

**Hamilton County General Health District**  
**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**October 9, 2023 – 4 p.m.**  
**Minutes**

**1. Call to Order**

At 4 p.m., Elizabeth A. Kelly, 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: Elizabeth A. Kelly, M.D., President  
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 13 Clean Kitchen Award recipients and congratulated them for their efforts to maintain a high level of sanitation and staff education.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**Mr. Rippe** moved to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2023, Board of Health meeting and public hearing with one amendment to strike Ms. Puthoff's name from just the public hearing attendance.

**Mr. Brett** seconded the motion as amended.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**6. Public Comment: None.**

**7. Health Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Kesterman began his report with an update on the Norwood Health Department environmental health program inspections support. They have requested HCPH's help on a limited basis and were not supportive of a more comprehensive and complete plan for HCPH to provide environmental health programming.

Commissioner Kesterman discussed the possibility of providing bulk birth certificates for governmental and social service agencies at a reduced rate via the Hamilton County

513Relief Bus. The Board recommended its approval, and the motion and vote will be found under the new business section of these minutes.

Commissioner Kesterman updated the Board on the maternity license application for TriHealth Bethesda North Hospital. He reported that there are no current violations with the hospital and recommends that the Board approve the license.

Commissioner Kesterman then provided an update of the construction site of 5050 Section Avenue. As of now, the project is on target to be finished on time. He noted that HCPH has a December 15 delivery date of desks which is the targeted move in date. This is combined with an anticipated full transition of the property for the first week of 2024. He recommended that once complete, the Board consider holding a meeting at the new location. He answered all questions regarding the signage for the new property on Section Avenue. Commissioner Kesterman also mentioned that they are exploring the new directional modifications on various map applications online.

Commissioner Kesterman finished his report with an update on staff turnover. Details are contained in the Board packet.

## **Staff Reports**

### **(a) Medical Director's Report**

Dr. Steve Feagins, Medical Director, began his report with praise for the new clinic stating it will be very good for new patients and clinicians alike. He also remarked that there was great planning in the building development. He also mentioned that the Epic Electronic Health Record system is up and running and continuing to assist many providers.

Dr. Feagins gave an update on increased hospital admissions in Southwestern Ohio for COVID-19 and details of these admissions were included in his report. He also noted that there are free COVID-19 tests available through the mail and now clinicians can treat for positive take-home tests. He also noted that now there is a combination test to detect both influenza and COVID-19 and there is a website to help produce the data for this. He noted that these take-home tests are a great resource.

Dr. Feagins noted that Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center is announcing mask requirements for its facilities due to vulnerable patients. He remarked that other hospital systems are recommending masks but are not requiring them yet.

In his report, Dr. Feagins reported on antimicrobial stewardship. He discussed with the Board antimicrobial resistance and how infectious disease clinicians are recognizing this problem.

Dr. Feagins noted that there is a prolonged shortage of the primary drug used for syphilis treatment and now they have transitioned to another antibiotic. They are carefully reserving the primary treatment for certain patient groups for syphilis and the medication levels must be monitored.

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

### **(b) Department of Community Health Services**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to approve Regulation 4-2023: Adopting Revised Local Fees for Plumbing and Medical Gas.

**Mr. Meloy** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Dr. Kelly** moved to approve the TriHealth Bethesda North Hospital Maternity Licensure Application.

**Mr. Brett** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye; - Ms. Puthoff abstained on the motion.**

**Mr. Rippe** moved to approve Resolution E-2023: Increase Funding and Expenditures in Construction Demolition & Debris Restricted Fund in the 2023 Budget.

**Mr. Brett** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Mr. Meloy** moved to provide birth certificates at a reduced cost of \$2 less than the standard price to Hamilton County or other governmental or social service organizations that make bulk purchases of birth certificates.

**Ms. Puthoff** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Mr. Brett** moved to have a public hearing for the proposed sewage treatment system program fees schedule changes at 3:30 p.m. November 13, 2023, at the Hamilton County Public Health offices located at 250 William Howard Taft Road, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Ms. Puthoff** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

## 10. Adjournment

**Mr. Meloy** moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

**Ms. Puthoff** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

Next Board of Health meeting: November 13, 2023, at 4 p.m.

  
Elizabeth A. Kelly, M.D., President

  
Greg Kesterman, Secretary  
Health Commissioner

Assistant Health Commissioner Ms. Lindner reported that staff are excited about the new clinic property. In her report she noted that a new grant, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Site-based Program (COSSUP), was received at the end of September for \$1.6 million over three years. The grant focuses on Overdose Fatality Review and overdose prevention strategies.

The Division of Health Promotion and Education will be hosting its annual WeTHRIVE! Dinner on December 7, 2023, from 5:30-8 p.m. At the next Board meeting, Ms. Lindner will bring resolutions for the WeTHRIVE! schools and communities for the Board's consideration and signature.

**(c) Department of Environmental Health Services**

Assistant Health Commissioner Mr. Davidson began his report by looking at adjusting the sewage treatment system program fees. He noted it has been five years since the last increase. Mr. Davidson presented the methodology that supported these increases for sewage fees. He noted that this proposed increase in fees would need to be presented at a public hearing for which the required public notice will be provided. Commissioner Kesterman gave additional details for proposed fees for homeowners and others. Commissioner Kesterman and Mr. Davidson both stated that the team would look at the fee schedule on an annual basis.

The plumbing license fees adjustment public hearing was held just prior to the Board meeting. The Board recommended approval of the new fee schedule, which is reflected in the new business section.

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) completed an annual audit for the Solid and Infectious Waste and Construction and Demolition Debris programs for which they recently issued a summary report that indicated HCPH is in substantial compliance and provided comments complimentary of our program and staff.

Mr. Davidson concluded his report with the environmental health enforcement updates included in the Board packet.

**8. Finances**

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

**Mr. Meloy** 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 2023 third quarter financial report. Mr. Varner discussed details of year-to-date revenue, expenditures, budget, fund balances, and grant activity. The Health Department fund balances remain strong. Mr. Varner also detailed the 2022 State Audit and discussed the two non-compliance findings of the audit. One of the non-compliance findings was working on timely cash deposits. The other non-compliance was due to a self-reporting issue on the schedule of expenditures of federal awards.

**9. New Business:**