

**Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
June 8, 2020 – 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

District Staff Present: Greg Kesterman, Interim Health Commissioner
Dr. Jennifer Mooney, Assistant Health Commissioner
Dr. Steve Feagins, Medical Director
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
Greg Varner, Finance Officer

Guests: Rose Stertz, Trustee Delhi Township

3. Clean Kitchen Awards

Interim Commissioner Greg Kesterman read the list of three 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 May 11, 2020 Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

5. Interim Health Commissioner's Report and Environmental Health Services Report

Interim Commissioner Kesterman provided an update on COVID-19 statistics from ODH and HCPH; fortunately, there has not been a spike from the re-opening/Memorial Day celebrations. Testing sites, including an interactive map, in Hamilton County has been a great addition to HCPH's website. Click on sites to see their specific requirements and full details. Mr. Rippe would like that feature released to news media outlets. Interim Commissioner Kesterman will share at Commissioner Driehaus's update to the county and he will send a news release to media outlets.

HCPH received a Contact Tracing Grant for \$540K and we anticipate another round of funding when the state's new fiscal year starts July 1. HCPH is migrating to contract employees because some reassigned county employees are being recalled to their original

jobs. Currently managing 430 active cases with daily average of new cases at 20-25. Staff are providing training and education to outbreak facilities.

HCPH lobby is open, but it is not getting much traffic. Modifications were made to protect visitors and employees when our space reopened. The majority of inspection services are up and running now. Food Safety Classes may be done via Zoom or at Sharonville Convention Center to allow for adequate social distancing. WeTHRIVE! has welcomed two new communities to the initiative: the City of Wyoming & Miami Township.

Reviewed new COVID-19 requirements for restaurant re-openings. The majority of complaints received pertain to lack of social distancing, second most common complaint is employees not wearing masks. Also reviewed a map of restaurant complaints by zip code.

List of other industry re-openings on June 10 and June 19 reviewed. Interim Commissioner Kesterman highlighted the requirements of their re-opening. Updated orders have been received for billiards, card playing, dancing, and entertainment. Staff are working closely with Ms. Chin on an equitable enforcement process until the guidance documents catch up across sectors. Interim Commissioner Kesterman congratulated the Environmental Health Team for keeping up with the frequent rule and guidance document changes.

County Commissioner Victoria Parks put forth Racism as a Public Health Crisis. HCPH has been working on reducing health disparities in minority communities for several years, certainly as evidenced by the WT movement. We want to keep the dialogue and the momentum around this dialogue moving so that we can continue to address racial inequalities. Interim Commissioner Kesterman indicated that if Commissioner Parks provides an invitation to work on her workgroup, we would participate. We are keenly aware of the difference in health outcomes for African American mothers and infants; access to healthcare; and other over-represented diseases in minority communities. There are many programs at HCPH that already address this work.

Mr. Brett would like to talk more about contact tracing and proposed state legislation information to share with officials more broadly that it is not just related to COVID-19. They are not thinking about sexually transmitted diseases. The Association of Ohio Health Commissioners has opposed the proposed legislation. Requiring a signed statement may deter contact tracing participation. A second piece of proposed legislation would prohibit Public Health Districts from declaring businesses a public health outbreak location (schools, etc.). The Association of Ohio Health Commissioners is watching these two pieces of proposed legislation closely. Mr. Rippe requested that tonight's slides be shared with the Board.

Staff Reports

(a) Medical Director's Report

Dr. Steve Feagins Medical Director highlighted infection control work through a multi-agency workgroup. They meet monthly, and during this pandemic crisis, they have been meeting weekly. The workgroup has made recommendations on several issues. The expansion of visitor policy, which helps to better care for those who cannot speak for themselves. And the sustainment of screening, which is staff heavy and the staff are now needed elsewhere. The workgroup created protocol to screen visitors and limit access. Tests will always be limited; recommendations are to only test systematic patients. There is a backlog of elective

surgeries; STRATA database statistics reviewed. Dr. Feagins also reviewed pre and post system test chart. The week before and week after symptom onset has the highest probability of detection. Dr. Feagins explained the two different types of antibody testing and the nuanced mysteries of COVID-19. Daily incident stats reviewed; Dr. Feagins is pleased to see no increase of R factor since Memorial Day and mass gatherings.

Mr. Rippe echoed frustration with no visitor policy and the inability for families to communicate with elderly family members. Dr. Feagins agreed visitors/family are important to care.

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

(b) Department of Community Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner Dr. Jennifer Mooney provided an update on grants. The Tobacco grant was extended with another year of funding. OEI and MCH grants have been submitted to ODH; hope to hear status by July 1. Ending HIV Epidemic - ODH is the current recipient of CDC federal funds and will be eligible for this funding from CDC. ODH sending a consultant to Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland to draft a community specific plan to end HIV. The deadline has been extended to December 31. The OD2A grant is moving! Nice weather and the ability to provide services outdoors have been helpful. The build out continues with additional program areas starting. An additional harm reduction brick and mortar site is being considered in Price Hill. The NACCHO \$150K mentor activities award was received just prior to the pandemic hit, so the timeline has been delayed (not cancelled). Submitted budgets for \$1.2M COVID-19 response and contact tracing.

Dr. Kelly asked what is the Tobacco grant. Dr. Mooney explained it is a cessation and prevention grant that is largely focused on cessation.

Mr. Brett liked the story in Dr. Mooney's written report from Forest Park Fire Chief Alfie Jones. It is so nice to see people stepping up to help others in need.

6. Unfinished Business: None.

7. Finances

Finance Officer Greg Varner reviewed the COVID-19 Finance Update. Net impact of the last 11 weeks is down \$74K (receipts less fees paid). Many of the staff in these programs have been reassigned to COVID activities which will help save general fund expenditures to at least offset the decrease in revenues. Staff will continue to monitor as business reopens. HCPH continues to be fiscally strong at this point.

Mr. Rippe asked for an update on the mobile unit for the syringe exchange program. Staff visited dealers but no one is willing to lease due to the needed unit modifications. OD2A is insisting on a lease. Board Members have contacts for a private bank lease to purchase when we attempt to purchase the large exchange vehicle. Staff are studying quotes to get the cargo van to proceed in the short term. OD2A will probably not pay for two vans so the less expensive van will be purchase with general fund dollars already budgeted and approved by the Board. If OD2A will not pay for two vehicles, there is no requirement to lease the van which we need to acquire now.

The May 2020 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet.

Mr. Brett moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Dr. Kelly seconded the motion.

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

8. New Business:

Mr. Meloy moved to hold the July Board Meeting at 4 p.m. via Zoom.

Dr. Kelly seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

9. Executive Session:

Mr. Brett moved to go to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 5:02 p.m.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Mr. Brett moved to end Executive Session 5:41 p.m.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye


10. Adjournment

Dr. Kelly moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:43 p.m.

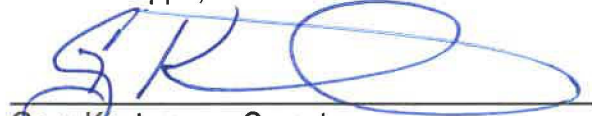
Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: July 13, 2020 at 4 p.m. via Zoom.



Mark A. Rippe, President



Greg Kesterman, Secretary
Interim Health Commissioner