

Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
May 11, 2015
Minutes

1. Call to Order

At 6:30 p.m., President Tracey Puthoff 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: Tracey Puthoff, President
Mark Rippe, Vice President
Dr. Kenneth Amend
Jim Brett

District Staff Present: Timothy Ingram, Health Commissioner
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
Greg Kesterman, Asst. Health Commissioner
Kathy Lordo, Asst. Health Commissioner
Mike Samet, Public Information Officer

Guests: Dan Meloy, Colerain Township
Zima Zucood, Standard Textile, Clean Kitchen Awardee
Lisa Gausman, Standard Textile, Clean Kitchen Awardee

3. Clean Kitchen Awards

Fourteen Clean Kitchen Award recipients were recognized, with representatives from Standard Textile present to accept their award.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2015 Board of Health meeting.

Dr. Amend seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

5. Health Commissioner’s Report – Staff Reports

Commissioner Ingram reported on Environmental Health staff work, in conjunction with the Hamilton County Sheriff Department, to identify and clean up a residence in Green Township used for manufacturing methamphetamine.

Commissioner Ingram cited Water Quality Sanitarian, Kevin Hawkins for receipt of a citizen compliment, noting that Mr. Hawkins is a consistent recipient of such compliments and exemplifies the “common sense” approach necessary to work with citizens in performing his job duties.

Commissioner Ingram also recognized Waste Management Director, Chuck DeJonckheere, who was awarded the American Society for Public Administration's Innovation Award, presented to an individual who has developed innovative methods of public service delivery. Mr. DeJonckheere and the Waste Management Division were recognized for their work with the Rumpke landfill.

On behalf of the Board of Health, Mr. Rippe asked that congratulations be extended to the Waste Management team on their work and subsequent award.

5a) Department of Community Health Services

Ms. Lordo reported on supplemental funding for Ebola, which requires each county to complete a plan to address the disease.

Ms. Lordo and John Sherrard, Emergency Response Supervisor, visited Sharonville administrators to discuss Point of Dispensing operations for the City. The City is considering implementing a "drive-through" dispensing operation.

Ms. Lordo reported that Sharonville immunization refrigerators have been moved to the City fire station. This will allow Hamilton County Public Health to resume vaccination clinics twice-a-month in Sharonville.

At the April Board of Health meeting, Mr. Rippe asked for information and statistics on the Cincinnati syringe exchange program. Ms. Lordo provided the following statistics, for the period ending April 30, 2015: 15,000 clean syringes provided; 308 clients seen; 27 clients in drug treatment programs; 212 naloxone kits distributed; 32 lives saved; five lives lost; 70 percent of participants tested positive for Hepatitis C; four percent tested positive for HIV.

Ms. Lordo continued with an update on the agency's accreditation program. Hamilton County Public Health will host a meeting of regional health leaders May 14 to review the agency's Community Health Improvement Plan. This group will ultimately serve as the Public Health Advisory Council. The Community Health Improvement Plan, once approved, will be incorporated into the agency's strategic plan and executed through the WeTHRIVE! movement.

Mr. Rippe was complimentary of the draft Community Health Improvement Plan.

5b) Department of Environmental Health

Mr. Kesterman reported on a reduction of odor complaints received about the Rumpke Solid Waste Landfill. The reduction is thought to be a result of Rumpke installing an additional odor control blanket.

Mr. Kesterman reported on two resolutions before the Board, both of which deal with implementation of statewide sewage rules. Both resolutions have been reviewed by the appropriate parties at the Ohio Department of Health, which has accepted and passed all changes.

6. Unfinished Business

As part of the Board of Health continuing education program, Ms. Puthoff provided a review of the roles of Board of Health members, ultimately leading to protecting public health and preventing the spread of disease. In addition, she reviewed policy responsibilities, which include: personnel; cellular communication; information technology, travel reimbursement; budget; and vehicle use.

7. Finances

Monthly Disbursements

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

8. New Business

a) Resolution E-2015 – Amending Sewage System Operation Policies

Mr. Rippe moved to adopt resolution E-2015.

Dr. Amend seconded the motion

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

b) Resolution F-2015 – Sewage System Treatment Policies and Standards

Dr. Amend moved to adopt resolution F-2015

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

c) Resolution D-2015-Syringe Exchange Program

Commissioner Ingram opened discussion for Resolution D-2015-Syringe Exchange Program, reporting that the Prosecutor's Office has declined to approve the resolution and pointed out the sections of Ohio Revised Code violated by syringe exchanges.

Commissioner Ingram said that a legislative request has been submitted to the Ohio Legislature and will be presented by State Senator Shannon Jones as an amendment to the State budget bill. The Senate President indicated favorability for the amendment moving forward for discussion as part of the budget bill. If the amendment is allowed, it proceeds to "committee" to reconcile any differences between the House and Senate versions; then to the House for vote; and finally to the Governor for signature.

Commissioner Ingram reminded that the Governor holds line-item veto ability. All inclusions to the budget bill must be completed, along with the budget, by June 30.

Commissioner Ingram added that Senator Seitz has indicated support for the program.

Dr. Amend asked if it would be prudent for the Board of Health to postpone action on Resolution D-2015 pending State action. Dr. Amend then moved to table the vote on Resolution D-2015.

Mr. Brett said that the Board of Health began discussion on syringe exchange in 2014. At the time, he was against the proposal. Having done due diligence, which included talking with first responders and law enforcement, while learning of injection drugs' cost to society, he has changed his position to one in support of the Resolution. Mr. Brett continued that if there was certainty of a positive outcome in the State Legislature, he would agree with waiting to pass the Resolution. However, as there is no guarantee, he urged the Board to move forward based on what is best for public health. Mr. Brett

continued that his discussions with first responders indicated that statistics for heroin use and blood borne disease acquired through contaminated syringes were considerably higher than reported, as many of the cases do not find their way into hospitals for treatment and reporting.

Mr. Rippe asked Commissioner Ingram what he anticipated happening at the State level. Commissioner Ingram shared the following quote from State Senator Jones: "I have run it up the flagpole and they indicated support. We'll see what happens next."

Commissioner Ingram reported on discussions he has had with leadership at the Ohio Department of Health regarding the administration's position on syringe exchange. Director Hodges replied that there is a conflict with law and he was uncertain as to how the discussion would culminate.

Commissioner Ingram reported that Dayton-Montgomery County has activated a syringe exchange program in a storefront, which has been in operation for just a few weeks. The Dayton program was achieved under a declaration by the Mayor as a public health emergency. In addition, he reported that the State of Kentucky has passed an "omnibus" bill covering all aspects of injection drug use and remediation, which includes the use of syringe exchange programs.

Mr. Rippe asked if township and village mayors who are willing might set up syringe exchange programs. Commissioner Ingram responded that the challenge is operating these programs under current drug and paraphernalia laws.

Ms. Chin said that the Prosecutor's Office is very aware of the health challenges posed by injection drug use. However, she said that the Prosecutor must be cognizant of criminal law and that syringe exchange exposed the Board to civil liability issues. She indicated that a Board of Health emergency resolution can act as an "umbrella" for communities electing to participate in a syringe exchange program, but such programs could still remain a liability for the Board and its members.

Mr. Rippe asked if anyone knows where the Governor stands on these programs. Commissioner Ingram replied that he did not. However, treatment costs for Hepatitis C patients amount to approximately \$84,000; for HIV -- \$600,000; and the cost of a syringe exchange program was approximately \$100,000 per year. From a business perspective, it is a simple decision.

Dan Meloy of Colerain Township echoed Mr. Brett's findings with first responders. There have been a considerable number of overdoses in the Township. Looking at an inventory of tools available to fight the addiction epidemic, syringe exchange is a viable option.

Mr. Rippe asked if other communities had reached out to Hamilton County Public Health to participate in syringe exchange. Commissioner Ingram responded that syringe exchange is one tool in a comprehensive approach and that communities are currently having these conversations. He believes that some communities would be willing to host exchange programs, following implementation of the first one.

Mr. Rippe asked what else the Board of Health might do to lobby State Legislators to pass legislation covering exchange programs. Commissioner Ingram responded that he has kept the Board of County Commissioners informed of the process. He suggested

contacting a lobbyist to begin work on the process. In addition, he is prepared to use his contacts at the State level to further discussions. The Ohio Department of Health will not take a stand until the Governor indicates his position. Commissioner Ingram also suggested that Board of Health members might consider using their contacts at the State level to further discussion.

Dr. Amend moved to table action on Resolution D-2015.

Ms. Puthoff seconded the motion

Roll Call Vote – Dr. Amend, Ms. Puthoff, Mr. Rippe – Aye; Mr. Brett – No

d) Rescheduling of June, 2015 Board of Health Meeting

Mr. Rippe moved to reschedule the June Board of Health Meeting to June 15, 2015, 6:30 p.m. at Hamilton County Public Health, 250 William Howard Taft, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219.

Dr. Amend seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

9. Adjournment

Dr. Amend moved to adjourn the meeting at 8 p.m.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: June 15, 2015, 6:30 p.m. – a change from the originally scheduled date.

Tracey Puthoff, President

Timothy I. Ingram, Secretary
Health Commissioner