

**Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
November 8, 2021 – 4 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 followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call of Members

Members Present: Mark A. Rippe, President
James Brett
Dan Meloy

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

3. Clean Kitchen Awards

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

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Meloy moved to approve the minutes from the October 11, 2021 Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Mr Brett moved to approve the minutes from the October 9, 2021 Board of Health Strategic Planning Retreat.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

5. Public Comment: None.

6. Health Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Kesterman is pleased to report the pandemic statistics continue to go in the right direction. Hamilton County has 108,347 cases with 4,191 hospitalizations. The average cases per day is 155 (the peak was 716 in December 2020). The county reproductive value is 1.07, and the region is 1.02. Breakthrough cases are approximately 10 to 12 percent. The federal recommendation to mask will go away when cases are below 50 per 100,000. On the vaccination front, several age groups have hit the 80 percent threshold. HCPH started administering pediatric vaccine Friday November 5, with a good

turnout. Commissioner Kesterman explained ODH changes in K-12 quarantine requirements using the newly announced “mask to stay” and “test to play” Strategies. Mr. Rippe asked when the changes were implemented. The ODH made the changes two weeks ago. Hamilton County still has a lot of opportunities for vaccinations and boosters in our community.

The Community Health Improvement Plan is updated through September and is in the Board packet. Commissioner Kesterman shared he is continually amazed by the team’s effort and the new initiatives started and accomplished despite the pandemic.

Rebecca Stowe is compiling input from the strategic planning retreat and will present the draft Strategic Plan at the December Board meeting.

Commissioner Kesterman requested the Board approve HCPH opposing HB 463 if the bill continues forward. Mr. Brett shared the first hearing is this Wednesday at 10 a.m., and it still has a single sponsor.

The Maternity Licensure for Mercy Anderson Hospital is required by ORC, and the HCPH Board has approved the renewals in the past. There are no violations of which HCPH is aware. Commissioner Kesterman recommends that the Board approve the license.

The 2021 WeTHRIVE! annual recognition event will be virtual, and more details will be shared in the future. The Board is asked to approve the recognition proclamations.

Mr. Rippe was pleased to read about the recognition of Dan Burke and asked Commissioner Kesterman express to Mr. Burke appreciation from the Board.

Staff Reports

(a) Medical Director’s Report

Dr. Steve Feagins Medical Director reported the number of inpatients on a ventilator in our region is at 83 (compared with 163 in early October). The hospitalizations are decreasing; however, there is increased need for long term acute care. The number of ICU patients have remained consistent.

Dr. Feagins is pleased to be expanding the vaccination pool to the 5-11 years age group which is expected to accelerate the decline in overall cases. Delta is still the predominate strain. Globally, vaccinations need to be made available to others in need before giving boosters to the general public. Protection against infection may be slowly waning for vaccinated people, but the vaccines continue to be strongly protective against severe illness and death. Seniors are the most vulnerable population. The number of unvaccinated cases is 6 times higher than vaccinated cases, and the number of unvaccinated deaths is 12 times higher than vaccinated deaths. Moderna’s performance is trending slightly better than Pfizer’s, which is trending slightly better than J&J’s. Dr. Feagins stated the data for deaths per year prior to and after roll out of recommended vaccines show that the COVID-19 vaccine is among the best vaccines in history. Dr. Feagins shared positive results with alternative early treatment with flvoxamine and explained the clinical trial.

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

(b) Department of Community Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner Dr. Jennifer Mooney shared the major updates in disease prevention. They are very busy with new staff and expansion of services. The team is working on marketing services to outside organizations including local non-profits who work with people who are at high risk for STI acquisition. The clinical staff are working with first year medical students to create an educational orientation to TB treatment for our patients through different media platforms that can be translated into a variety of languages. Staff are administering flu and COVID-19 vaccinations.

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) was impressed with HCPH's toolkit on how to build local capacity for conducting infection control assessments and plans to continue the project period to allow for further growth and development.

The Harm Reduction Committee is breaking out into two work groups to focus on access and stigma.

Mr. Meloy thanked Dr. Mooney and her team for recognizing stigma and working to reduce its effects..

(c) Department of Environmental Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner Mr. Davidson shared that staff pivoted multiple times on vaccine operations in recent weeks. Tents were used in the fall, but with cooler weather approaching and the elections behind us, the HCPH clinic will be moving back to the Board of Elections. Mr. Davidson recognized the team for its nimbleness.

The agency and regional first COVID-19 After-Action Reports/Improvement Plans were very good reports. Mr. Davidson commended John Sherrard and Robin Thomas who received good feedback and put together the final products. Final reports are still to be submitted to ODH by March 31, 2022.

A sub-committee of the Solid Waste Management District is taking a close look at statutory authority for development of local rules for requiring review and approval of any construction, enlarging, or modification of any solid waste facility (that would be in addition to existing EPA approval). Their first meeting was held October 22, 2021, and the next meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2021, where they will discuss recommending putting into place additional rules. HCPH has two staff that are participating in the sub-committee – Chuck DeJonckheere and Kurstin Jones

Mr. Davidson welcomed Christa Hyson, HCPH's new Director for the Division of Emergency Preparedness.

There were seven condemnations this past month. Full details are in the Board packet.

7. Finances

The October 2021 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet.

Mr. Meloy moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye; - Mr. Brett abstained on Whitewater expenditures.

Finance Officer Greg Varner reported staff are working hard on drafting the 2022 budget and will present it at the December Board meeting.

8. Unfinished Business: None.

9. New Business

Mr. Brett moved to approve authorizing the Health Commissioner to provide, if needed, opposition to House Bill 463.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Mr. Meloy moved to approve the Mercy Health Anderson Hospital Maternity Application.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Mr. Meloy moved to approve the WeTHRIVE! Proclamations.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

10. Executive Session

Mr. Brett moved to go to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 4:47 p.m.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Mr. Brett moved to end Executive Session where no action was taken at 5:16 p.m.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

11. Adjournment

Mr. Meloy moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: December 13, 2021.



Mark A. Rippe, President



Greg Kesterman, Secretary
Health Commissioner