

Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
September 12, 2016
Minutes

1. Call to Order

At 6:30 p.m., President Tracey Puthoff, called to order the regular session of the Board of Health of Hamilton County General Health District, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call of Members

Members Present: Tracey Puthoff, President
Dr. Kenneth Amend
Jim Brett
Tom Chatham
Mark Rippe

District Staff Present: Timothy Ingram, Health Commissioner
Greg Kesterman, Assistant Health Commissioner
Craig Davidson, Assistant Health Commissioner
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
Mike Samet, Public Information Officer

Guests: Alexis Grimes Trotter, Student

3. Clean Kitchen Awards

Mr. Kesterman read the list of 10 Clean Kitchen Award recipients.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the minutes from the August 8, 2016 Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

5. Health Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Ingram reported that the opioid epidemic has been time consuming. August saw significant increases in overdose activity, blamed on the drug additives, fentanyl and carfentanil. Hamilton County Public Health has hired Laura Laake as a injury prevention coordinator charged with working in a number of health care areas to mediate the opioid epidemic. In addition, Commissioner Ingram is working with the Hamilton County Heroin Coalition to develop a daily report merging 911 dispatch and health data, enabling first responders to react quickly to emerging incidents.

The Public Health Accreditation Board has selected a site review team and scheduled a visit for January 25-26, 2017. They have requested at least two Board of Health members be present for a meeting January 26, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Ms. Puthoff and Mr. Rippe indicated they would attend.

Commissioner Ingram reported that the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Health have executed a contract to have Hamilton County Public Health conduct non-flammable medical gas inspections within the City. The anticipated start date is October 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ingram reported that Hamilton County Public Health is in the midst of a website re-design. The contract is with US Digital Partners and the project should be completed by January 2017.

Commissioner Ingram called attention to a congratulatory note received from Ohio State Representative, Jonathan Dever, recognizing the work of the WeTHRIVE! initiative.

Mr. Rippe asked if the City of Cincinnati had selected a new health commissioner. Commissioner Ingram responded that there are currently two final candidates and the City Board of Health indicated that a selection should be made at its September meeting.

Commissioner Ingram advised that the October 2016 Board of Health meeting would be a busy one with several important actions for the Board to consider. These include: budget revisions to incorporate the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review into the general fund; budget discussion for the Serv-Safe education program; third quarter performance results; salary survey review; strategic plan preview.

Staff Reports

(a) Department of Community Health Services

Mr. Davidson reported that the Ohio Department of Health, Injury Prevention Program Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention grant activity is underway, beginning with the hiring of Laura Laake as injury prevention coordinator.

Mr. Davidson participated in an August 18, 2016 panel discussion at the Hamilton County Public Defender's office, addressing bloodborne infectious diseases and distribution of naloxone, in response to the opioid efforts.

Mr. Davidson provided the Board of Health with training into the EpiCenter surveillance system, monitored by the Ohio Department of Health and local health departments throughout Ohio. Epicenter is currently being used to track emergency department visits caused by opioid use. The system establishes baselines for expected emergency department visits and reports when anomalies above these expected thresholds are received. The EpiCenter data is, in part, the system used to establish the August 2016 overdose data, largely occurring on the western side of Hamilton County. Mr. Davidson reviewed how thresholds are established; the demographic breakdown of overdose victims; and the geography, by ZIP code of the overdose activity.

Ms. Puthoff asked what activity was occurring in the City of Hamilton around opioid abuse. Mr. Davidson responded that the City of Middletown is currently offering a syringe exchange program.

Mr. Rippe inquired as to the activity of the Cincinnati Exchange Project. Commissioner Ingram responded that following the program manager's recent issue with law enforcement, the program is proceeding in select areas using a rented van and volunteer staff. Activity may pick up again following the manager's trial in October 2016. In the meantime, Commissioner Ingram has met with University of Cincinnati officials and plans are developing for moving the program forward. Because of the issues with the program manager, Colerain Township's implementation of the bloodborne infectious disease program has been put on hold until all details have been worked out.

Commissioner Ingram continued that Hamilton County Public Health has applied for a Funders' Foundation grant to address opioid abuse. Three proposals have been submitted, potentially covering the syringe exchange program; naloxone distribution; and developing combined reporting with law enforcement using EpiCenter data for daily reports.

Commissioner Ingram continued that the good news on the opioid front is that HIV rates overall in the County have remained stable, thus far.

Mr. Rippe asked if the data contained in EpiCenter and the proposal to combine this data with law enforcement information is "real time." Commissioner Ingram responded that the Epi Center data is real time and the dispatch data would be compiled within an assigned time period. While the data will not be perfect, it will be actionable while maintaining strict protocol to avoid any confidentiality breach.

Mr. Rippe asked where Hamilton County ranks within Ohio for opioid abuse. Mr. Davidson responded that he did not have current rankings, however, Hamilton County remains higher than other urban areas within the State.

Mr. Davidson continued with a report on infectious diseases in the County. Hepatitis B&C continue to be the top reported diseases in the County. Syphilis is currently the third-most-reported disease. In addition, there has been some *E. coli* activity in daycare settings.

Mr. Brett inquired if the high syphilis numbers might be a result of awareness efforts causing the public and physicians to conduct more testing. Mr. Davidson responded that this could play a part, however, cases still remain elevated.

(b) Department of Environmental Health Services

Mr. Kesterman reported that the Waste Management Division staff is active with Rumpke personnel to identify and minimize odor from the landfill. Odor complaints have declined since 2014. Complaints tend to increase during political activity and public discussion about the landfill. Hamilton County Public Health responds to complaints within one business day. Mr. Kesterman and Chuck DeJonckheere, Director of Waste Management, will present odor report findings to the Colerain Township Trustees September 13, 2016.

Dr. Amend asked if the doubling of anonymous odor complaints is significant. Mr. Kesterman responded that similar to his previous comment about public discussion of the landfill, recent legal activity also may cause an increase in anonymous complaints.

Dr. Amend asked how odor complaints are judged. Mr. Kesterman responded that complaints were judged by smell and applied to a scale developed by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency rating odors according to pre-determined criteria. Often, smells correspond to a tear in the landfill's odor control blanket. The Southwest Ohio Air Quality Agency has a 24-hour complaint system and Rumpke receives these complaints immediately, often allowing them to get started on remediation before Hamilton County Public Health responds.

Dr. Amend asked if odors are exacerbated by high heat and humidity. Mr. Kesterman responded that this is not necessarily the case. In addition, Rumpke received a permit to use more odor control chemicals, but has received numerous odor complaints when more chemicals are applied.

Mr. Kesterman reported that sewage treatment system inspections for the Village of Indian Hill will begin in January, 2017. An inspector from the Village will accompany Hamilton County Public Health sanitarians for the first year of the program.

As Commissioner Ingram mentioned in his report, Hamilton County Public Health will begin non-flammable medical gas inspections within the City of Cincinnati. Mr. Kesterman reported that there is an experienced inspector already on the Plumbing Division staff. He anticipates approximately 20 additional inspection sites will occur.

6. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business. However, Ms. Puthoff mentioned that the 20-minute session presented by Mr. Davidson on interpreting EpiCenter reports qualified for Board of Health training requirements.

7. Finances

a) Monthly Disbursements Report

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Chatham seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye; Mr. Brett abstained on Whitewater Township expenditure.

Mr. Rippe inquired whether the capital expenses in the Disbursement Report were budgeted expenses. Commissioner Ingram responded that they were part of the budget.

8. New Business

a) Board of Health Strategic Planning Meeting will be held Saturday, October 15, 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at the Kenwood Country Club.

9. Executive Session

Mr. Brett moved to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 7:17 p.m.

Dr. Amend seconded the motion

Roll Call Vote– All Aye

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:40 p.m where no decisions were made.

10. Adjournment

Dr. Amend moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.


Mr. Chatham seconded the motion

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: Monday, October 10, 2016.



Tracey Puthoff, President



Timothy I. Ingram, Secretary
Health Commissioner