

Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
April 13, 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
Tom Chatham

District Staff Present: Timothy Ingram, Health Commissioner
Greg Kesterman, Asst. Health Commissioner
Kathy Lordo, Asst. Health Commissioner
Dr. Stephen Bjornson, Medical Director
John Teufel, Finance Officer
Mike Samet, Public Information Officer

3. Clean Kitchen Awards

Eight Clean Kitchen Award recipients were recognized.

4. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Amend moved to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2015 Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

5. Health Commissioner's Report – Staff Reports

Commissioner Ingram reviewed the first quarter Plan of Work, indicating good overall progress on most measures.

Commissioner Ingram reported on the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners' resolution to create the Hamilton County Heroin Coalition, comprised of representatives from throughout the region serving to address the growing problem of opiate use. There are currently eight members on the Coalition.

The Cradle Cincinnati initiative to address infant mortality, for which Hamilton County Public Health provides data support, reported leveling rates of infant mortality and a reduction in the five-year trend. While much work remains, initial signs are positive.

Commissioner Ingram thanked the District Licensing Council for its annual meeting attendance and review of revisions to plumbing and water quality rules and fees. Mr. Brett indicated that Mr. Kesterman conducted an informative, pertinent meeting and that Council members appreciated the information.

5a) Department of Community Health Services

Ms. Lordo reported on 2014 year-end results and 2015 targets for performance for the Ohio Department of Health syphilis and HIV grants. Most of the targets are on track and the Ohio Department of Health completed a positive review for the agency's programs.

Ms. Lordo explained that the agency has been short two disease investigative positions due to resignations and new hires are ineligible to perform some of the required work until they complete training.

Dr. Bjornson reported that there is nothing remarkable about the month's communicable disease report.

5b) Department of Environmental Health

Mr. Kesterman detailed a successful outcome for a housing complaint. Environmental Health sanitarians worked with the Sheriff and University of Cincinnati's Mobile Crisis Team to clean up a condemned home, allowing a tenant to return to residence.

Mr. Kesterman reported on implementation of statewide sewage rules. Agency personnel met with representatives from the Ohio Department of Health and received the go-ahead to move forward with County rules. Mr. Kesterman plans to review the completed rules at the May, 2015 Board of Health meeting.

Commissioner Ingram and Mr. Kesterman met with representatives from the Village of Indian Hill to provide an update on the new rules requiring Hamilton County Public Health to handle sewage treatment system inspections in the Village. A draft transition plan has been created. Indian Hill administration plans to share the plan with its Council with the intention of transitioning the program to Hamilton County Public Health in September, 2015.

6. Unfinished Business

Ms. Puthoff indicated that discussion of continuing education for Board of Health members would be resumed at the May, 2015 Board of Health meeting.

7. Finances

Monthly Disbursements

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Brett seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Mr. Teufel reported that first quarter finances are on target for budget achievement. Total revenues for general and restricted funds consolidated through March 31, 2015 are at 99 percent of budget.

On the expense side, Mr. Teufel reported overall personnel costs for the first quarter are at 98 percent of budget. During the quarter, the agency added three new sanitarians – two as replacement positions and one to handle Sharonville volume. In addition, two replacement disease investigation specialists were added. During the second quarter, the agency will: add an additional health educator, funded by Cradle Cincinnati, to handle maternal smoking cessation programming; add an additional plumbing inspector; convert two customer service staff from temporary to permanent; convert the information technology position from contract to staff. Mr. Rippe asked if the second quarter hiring is budgeted, to which Mr. Teufel responded affirmatively.

In the area of fund balances, Mr. Teufel reported that the agency will receive \$460,000 to administer the Emergency Ebola Supplemental Public Health Emergency Preparedness program. The agency will realize approximately \$125,000 of this grant, which will cover agency expenses for the program.

8. New Business

- a) Hamilton County Heroin Coalition: Commissioner Ingram will be heading the prevention segment for the new Hamilton County Heroin Coalition. Hepatitis and HIV infections are higher than they should be for the region. Several communities have become active in prevention and have begun discussing potential syringe exchange programs, as well as naloxone distribution.

Commissioner Ingram presented a draft resolution declaring a public health emergency and authorizing a syringe exchange program in Hamilton County. The resolution would allow exchange programs to move forward only with the consent of participating communities.

Dr. Bjornson highlighted the increase in hepatitis and HIV and indicated that many of the new infections being recorded are transmitted through the sharing of contaminated syringes. Hepatitis rates in Hamilton County are currently two times the State levels.

Dr. Amend reminded the Board that it had previously heard a presentation on syringe exchange programs and had reacted favorably.

Mr. Brett has polled several first responders regarding syringe exchange programs. All responded positively, indicating that programs making their jobs safer are encouraged.

Ms. Puthoff asked about the necessity of the “emergency” component for the resolution. Commissioner Ingram responded that this allows programs to be more quickly implemented to respond to public health needs.

Mr. Rippe inquired about the number of other counties around the country currently operating syringe exchange programs. Commissioner Ingram responded that programs were operating in most major population centers around the country, while in Ohio, there are currently programs operating in Cleveland, Portsmouth and the City of Cincinnati.

Mr. Rippe asked if there were any results available from the Cincinnati exchange program. Ms. Lordo indicated that she would gather results and share them at the May, 2015 Board of Health meeting.

Commissioner Ingram reported that the resolution is in the hands of County Prosecutor Nee Fong Chin for comment. Ms. Puthoff indicated that she will also read and submit any edits. The edited resolution will be presented to the Board of Health for action at its May, 2015 meeting.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Rippe moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

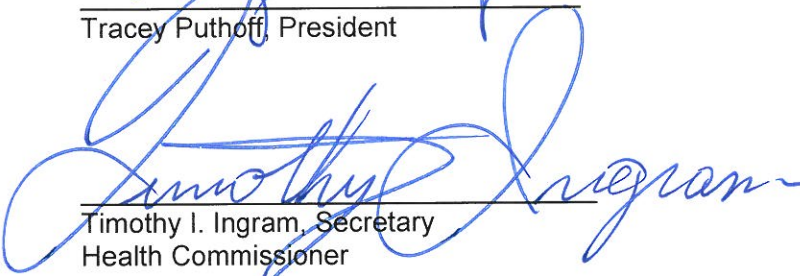
Dr. Amend seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: May 11, 2015.



Tracey Puthoff, President



Timothy I. Ingram, Secretary
Health Commissioner