well.

Dr. Horton asked for an update on the parking lot across from the hospital. Mrs. Robinson noted the parking lot is scheduled to be done in the first week of May and is a number one priority for the paving crew.

B. Lighting Along Tongass Avenue and Pedestrian Safety – PeaceHealth.

Sarah Cook noted the issue is the lack of lighting at Carlanna Lake Road intersection and pedestrians are being injured. Mrs. Robinson will follow up with DOT as that is pedestrian safety issue. Dr. Horton also noted the crosswalk lines need to be repainted. Mrs. Robinson noted she will address the lighting with DOT at their next meeting and report back to the committee at the next meeting in July.

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C. Capital Improvement Planning – City & PeaceHealth

Lacey Simpson addressed the committee on the need to ensure the city of Ketchikan and PeaceHealth are still collaboration to get capital projects outlined in the lease agreement back on track.

Scott Smith and Amanda Robinson have evaluated the current list of capital projects and noted the following:

- KMOB roof warranty issue – roofing contractor will be in town May 3rd and will assess the roof and try to make preliminary repairs.
- Physical Therapy Wall Water Intrusion – Marble Construction will coordinate with Pat McLavey, PeaceHealth Facilities Manager, to get in there and start the work. Mrs. Robinson is moving forward on a plan for design.

Mrs. Robinson suggested she and Scott Smith get together off-line and identify projects that should be addressed in FY26. Mr. Smith feels he and Mr. McLavey can review the list of capital projects to identify what they feel are priority and bring those items back for a deeper conversation with Mrs. Robinson sometime in mid-May.

D. Update on ER Staffing Contract – PeaceHealth

Lacey Simpson noted this was addressed previously during Sarah Cook's presentation of the Emergency Department Update. Mrs. Simpson asked if there was a public announcement made regarding Apollo MD. Kate Govaars, PeaceHealth Marketing and Communications Manager, noted the change was operational and being there was no disruption to patient care, there was no public announcement.

Future Agenda Items:

1. Same Day Clinic – Standing Agenda Item
2. ED Renovation Update – Standing Agenda Items
3. Update Capital Project list

Pending Discussions:

Questions to address for future discussion - Judy Zenge & Lacey Simpson
5-Year Review Process – Sarah Cook & Lacey Simpson

Adjournment:

There being no further business before the Healthcare Advisory Committee, Vice-Chair Simpson adjourned the meeting at 9:49AM. The next meeting of the Healthcare Advisory Committee will take place on Thursday, July 24, 2025, at 9:00am in the City Council Chambers, and available via Webex invitation.

Respectfully Submitted by: Lori Medvid, Executive Assistant
PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center