

**Hamilton County General Health District**  
**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**May 8, 2017**  
**Minutes**

**1. Call to Order**

At 6:30 p.m., President Kenneth Amend M.D., 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: Dr. Kenneth Amend, President  
Jim Brett  
Thomas Chatham  
Tracey Puthoff, Esq.  
Mark Rippe, Vice President

District Staff Present: Timothy Ingram, Health Commissioner  
Greg Kesterman, Assistant Health Commissioner  
Craig Davidson, Assistant Health Commissioner  
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney  
Stephanie Taylor, Human Resource Officer  
Dr. Steven Bjornson, Medical Director  
Dr. Steve Feagins, Assistant Medical Director

Guests: Ryan Adcock, Executive Director Cradle Cincinnati

**3. Clean Kitchen Awards**

Greg Kesterman read the list of 22 Clean Kitchen Award recipients and congratulated them for their efforts to maintain a high level of sanitation and staff education.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to approve the minutes from the April 10, 2017 Board of Health meeting.

**Mr. Brett** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**5. Health Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Ingram presented Dr. Amend and the Board of Health with the Hamilton County Board of Health Accreditation Plaque. Commissioner Ingram also stated that the staff celebration of HCPH achieving accreditation status occurred on the morning of April 26. Board member Thomas Chatham represented the Board of Health and made some opening remarks. Gwen McFarlin, DAC Chairperson and Springfield Township Trustee attended and spoke to the staff. Also, Dr. O'Dell Owens attended the meeting and was the featured speaker. It was a fun event as many accolades were offered by the speakers while the Public Health Accreditation Board plaque was circulated among the staff in a full conference room. The plaque will be displayed in the lobby. The Board congratulated Commissioner Ingram on the very nice letter from the CDC regarding HCPH receiving accreditation status.

Commissioner Ingram announced that the House version of the Ohio Budget brought several disappointing proposals to local health districts. The first proposal is the reduction of state dollars to locals for becoming an accredited health department. The House budget proposal is a 25% reduction compared with the Governor's budget proposal. What this means to HCPH budget is instead of receiving an estimated \$180,000 per year, we would receive \$135,000 annually.

The second proposal is the proposed elimination of the Sanitarian Registration Board. The Ohio Sanitarian Registration Board is an independent Board providing oversight in the practice of environmental health. It has been in place since 1977. Hamilton County Public Health employs 27 sanitarians, primarily in the Divisions of Environmental Health, Water Quality, and Waste Management.

The House version of the Ohio Budget proposes transferring the Sanitarian Registration Board to the Ohio Department of Health. This proposal is fraught with many issues. It will dilute the professional status of the Ohio Registered Sanitarian. There are no other professional licenses in the State of Ohio that are not administered by an independent board or commission. Burying the Sanitarian Registration Board in a state agency (like ODH) would effectively eliminate independent oversight of this critical public health function, potentially placing many Ohioans at risk.

Other changes are a \$3 increase in birth certificates going to Children's Trust Fund and increased lead regulations from ODH.

The HCPH staff will work to oppose the first two proposals in the House Budget bill. Commissioner Ingram encouraged everyone to reach out to our Hamilton County legislative delegates and state your opposition.

Commissioner Ingram reported three proposals were submitted to the Hamilton County Levy Committee for funding beginning in 2018. The first proposal is a renewal of the Tuberculosis Prevention and Control program. We are requesting level funding of \$888,000 annually. The second proposal is the Harm Reduction-Blood Borne Infection Reduction program in order to address the secondary infections caused by injectable drug use (IDU), primarily due to the opiate epidemic. Hamilton County Public Health is requesting \$150,000 per year to support a comprehensive harm reduction-blood borne infectious disease prevention program. We will leverage other local and regional resources to match the requested amount of \$150,000 per year for a matched total of \$325,000 per year. This includes funding from both other public and private funding source.

As provided for by Ohio Revised Code 3707.57, a blood borne infectious disease prevention program would provide IDU with clean needles and syringes to decrease the risk of blood borne infectious disease acquisition and transmission. Participants in the comprehensive program would also receive hepatitis and HIV testing, counseling and education, and referral to treatment services.

The third proposal is for \$72,000 annually, to hire personnel/consultants to engage the dental community, healthcare, and others in addressing the need for dental care among various populations in Hamilton County. Unfortunately, there is a heavy burden and societal costs of citizens seeking dental treatment and pain relief in hospital emergency departments due to the person not having a dental home. This proposal will create an Oral Health Coalition charged



with developing a plan and then executing the plan to increase dental capacity in Hamilton County for the Medicaid/Medicare population.

Commissioner Ingram introduced Ryan Adcock, Executive Director of Cradle Cincinnati, who presented their 2016 annual report and accomplishments to the Board in detail. Cradle Cincinnati is focused on lowering Hamilton County's infant mortality rate. The good news is infant deaths are decreasing. Mr. Adcock thanked the HCPH staff for their support and input that make this possible. A copy of the Cradle Cincinnati 2016 report is enclosed in the Board packet for review. Ms. Puthoff inquired about the trends in 2017; Mr. Adcock was pleased to report the Q1 infant mortality rate is lower than national average and looking very encouraging. Commissioner Ingram thanked Mr. Adcock for his leadership.

Commissioner Ingram introduced Stephanie Taylor, Human Resource Officer, who is on hand to answer any questions about the **Personnel Policy Revision- Section 5.8 - Tuition Reimbursement Program**. Ms. Taylor reviewed PowerPoint presentation and reported in 2002, the Board of Health first adopted a tuition reimbursement policy for employees. This policy has been revised two times since its adoption with the last revision occurring in 2012. Since 2002, eight employees have utilized the program with a total cash outlay of \$56,000. Six out of the eight employees are still employed with HCPH. Due to several changes in the post-secondary education system, it is time to revise the policy in order to stay current and competitive.

Some of the changes proposed include accepting on-line course work, revising the current maximum reimbursement per year, and adjusting employee pay back in the event they leave our employment within three years of course work reimbursement. Ms. Puthoff inquired about the cap, should we limit someone seeking additional education if they can balance both work and school? Ms. Puthoff will recommend raising the proposed annual cap from \$4,200 to \$6,000 when Board votes later tonight. Dr. Amend inquired about the existing four employees. Commissioner Ingram suggested the Board could edit the language of the resolution to allow them to choose from the old policy or the new policy. Ms. Chin inquired about the program timing; Ms. Taylor reported it is a rolling program.

Personnel Policy Revision--Section 5.8 Tuition Reimbursement Program changes were discussed and modified as follows:

- Section E2, change the timing from less than 3 years to a trailing 36 months.
- Section E4, strike this item. It will be covered in the motion that the existing four employees are grandfathered and may choose between the old and new tuition reimbursement policy as long as they are eligible for the program.
- Section F5, increase maximum from \$4,200 to \$6,000.

**Mr. Rippe** moved to approve the Personnel Policy Revision as presented except for additional modifications to Sections E2 (36 months), E4 (strike), F5 (\$6,000), and to grandfather the existing four employees who may choose the old or new tuition reimbursement policy as long as they are eligible for the program.

**Mr. Chatham** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**



## **Staff Reports**

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

Assistant Commissioner Craig Davidson reported that Staff from Epidemiology and Assessment continues to make progress towards the goal of expanding our overdose surveillance and reporting beyond Hamilton County. As of early April, a daily report for Northern Kentucky is now being issued. Staff is now working to incorporate data from Butler and Clermont Counties into the process. During this next phase, the data will be moved to a web-based platform to better allow for the data to be both viewed from a regional perspective as well as permit data filtering and a drill down to specific counties. The current estimated timeframe for completion of this phase of the project is six to eight weeks. In the interim, Mr. Davidson has initiated discussions with the support vendor for the Inject Hope website to begin uploading our report files to the site. This will permit HCPH to direct users of the reports to the Inject Hope website instead of having them having to rely on a daily email. It is also hoped that moving the reports to an online format will make them more accessible; particularly to a wider audience.

Craig Davidson reported that a letter from Ohio Department of Health staff from the Bureau of Health Promotion was received on April 10 in follow up to a March 22 site visit with Health Promotion and Education staff. Bureau Director, Mandy Burkett, and Public Health Consultant, Esther Benatar, summarized their review of our progress to date on completing Tobacco Grant deliverables. All comments were positive and they congratulated staff on the great work that has been done thus far.

The first quarter 2017 newsletter and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) progress report were each recently sent to the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC). They summarize notable program accomplishments and highlights. Each of these documents is attached to the Board report.

Stories of progress highlighted in the newsletter range from a program hosted by Reading-Lockland Presbyterian Church that teaches middle school students how to plan and prepare healthy meals, to a military veteran on a mission in Mt. Healthy to prevent diabetes, and to firefighters in Forest Park partnering with Cradle Cincinnati to conduct infant sleep safety education. These and other stories are now also being shared via our blog on [watchusthrive.org](http://watchusthrive.org): [watchusthrive.org/blog](http://watchusthrive.org/blog)

Final planning for the annual PHAC meeting on May 11 is underway. We plan to highlight for the PHAC members achievements during 2016—including CHIP progress and public health accreditation. We will also review with them our new agency strategic plan, how we are working to align the current CHIP with the recently released State Health Improvement Plan, and initiate a discussion on health equity and cultural competency.

Craig Davidson also reported that During April 17-19, he was afforded the opportunity to attend the National Prescription Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit in Atlanta, GA along with staff from other Hamilton County Heroin Coalition member agencies and individuals representing similar coalitions in Northern Kentucky and Clermont County. There were approximately 2500 attendees comprised of clinicians, counselors, social workers, therapists, psychologists, interventionists; physicians, psychiatrists, nurses, pharmacists, dentists; advocates, families, and people in recovery; law enforcement personnel; public health and prevention officials; federal, state, and local officials and lawmakers; education specialists and researchers; treatment center owners and operators; and lawyers. Topical tracks for the break-out sessions



included heroin, law enforcement, clinical, advocacy, prevention, prescription drug monitoring programs, treatment, pharmacy, and third-party payer. Among the featured speakers were Dr. Tom Price, Secretary of Health and Human Services; Dr. Vivek Murthy, former US Surgeon General; Dr. Francis Collins, Director of National Institutes of Health; Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of National Institute of Drug Abuse; Dr. Anne Shuchat, Acting Director of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; former Congressmen Newt Gingrich and Patrick Kennedy; and Matt Bevin, Governor of Kentucky.

Overall, the conference was well-organized, generally informative, and a good opportunity to gain perspective on our efforts to date relative to those of other local coalitions and task forces throughout the United States working to address the opiate epidemic. The conference was affirmation that we are largely on the right track and are progressing as well as most other areas around the country. Commissioner Ingram attended a press conference this morning regarding 2016 data and the high number of overdoses in 2017. There is a lot of policy work and funding discussion that needs to happen.

The monthly Communicable Diseases Epi report was provided in the Board packets. Dr. Bjornson reported no major communicable disease problems.

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

Assistant Commissioner Greg Kesterman reported that on Monday, April 10, 2017, U.S. EPA responded to an emergency involving a mercury spill at a pawn shop located at 5905 Vine Street, in the Village of Elmwood Place, Ohio. The U.S. EPA requested HCPH and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency accompany them during the site inspection. Elemental mercury beads were observed inside the pawn shop, on the sidewalk, and along the curb in front of the building. U.S. EPA mobilized its Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) and Emergency and Rapid Response Services (ERRS) contractor to conduct emergency response cleanup services.

The Village of Elmwood Place notified HCPH that the Elmwood Place Community Improvement Corporation, which is a function of the Village Council, is now the current owner of the property because the previous owner was delinquent on property taxes. The U.S. EPA has secured additional funding for remediation inside the building. They are working closely with HCPH to allow for removal of non-contaminated items belonging to the tenant. Once the removal has been completed, the U.S. EPA will hire a contractor to remove remaining items and decontaminate the structure. That process may take three to four months.

Greg Kesterman reported an event which is included in the Board packet. HCPH has been an active proponent of conducting final tests on sanitary plumbing systems to ensure that long term public health problems are avoided. Recently, Brian Ores – Plumbing Inspector II, completed an inspection in a Norwood apartment building. During the inspection, the final air test on the sanitary system was unable to pass. Through the process of elimination, the contractor was able to determine that the leak was in a lower level apartment unit in which the cable company had sent its cable through the main sanitary stack. Through the use of the final air test, a major public health problem was averted.

There were five Housing Program Condemnations and two Food Safety Enforcement issues. Their reports can be found in the Board packet.

**6. Unfinished Business:**

Commissioner Ingram stated that the Cradle Cincinnati Presentation shall count as 30 minutes of training toward the required Board of Health training.

**7. Finances**

The April 2017 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet. Ms. Puthoff inquired about the Fifth Third expenses and Commissioner Ingram noted they are for purchasing ServeSafe course books.

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

**Mr. Brett** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**8. New Business**

Commissioner Ingram thanked Mr. Chatham for attending the accreditation celebration.

This is our Assistant Medical Director's first Board meeting and Dr. Feagins said he is looking forward to serving Hamilton County community.

Mr. Rippe thanked Commissioner Ingram for speaking to a local business group and reported that he did a great job.

**9. Adjournment**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

**Mr. Chatham** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

Next Board of Health meeting: June 12, 2017.



Kenneth Amend M.D., President



Tim Ingram, Secretary  
Health Commissioner

*Acting*