

Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
Minutes – October 8, 2007

1. Call to Order

At 6:31 p.m., President Mark Rippe called to order the regular session of the Board of Health of the Hamilton County General Health District.

2. Roll Call of Members

Members present: President Mark Rippe; Tracey Puthoff, Esq.; Kenneth Amend, M.D.
Jim Brett; Thomas W. Chatham

District Staff: Timothy Ingram, Health Commissioner; Kathy Lordo, Assistant Health
Commissioner; Chris Griffith; Lisa Humble, Chief Assistant Prosecuting
Attorney Nee Fong Chin

Guests: Brian Sovern, Carolyn Wallis, Frank Harmon

3. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Puthoff corrected page 2, number five, fifth line – the word “outside” should be “inside.”

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the September 17, 2007, minutes as corrected. **Dr. Amend** seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Yes: Amend, Puthoff, Rippe Abstain: Brett, Chatham

4. Health Commissioner’s Report

Mr. Ingram highlighted agenda items and his report items:

- a) An addendum to the finance report, which he distributed, replaces page 6b-11 of the original report submitted to the Board; it would be discussed later in the meeting.
- b) Two guests in attendance, Carolyn Wallis from Hamilton County Personnel Department and Frank Harmon from Ohio Insurance Company, would present information on 2008 employee health insurance later in the meeting.
- c) Alan Hamilton, in the Environmental Health Division, received Ohio Environmental Health Association’s Sanitarian of the Year award.
- d) An article published in a national plumbing magazine was included in the Board’s packet of information. Plumbing Inspector Carla Fultz wrote the article.
- e) A proposal for Employment Anniversary Awards would be discussed later.
- f) Mr. Rippe congratulated the Health Commissioner on the new look – new stationery and new logo. Ms. Puthoff suggested registering the new logo.
- g) The Board discussed recent news regarding Ohio’s no smoking law: 1) Ms. Puthoff said that a recent news story reported that Butler County Health Department does not investigate smoking complaints that occur after its business hours because the after-hour complaints can’t be addressed until the next day. Mr. Ingram said that, if necessary, the Health District does stagger employee hours to handle after-hour complaints. 2) The Health District has received over 400 smoking complaints and is close to taking a case to a hearing officer. Local decisions are appealed to Franklin County Court of Common Pleas. The Ohio Attorney General has said that they would represent local boards of health in these appeals.
- h) Mr. Rippe expressed his and the Board’s congratulations to Ms. Fultz and to Mr. Hamilton.

Assistant Health Commissioner Kathy Lordo

- a) The number of cryptosporidiosis cases increased in 2007 because the Health District reminded doctors, when testing for shigelosis, to also test for crypto.
- b) She gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Health District's new web site – Hamilton County Public Health. The “user friendly” site was designed with tools to make it easy to find information and forms, file nuisance complaints, and link to division information and resource library. Soon, customers will have the ability to go on-line and apply, pay, and print licenses and permits. Customers can now pay on-line for birth and death certificates, but the Health District mails the certificate.

Health District staff has the ability to immediately update the site, which is monitored by the District's Public Affairs Specialist and two Health Educators. Site development began the end of April and was completed at the end of August. A Health District grant for bioterrorism preparedness was used to develop the site because the grant requires the Health District to develop a quick response system.

Employees can be e-mailed from the site. For complaints, the standard is for staff to begin by contacting the complainant within 24 hours, after which an investigation will be scheduled. Mr. Chatham asked that the 24-hour standard to respond be qualified as “within 24 hours or the next business day” and that this language be on the site. Ms. Lordo thought the language was already on the complaint form, but she would check on it.

5. Regulation 5-2007, Amending Sections I and II of Plumbing Regulation 1-97

Plumbing Director Lisa Humble told the Board that a change in *Plumbing Regulation 1-97* was needed because of a change in State law, effective January 1, 2008. The new law requires commercial and residential plumbing contractors to get a State license in order to obtain a plumbing permit. Plumbing contractors doing outside sewer and water lines were exempted from the law.

This regulation has been discussed at previous Board meetings. Mr. Ingram read a summary of *Regulation 5-2007*. He also explained that four members voting affirmatively for the regulation this evening would dispense with the requirement to read the regulation at three consecutive public meetings. The regulation will go into effect 30 days after the regulation is first published.

After listening to the summary, **Mr. Brett** moved to approve *Regulation 5-2007, Amending Sections I and II of Plumbing Regulation 1-97*. **Mr. Chatham** seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Yes: Amend, Puthoff, Brett, Chatham, Rippe

6. Variance

Brian Sovern, 11695 Aristocrat Drive, Crosby Township, requested a variance to construct an open patio addition that would be approximately four feet from the edge of the existing septic tank. This is a preexisting property and preexisting house served by a subsurface sandfilter that was in compliance at the time of inspection.

Mr. Rippe swore in Mr. Sovern and Mr. Griffith, Director of Water Quality Division, after which Mr. Griffith presented Health District information: 1) Staff recommended denial of variance request because the open patio addition would not meet the ten feet setback required by *Household Sewage Regulation 529*. 2) Mr. Griffith informed the Board that the proposed construction wouldn't interfere with any future, onsite, replacement system. 3) Mr. Griffith said that, “as long as surface water is diverted away from the tank, no footer tiles are installed, and the area over and around the septic tank is protected during construction,” there should be no problems.

Ms. Puthoff moved to approve the variance for 11695 Aristocrat Drive, Crosby Township, with the following provisions: a) no drain tile around the open patio addition; b) ground surface is to drain away from the septic tank; c) area over and around the septic tank is to be protected during construction, d) Mr. Sovern is to work with Health District staff. **Dr. Amend** seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Yes: Amend, Puthoff, Brett, Chatham, Rippe

7. Employment Anniversary Award

Mr. Ingram reported on a staff survey. In this survey, staff members indicated their first preference, paid time off. Staff's second preference was a cash award. He distributed a handout that suggested ways to calculate 5-, 10-, 15-, 20-, 25-, 30-, and 35-year awards.

Discussion covered the following:

- a) The award should show value and grant recognition.
- b) Is the purpose of the award for retaining or attracting employees?
- c) Would number of days off affect workflow?
- d) Allow staff to choose cash or days off.
- e) The Board has taken action to make the Health District comparable to other health departments when it changed the *Personnel Manual* and increased employee benefits.
- f) Board members generally liked Mr. Ingram's idea to recognize staff at an annual staff breakfast when the Board President would present awards.

For the November meeting, Mr. Ingram was asked to run two of three profiles containing the following – use the lower numbers; show scope of workdays per year and scope of costs per year; when does the program start; determine a retroactive date.

8. Employee health insurance for 2008

Mr. Ingram said that the County Commissioners switch to Humana for 2008 employee health insurance represents a paradigm shift. For this reason, Mr. Ingram arranged for the Board to review alternative health insurance. He thanked Ms. Carolyn Wallis, Benefits Administrator from Hamilton County's Personnel Department, and Mr. Frank Harmon, of Ohio Insurance Company and representing Medical Mutual of Ohio, for taking time to present information to the Board.

For an alternative consideration, Mr. Frank Harmon presented the health insurance proposal from Medical Mutual of Ohio. This plan would be similar in benefits and costs to that offered by Anthem in 2007. Claims would be processed by Medical Mutual of Ohio rather than by the County Personnel Office. This insurance would use health reimbursement accounts, and the Board could custom tailor copays.

Ms. Wallis presented Humana insurance information available through the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners: 1) Humana had the best plans for employees to take steps to level off increases. 2) Employees may choose from two high deductible plans, an HMO plan, and a PPO plan. 3) The Humana plans encourage consumer behavior changes by decreasing utilization for illness and promoting wellness.

Mr. Chatham said that comparing Humana and Medical Mutual of Ohio on such things as deductibles, copays, etc. is difficult. To him, the issue is, "Will our costs be lower in a pool of 68 people or in a pool of 6,000 people?" To answer this, one would have to study the people in each pool to determine the advantage of one over the other. Mr. Harmon said that the Health District would be part of Medical Mutual's pool, and Medical Mutual insures more government employees in Ohio than any other company.

Ms. Puthoff asked, "Does the Board get enough savings to take the risk of being part of a small pool as opposed to a larger pool?" After more discussion, the Board thanked Mr. Harmon and

Ms. Wallis for their time in providing 2008 health insurance information. Mr. Ingram said he would call them after the Board made a decision.

The discussion continued with Ms. Puthoff adding that she would need information on an alternative health plan several months in advance to do a fair comparison. **Mr. Rippe** moved to approve using the Hamilton County Commissioners plan from Humana for 2008 employee health insurance. **Ms. Puthoff** seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Yes: Amend, Puthoff, Brett, Chatham, Rippe

9. Finances – revenue and expenditures; mileage and disbursements

Addendum for page 6b-11 in the financial packet presented additional disbursements needed to close out a grant. After a brief discussion of the submitted report, **Ms. Puthoff** moved to approve the revenue and expenditure report and payment of the mileage and disbursements.

Mr. Chatham seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Yes: Amend, Puthoff, Brett, Chatham, Rippe

10. Executive Session

None.

11. Adjournment:

With no other business to come before the Board, **Ms. Puthoff** moved to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Role Call Vote – Yes: Amend, Puthoff, Brett, Chatham, Rippe

Mark A. Rippe, President

Timothy I. Ingram, Secretary
Health Commissioner