

Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
May 10, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.
Minutes

1. Call to Order

At 4 p.m., Mark A. Rippe, President, called to order the regular session of the Board of Health of Hamilton County General Health District, conducted by conference call, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call of Members

Members Present: Mark A. Rippe, President
James Brett, Vice President
Elizabeth A. Kelly, M.D.
Dan Meloy
Tracey A. Puthoff, Esq.

District Staff Present: Greg Kesterman, Health Commissioner
Dr. Jennifer Mooney, Assistant Health Commissioner
Craig Davidson, Assistant Health Commissioner
Dr. Steve Feagins, Medical Director
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
Greg Varner, Finance Officer
Rebecca Stowe, Performance Management & Grants Coordinator

Guests: Carrie Davis and Lisa Gehrum Novakov

3. 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.

4. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Kelly moved to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2021 Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

5. Public Comment

Carrie Davis, representing Ditch the Dump and Child Advocacy for Rights and Equity Inc., expressed concern about well and cistern water near the Bond Road landfill. Ms. Davis would like more information on the health risks. Ms. Davis also expressed concern about odor monitoring with no consequences or no citations issued. Why is HCPH not recommending opposition to Ohio EPA approving the permit alteration request? Will HCPH do an assessment by using data at the Colerain site?

Commissioner Kesterman shared that information is posted to the website regarding cistern regulations by the EPA. HCPH is only involved during cistern installations. There are rainwater filtration recommendations and associated regulations. HCPH follows the process

outlined by the EPA guidance for odor complaint investigations which is a four-tier scale (level 3 triggers a citation). There were two citations issued to Rumpke for odor in recent years. The air monitoring (dust) is completed by Southwest Ohio Air Quality and complaints of that nature should be directed to them.

6. Cradle Cincinnati Annual Report Review, Ryan Adcock

Mr. Adcock was unable to attend the meeting and will be rescheduled to a future meeting.

7. Health Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Kesterman reported the vaccine supply is now exceeding current demand. HCPH will continue to work with our partners to further increase vaccinations within our community. COVID-19 is trending at 70 cases/day. The positivity rate is 4.5 percent, and the R factor is 0.84. Hospitalizations in the region are stable and vaccination is the number one tool for keeping people out of the hospital. Hamilton County should reach Public Emergency Level 2 in next couple of weeks when the daily cases drop below 100. Students 16 years old and up are eligible for the vaccine but are experiencing low turnout. Statewide population vaccination started is 41.6 percent. In the county, 43.4 percent have started, and 37.78 percent are completed. Reviewed the vaccine access by zip code map and the lowest performing areas are being targeted both inside and outside the City of Cincinnati. Ms. Puthoff asked about the color code key. The darkest color are approximately 60 percent vaccinated and the lightest color is closer to 10 percent. Everyone is a ten-minute drive from a vaccination clinic and walk in appointments are available. Mr. Rippe asked about getting townships involved to help get the word out to residents. HCPH has offered them information and clinics. Also offering services to businesses and encouraging incentivizing employees to vaccinate. Private providers are also doing work in this space. CDC masking guidance discussed and HCPH is working with the governor to update guidance. Mr. Rippe asked if the Monday call with the governor is still happening. Yes, it is. Dr. Kelly congratulated HCPH staff for getting us to this point and working toward 90% herd immunity.

Highlights from the Community Health Improvement Plan Q3 progress report are in the Board packet. All five focus areas are on track. HCPH has also started our Community Health Needs Assessment which is updated every three years. Data collection for 2021 began in April. The survey is located at <https://genh.healthcollab.org/> and runs April 1 through May 30. All community members are encouraged to complete the survey.

Commissioner Kesterman is monitoring House Bill 110 which includes a provision that would require any health department serving a city with a population of 50,000 or less to complete a study on the benefits of merging.

Staff Reports

(a) Medical Director's Report

Dr. Steve Feagins Medical Director highlighted the J&J vaccination pause was out of an abundance of caution. The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended the continued use of the vaccine, saying their review of data shows that the

J&J-Janssen vaccine's "known and potential benefits outweigh its known and potential risks."

Nurses Week is May 6-12 recognizing healthcare providers. 2020 was planned the "Year of the Nurse" by the WHO as a 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale. Because providers were so busy during the pandemic, they did not get the proper recognition, so they are getting it now.

Dr. Feagins reported the vaccinations by zip code heat maps show pockets of cases directly correlate with the smaller vaccination rates. Sports physicals were updated to include eight new COVID-19/vaccination questions. This history will also be a part of pre op screening risk stratification. Pfizer-BioNTech is pending FDA Emergency Use Authorization for ages 12 to 15. Approval is likely to occur this week. Full FDA approval could occur in the next month for Pfizer and they may choose to direct market to consumers. Businesses may want to pursue mandating. Mr. Rippe asked if athletic students will be mandated. That is not known at this time, updating the sports screening was a big step.

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

(b) Department of Community Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner Dr. Jennifer Mooney spoke to the vaccination effort from a clinical operations perspective. A lot has changed with vaccine clinics in just a week. Nurses contracted through ODH are setting up popup clinics in targeted areas and promoting at local stores. Looking to creative ideas for popup site locations to vaccinate the general population.

Dr. Mooney shared the Harm Reduction daily report is on the website and HCPH added a monthly report dashboard. The dashboard data can be filtered, is user friendly, and interactive. HCPH is co-leads the harm reduction subcommittee of the Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition (formerly known as the Heroin Coalition). The team is working with a consultant to help build a more comprehensive harm reduction subcommittee that fosters greater collaboration and communication. Dr. Mooney will share back more information next month.

(c) Department of Environmental Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner Mr. Davidson covers vaccine site operations, and they are shifting day to day. Sharonville Convention Center has been a great partner providing lower-level space on a daily basis throughout the week. Due to decreased demand, HCPH is pivoting to a smaller space there and opening other sites to have more geographic presence. Staff are looking for opportunities to make vaccinations convenient and surveyed all 45 cities, villages, and townships asking for site recommendations. One of the more unique options was at the reopening of Kenwood Theater while they were offering free admission. It was raining that night; however, HCPH was able to vaccinate 12 individuals.

Mr. Davidson highlighted the ODH audit of HCPH's emergency preparedness plans for medical countermeasure distribution and administration via the CDC Operational Readiness Review. HCPH achieved the highest rating in 2016 and continues to maintain it as a part of the requirements for receiving federal emergency preparedness grant funding. The full ODH report is in the Board packet.

The residential and commercial construction industry continues to struggle from the pandemic with increased material costs and material shortages. Things are starting to open and revenue is on track to exceed last April's numbers.

2021-22 Food licenses applications continue to come in with the July 1 extension granted by House Bill 404. Last year HCPH had 2,500 and as of April have 2,380. Mobile license numbers have increased as well.

There was one condemnation in Green Township, and it has been a busy month with food facilities in for status meetings. Full details are in the Board packet.

Dr. Kelly stated this is the time for HCPH to get this community toward herd immunity. Access is not the reason, so need to deep dive to address trust, fear, and other various issues with rigorous quality improvement science. Dr. Kelly has a background in this work and is willing to help. Commissioner Kesterman will follow up via phone tomorrow and staff appreciate all thoughts and expertise.

Mr. Brett said every person vaccinated count, so staff should not be discouraged by low turnouts. HCPH has administered over 51,000 vaccines.

(d) Performance Management System & Accreditation Updates

Performance Management and Grants Coordinator Rebecca Stowe reviewed the performance management system journey and the Task Force's proposed changes to the performance management system. The changes will be implemented in the coming weeks. The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) feedback was positive regarding HCPH's performance management system. HCPH became accredited on March 14, 2017 but must reapply every five years so HCPH is in the reaccreditation process now. Ms. Stowe reviewed the reaccreditation requirements that are different from the initial process. Reaccreditation site visits are virtual. The application period is January 1, 2022 through March, 31 2022 and the documentation is due eight weeks after application.

Mr. Rippe asked about the health equity definition and system wide incorporation. The health equity coaches are mirroring the quality improvement coaches to help integrate health equity and quality improvement across the agency.

Ms. Puthoff asked about virtual site visit determination even though it does not occur until 2022. Yes, reaccreditations were virtual before COVID. Only the initial accreditation site visit is in person. Ms. Stowe's presentation and discussion shall count for 25 minutes of continuing education for the Board of Health.

8. Unfinished Business: None.

9. Finances

The April 2021 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet. Ms. Puthoff asked about the expense for Barbara Brown for \$11,697.92 with no description. Ms. Brown is a lead contract nurse for COVID-19. The services were rendered in March which was a busier month and are covered by one of the COVID grants. Mr. Rippe shared that the contractor list should be reduced in the future with the reduction in contact tracers and contract nurses.

Ms. Puthoff moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

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

10. Adjournment

Mr. Brett moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

Ms. Puthoff seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: June 14, 2021 at 4 p.m. via Zoom. The end of year Strategic Session meeting date to be scheduled soon.



Mark Rippe, President



Greg Kesterman, Secretary
Health Commissioner

