

**Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
September 6, 2022 – 4:00 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
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

Guests: None

3. New Business:

Regulation 1-2022: Adopting revised fees pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code Sections 3709.09, 3709.21, 3717.25, Section 3717.45, and Section 3717.09 for food service operations, retail food establishments, temporary food service operations, vending operations, mobile food service operations, and attendance at a course of study offered by Hamilton County General Health District as a licensor in food protection.

Regulation 2-2022: Adopting revised local fees pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code Section 3709.09, 3709.21, and 3749.04 for Public Swimming Pools and Spas.

Regulation 3-2022: Adopting Revised Local Fees Pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code Section 3709.09, 3709.21, and the Board of Health of the Hamilton County General Health District Public Accommodation Facilities Public Health Sanitation Regulation 1-2009.

Ms. Puthoff moved to approve Regulations 1-2022, 2-2022, and 3-2022.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Brett moved to approve the minutes from the August 8, 2022 Board of Health meeting.

Ms. Puthoff seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye; - Mr. Rippe abstained

5. **Public Comment:** None.

6. **Health Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Kesterman shared an update regarding COVID-19 cases. The seven-day average is 217 per day. BA. 5 remains the predominate variant; however, BA. 4 is slowly increasing. Hospital and ICU admissions are on the decline. The 176 cases per 100,000 population correlates with low transmission. Hamilton County is currently in a low transmission category. Commissioner Kesterman noted that with a community level of 198 cases, just two more cases would elevate the community to a higher transmission category. HCPH continues public education communications on the shift toward personal assessment of risk and responsibility and the need to be vaccinated. HCPH will veer away from public changes in recommendations based on community level due to the volatility of the tool.

Fall boosters will be available by HCPH at a new Norwood location for the next year. The Board of Elections is no longer available due to elections. The new booster is being recommended. Mr. Rippe asked if the booster includes the flu shot. It does not, it includes the original COVID-19 and Omicron. Commissioner Kesterman reviewed the vaccination rates. HCPH will be taking over the Test and Protect website in mid- to late-September and will be paid for by the county. Fortunately, Hamilton County is not seeing a significant spread of Monkeypox. The protocol is for the HCPH team to continue to vaccinate those at the highest risk and expanded eligibility to those engaging in higher-risk behaviors.

Staff Reports

(a) Medical Director's Report

Dr. Steve Feagins Medical Director reported that Southwest Ohio recent school age children infection peak was 24 percent and is now at 22 percent. That is higher than the county region. The peak is attributed to sports starting up in August. Expect to see positive tests and the trend is double from last year's positive tests. That increase is attributed to relaxation in masking requirements, etc.

Dr. Feagins explained the current vaccine variant testing, boosters, as well as information about booster availability for children. Ms. Puthoff asked if Moderna is the only booster currently available. Pfizer is expected to be released as well. During the meeting, the Commissioner received a message that our COVID vaccine team just received 300 Pfizer doses. The booster manufacturer does not have to match the original vaccination manufacturer – they can be mix and match. There should be two months in between boosters. Flu shots are also available. Dr. Feagins explained there are almost no COVID-19 deaths in the 50+ years vaccinated category.

Polio is an issue that Dr. Feagins never thought would be a current topic of discussion. Just one paralytic case is concerning because that equates to 200 people infected. Dr. Feagins explained how waste water is used for testing and identifying areas of concern. While endemic to Afghanistan and Pakistan, if vaccine rates decline it could lead to a re-emergence. Inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) is still required for children and especially for healthcare workers. There are no polio vaccine supply issues. Wastewater sampling and surveillance can be used to monitor for polio, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV.) activity in the community similar to what has been established for Covid-19. This does not change the treatment plan. Public health's focus should be preparing a response

plan if there is a positive polio test. Mr. Rippe asked is it being looked at everywhere. Yes, and a positive will result with more testing. The team will be working on a communication plan for testing and vaccination. Dr. Feagins also provided an update on methods of Monkeypox detection.

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 that Ohio will be receiving \$800M in pharmaceutical settlement dollars. Hamilton County's share is \$12M over the next 18 years. For harm reduction efforts, the Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition Harm Reduction subcommittee is recommending a consistent Narcan distribution system throughout the county. This will include education, data collection, and evidence based strategic distribution. The goal of this strategy is to ensure the finite resource of Narcan is distributed to those at highest risk since ordinarily grant funding cannot be used to purchase Narcan directly.

The increase in syphilis reported to date in 2022 is likely inflated due to low/no tests conducted during the pandemic. The cases now do indicate an increase in syphilis among women engaging in sex exchange and those with substance use disorders. The HCPH team is doing proactive outreach and facilitating testing at the justice center to help expedite getting people to care.

WeTHRIVE! program has cross-cutting funding that also applies to the Environmental Health Department for COVID mitigation. The team is offering community stipends aimed at mitigation strategies to help build back communities affected by COVID. Many communities have creative ideas planned and are near implementation.

Ms. Puthoff shared the syphilis program historic background explaining that HCPH took over syphilis program from Cincinnati Health Department. While the numbers were expected to go up given more testing, Ms. Puthoff inquired if HCPH was in good standing with ODH. Dr. Mooney shared that ODH widely praises Hamilton County for their great work and the program is in good standing.

(c) Department of Environmental Health Services

Clean Kitchen Awards

Assistant Health Commissioner Craig Davidson read the list of ten Clean Kitchen Award recipients and congratulated them for their efforts to maintain a high level of sanitation and staff education. Mr. Rippe asked if the 5- and 10-year awards are different; suggest licensee's may appreciate having a window cling they can post at the door that signifies 5 and/or 10 years. Mr. Davidson will discuss with the team and perhaps can add that to the routine customer service survey to get feedback. Mr. Rippe also asked if inspectors make vendors take down the awards if they fail in a subsequent year. No, it is not in the current operating guidance and that may have legal implication if staff are trying to physically remove past awards per Ms. Chin.

Mr. Davidson was pleased to report Mr. Tara Dahal was selected as the 2022 Immunization Champion for Ohio. The award is presented by the Association of Immunization Managers.

Mr. Dahal was nominated by Christa Hyson, Director of Emergency Preparedness. Mr. Dahal is with the Nepali Language and Arts Center (located in Colerain Township) and was nominated for his vaccination efforts in the community. Mr. Dahal will be invited to a future Board meeting to recognize him for his outstanding efforts.

Mr. Davidson explained UC's first year medical students service-learning program. HCPH's Emergency Preparedness Division is one of 15 community agency host sites. The community service-learning projects help students to better understand social determinants of health in the community. Specifically, the students will assist HCPH with development of procedures, guidance, and identification of supplies/equipment necessary to support the medical needs of residents of a mass care shelter in an emergency.

HCPH was asked to participate with other stakeholders in Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center's Asthma Learning Health System to help improve outcomes of childhood asthma. Mr. Davidson is looking forward to working with the group.

Property condemnations are listed in packet. Mr. Rippe asked how long it takes to get to a fire department filing for HCPH condemnation. Mr. Davidson indicated that depends on the individual. Typically, an EMS run is the discovery trigger and building and/or zoning is another source.

Mr. Rippe asked if pool license communications could include the requirement for lifeguards since staff are so hard to come by. The past lifeguard issue was an anomaly because of modifications that were made to the pool. New pools and pool modifications should be the only ones affected by lifeguard requirements.

7. Unfinished Business: None.

8. Finances

The August 2022 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet.

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

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

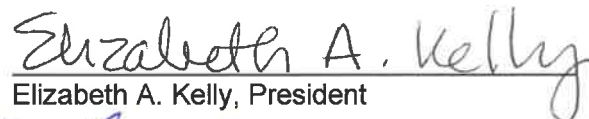
9. Adjournment

Mr. Brett moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:57 p.m.

Mr. Rippe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: October 10, 2022.


Elizabeth A. Kelly, President


Greg Kesterman, Secretary, Health Commissioner