

Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
April 10, 2023 – 4 p.m.
Minutes

1. Call to Order

At 4 p.m., Dan Meloy, Vice President, 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: Dan Meloy, Vice President
James Brett
Tracey A. Puthoff, Esq.
Mark A. Rippe

District Staff Present: Greg Kesterman, Health Commissioner
Jackie Lindner, Assistant Health Commissioner
Craig Davidson, Assistant Health Commissioner
Dr. Steve Feagins, Medical Director
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
Greg Varner, Finance Officer

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Clean Kitchen Awards

Craig Davidson read the list of five Clean Kitchen Award recipients and congratulated them for their efforts to maintain a high level of sanitation and staff education.

5. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Puthoff moved to approve the minutes from the March 13, 2023, Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

6. Public Comment: None.

7. Health Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Kesterman reported that Hamilton County's COVID-19 cases continue to be on a downward trend. The current 7-day average is 39 cases per day and Omicron continues to be the primary variant. Hospitalizations likewise continue to be on a downward trend with current hospitalizations at 54. Congress has passed legislation ending the

pandemic, effective April 10, which ends the public health declaration. The World Health Organization plans to end its declaration later this year. Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) vaccination clinics are scheduled to close June 2. Many vaccination locations will still be available at a number of healthcare providers and pharmacies around the community. Tonight, HCPH will recognize three partners over the past three years for their support: Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio, Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, and the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati.

HCPH celebrated National Public Health Week with staff comments and videos on social media as well as appreciation stations at HCPH buildings. Commissioner Kesterman will speak to other items like space planning, Epic electronic medical record (EMR), and personnel policy under new business.

Staff Reports

(a) Medical Director's Report

Dr. Steve Feagins, Medical Director explained the COVID-19 vaccines were one of the most effective tools in managing the pandemic. All healthcare systems in the region have moved to optional masking in clinical areas. UCMC, Cincinnati Health Department, and HCPH clinical areas are masks-recommended (but not required). Research shows the Omicron strain is less likely to develop into long COVID. Vaccine accumulated immunity helps reduce long COVID as well. On the national front, while Ohio had one of the highest infection rates, Ohio had one of the lowest death rates. Dr. Feagins attributed Ohio's success to the community's collaborative response.

Hamilton County's Tuberculosis Control Clinic Medical Director, Dr. Moises Huaman, spoke this week at the Ohio Department of Health's "World Tuberculosis Day" on multi-drug resistant tuberculosis.

Sexually transmitted diseases were higher during the pandemic, but there was not as much testing occurring. HCPH is working with clinicians to do more STI testing and the numbers of cases are expected to increase as a result.

The Southwest Ohio "At Capacity" definitions are used to inform EMS but do not prevent intake. At Capacity was defined by the regional hospital committee and they decided to keep the current definitions rather than adopt the state's new EMS system term -- "diversion."

The monthly Communicable Diseases Epi report was provided in the Board packet.

(b) Department of Community Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner Ms. Lindner added to her written report that HCPH received a grant for \$175,000 to enhance public health data science work. HCPH will use Structured Query Language (SQL) processing to enhance surveillance efforts. The grant will cover an employee, software, and training. Mr. Rippe asked about the employee after one year when the grant is over. Ms. Lindner explained it may be a contract position or an employee if HCPH is able to combine with another grant position.

Dr. Feagins mentioned earlier Dr. Moises Huaman's presentation on multi-drug resistant tuberculosis at "World Tuberculosis Day." Dr. Huaman's paper on latent TB was accepted into the Journal of Clinical Tuberculosis and Other Mycobacterial Diseases. His paper demonstrated a decline in TB diagnosis and treatment. Ms. Lindner has a copy of the paper and will share it with the Board upon request.

Ms. Lindner was pleased to recognize HCPH staff from Disease Prevention and Harm Reduction for collaborating to help a client in need who was seeking treatment.

Mr. Rippe appreciated the staff photos in the meeting packet.

(c) Department of Environmental Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner Mr. Davidson shared that work on the process for demobilizing vaccine operations has commenced. The last day vaccines will be offered by HCPH will be June 2. HCPH has administered over 93,000 total vaccines since December 2020. That includes some flu and Mpox doses. The proclamations tonight are to acknowledge appreciation of partners for all their support during such the pandemic.

Mr. Davidson highlighted the great work that HCPH's Plumbing Division is doing in Brown County. It has and continues to be a mutually beneficial program for each county. Full details are in the meeting packet.

2023 Construction and Demolition Debris (C&DD) landfill licensing applications were received, and licenses issued to all except two facilities. The Waste Management Division is receiving monthly updates on Loveland Landfill's plans for closing and redeveloping the site. E-town's trust value dropped below what was needed to meet its financial assurance obligation. They got a letter of credit to supplement the trust to the required level. An updated aerial survey has since been submitted so the license can be issued. All C&DD landfill capacity timeline details are in the meeting packet.

Mr. Davidson reported there were three housing program condemnations detailed in his report.

8. Finances

The March 2023 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet.

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Ms. Puthoff seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye; - Mr. Brett abstained on White Water expenditures.

Greg Varner, Finance Officer, presented the First Quarter Financial Review. Mr. Varner discussed details of revenue, expenditures, budget, fund balances, and grant activity. HCPH is on schedule with the budget for revenue expectations and expenditures. Mr. Davidson answered Ms. Puthoff's question regarding future payments from Evans Landscaping. Commissioner Kesterman congratulated the Finance Department and other HCPH department staff for collaborating and diversifying grant opportunities and sharing staff to meet needs. He shared that HCPH is in the process of applying for a second round of OD2A funding, although this time it is significantly more competitive. HCPH is a strong

contender for the funding but is working to position the Harm Reduction department to manage budgetary issues should we not be funded.

9. New Business:

Proclamations

Mr. Brett moved to approve the three proclamations for vaccination partners: Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio, Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, and the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati.

Ms. Puthoff seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Personnel Policy Section 3.4

Commissioner Kesterman explained the proposed policy change relates to employees who carry the emergency phone and the compensation calculation for those involved. Ms. Puthoff clarified this is simply a fix to make the compensation easier to process. Commissioner Kesterman said that is correct. Mr. Rippe asked about the volume of emergency calls and Commissioner Kesterman said they are likely less than a dozen each year.

Mr. Meloy moved to approve the Personnel Policy Section 3.4

Ms. Puthoff seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

BOH Reorganization

Ms. Puthoff moved to approve the annual Board of Health Reorganization with Dr. Kelly continuing as President and Mr. Meloy continuing as Vice President.

Mr. Rippe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye; - Mr. Meloy recused himself.

Ms. Puthoff moved to approve the Board of Health meeting schedule to meet on the second Monday of each month at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

10. Executive Session

Ms. Puthoff moved to go into Executive Session at 4:46 p.m. to discuss acquisition of real estate to address agency space needs.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Ms. Puthoff moved to end the Executive Session during which no motions were made at 5:50 p.m.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Ms. Puthoff moved to authorize the health commissioner to sign a letter of intent for the lease of 5050 Section Avenue, Cincinnati Ohio 45212. Such motion also authorizes the

health commissioner and Board designees to negotiate terms and conditions of the lease agreement for 5050 Section Avenue. With a legal review and approval from the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office and agreement between the health commissioner and board designees, the health commissioner is authorized to execute the lease agreement upon such terms and conditions, including a term of fifteen years, for the Public Health Clinic and associated office space.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Mr. Brett moved to designate Mr. Rippe and Ms. Puthoff, should she be able and have no conflicts, as the Board designees for the lease negotiations.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Ms. Puthoff moved to authorize the health commissioner to enter into an agreement with Mercy Hospital for the development and use of EPIC for HCPH's clinical functions.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

11. Adjournment

Ms. Puthoff moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: May 8, 2023.



Dan Meloy, Vice President



Greg Kesterman, Secretary
Health Commissioner

