

**Hamilton County General Health District  
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH  
August 11, 2025 – 4 p.m.  
Minutes**

**1. Call to Order**

At 4 p.m., Dan Meloy, 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, President  
Tracey A. Puthoff, Esq.  
Eric Knapp  
Max Miller

District Staff Present: Greg Kesterman, Health Commissioner  
Craig Davidson, Assistant Health Commissioner  
Jackie Lindner, Assistant Health Commissioner  
Steve Feagins, M.D., Medical Director  
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney  
Greg Varner, Finance Officer  
Allison Babka, Public Information Officer

Guests Present: None.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Clean Kitchen Awards**

Assistant Health Commissioner Craig Davidson read the list of three Clean Kitchen Award recipients and congratulated them for their efforts to maintain a high level of sanitation and staff education.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**Mr. Miller** moved to approve the minutes of July 14, 2025, Board of Health meeting with the following amendment under Section 10 Executive Session: No decisions were made from the Executive Session.

**Mr. Knapp** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**6. Public Comment: None.**

**7. Health Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Kesterman highlighted several areas from HCPH's quarterly performance report. HCPH submitted six new grant applications last quarter, with three being funded and three being rejected, which will be reflected in the next quarterly update due to timing. New diverse grant opportunities are being pursued, as there has been a significant decline in traditional federal and state grant opportunities. The number of birth certificates issued was

the highest on record since measurement began. Over 3,600 birth certificates were issued last quarter with diverse clients purchasing them. The 513Relief Bus has been a great partner with HCPH to encourage new birth certificate applicants. Ms. Puthoff asked about the 513Relief Bus implications regarding discounted birth certificate applications. Commissioner Kesterman noted that there have been no complaints to date.

Commissioner Kesterman noted that the access to testing and treatment metric continues to increase. This metric shows the continued outreach for infectious disease testing at the HCPH clinic. The metric for the number of lead hazard reduced units continues to trend positively. Ms. Puthoff asked a question regarding the source of the lead program's funding. Commissioner Kesterman answered that HUD was awarded this grant and some funding has come from ODH.

Commissioner Kesterman reviewed the performance accountability scorecard. He noted that this quarterly performance report started in Q1 2023, and they now have 10 quarters of data to review. This tool has assisted HCPH's administrative team implementing new, revising, and expansion updates. The culture of quality improvement survey agency score increased in 2025. HCPH is close to rolling out an upgraded water quality database for the STS program. Along with an improved nuisance database, both should be ready by the end of the year. HCPH also has a cybersecurity incident response plan in development per the governor's approved budget. Commissioner Kesterman answered a question from Ms. Puthoff about HCPH's response to phishing scams. He noted that the County has a program in place and HCPH participates. The program includes readiness testing for staff. Full details of HCPH's quarterly performance report were included in the Board packet.

Commissioner Kesterman concluded his report with an update on federal funding. The HIV Prevention Services in Sexual Health Clinics stands with no NOA on August 1. This grant is \$600,000. HCPH received news that we would be awarded the full \$3M award for the Overdose Data to Action grant, but we have not yet received the NOA as it goes through two additional reviews than it had in the past. A federal executive order on ending crime and disorder contains language that could potentially change grants in the harm reduction space. Commissioner Kesterman noted that HCPH has not heard any response or potential implications from health partners from this executive order at this time. Mr. Meloy provided insight into the status of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Commissioner Kesterman answered a question from Ms. Puthoff regarding the language of the executive order.

## **Staff Reports**

### **(a) Medical Director's Report**

Medical Director Dr. Steve Feagins highlighted statistics from the 2024-2025 influenza season, noting that there was a high severity for all ages and by age group. It was the first high severity season since 2017-2018. He provided influenza statistics, including estimated hospitalizations and pediatric flu deaths. Pediatric flu deaths were the highest number recorded in any non-pandemic season since 2004.

Dr. Feagins reported on the Pfizer Bicillin L-A recall. Bicillin is reserved for high-risk individuals for the treatment of syphilis. To preserve the current limited stock of Bicillin L-A., health systems have noted that Bicillin L-A will be administered only for pregnant women,

HIV positive patients, and patients who have difficulty adhering to Doxycycline therapy. Health systems, including HCPH, are watching their stocks carefully.

A Legionnaire's disease cluster has been identified in Harlem, New York. The likely source is a cooling tower in the area that may have been spraying mist containing *Legionella* bacteria. Ohio has 311 cases of Legionnaire's disease YTD with 286 hospitalizations. Maps of Ohio counties were shown comparing Legionnaire's disease incidence and Lyme disease testing. Dr. Feagins highlighted certain water systems that were at risk for promoting *Legionella* growth. Certain conditions promote amplification including water stagnation, warm temperatures, organic matter, protozoa, and low levels of disinfectant. Potential areas include after construction, dead ends in the piping, stagnant water, and ice machines. Facilities should contact their local health departments, which then inform ODH. ODH then provides guidance for testing and remediation requirements and a review of water management plans. A map of Legionnaire's disease cases shows they are predominantly found in the eastern and northeastern area of Ohio.

The monthly communicable diseases report from epidemiology was provided in the Board packet.

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

Assistant Health Commissioner Jackie Lindner shared the most recent conferences the Harm Reduction staff were able to attend. These conferences included the NACCHO 360 conference in Anaheim, California, and the annual OD2A Recipient Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. Staff presented information on collaborating with healthcare systems, the Stories Over Stigma program, and provided information on HCPH's drug checking efforts. Ms. Lindner noted that the staff presentations were well received, and she thanked the team for their work.

Ms. Lindner noted non-fatal overdoses in Hamilton County are gradually increasing. June was the highest month for this year with 182. The numbers are edging back down but they are still researching causes.

Ms. Lindner reported that the Epidemiology team is investigating a small cluster of tuberculosis cases. ODH notified HCPH in June that CDC has identified a genomic match among several recent cases of tuberculosis. Ms. Lindner noted that these individuals may be connected through a common residence in a nearby apartment complex. Staff are continuing to test and screen individuals for tuberculosis at community-based locations

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

Assistant Health Commissioner Craig Davidson provided the current list of delinquent sewage treatment system program fees and reviewed the process for annually certifying the list for submission the Auditor's office and placement on the property tax record for each property owner. He noted that the sewage treatment system program cost methodology was recently completed in accordance with Ohio Revised and Administrative Codes. Mr. Davidson explained the methodology for assessing need for potential fee adjustments includes factors such as wages, benefits, and anticipated costs for future inspections. The last adjustment to fees for this program was in 2023. Based on the recent analysis, it is not recommended that these fees be revised for the upcoming licensing period.

Mr. Davidson continued his report by stating that his team has also completed the required annual cost methodology for license fees for food service operations and retail food establishments. He noted that this analysis is also dictated by the Ohio Revised and Administrative Codes. A proposed increase of around 5% for all fee categories is recommended. The proposed hearing for this fee increase will be at the October Board of Health meeting. Details of these proposed license fee increases are in the Board packet.

Mr. Davidson stated they are finishing the cost methodology process for the pool and campground programs as well. He noted that he plans to provide recommended adjustments to license fees for these programs at the next Board meeting.

HCPH is also looking at a new software platform that will be helpful for the management of these programs. Mr. Davidson noted the state-provided software has proven difficult to utilize, and his team is looking at other options. Mr. Davidson noted that they would need a budget revision in the future should they decide to switch software platforms. He noted Clermont County recently decided to move to the platform that is being considered. A proposed switch may include a \$35,000 up-front development and migration cost and a \$55,000 annual cost. A more refined quote from the vendor is being requested as a next step.

Commissioner Kesterman noted that HCPH team members have submitted multiple requests and recommendations for changes and improvements to the state software. Commissioner Kesterman said that the HCPH team continues to experience difficulty with the state provided software system, which has prompted additional inquiry with the alternative vendor. Some of the difficulties with the state provided software include difficulties associated with pulling information for the cost methodology, such as a list of addresses for operators. Public access to inspection records has also proven to be a concern.

Mr. Miller asked a question regarding whether HCPH is under contract with the current software company. Commissioner Kesterman stated that they are not as the contract is managed by the Ohio Department of Health and provided to local health districts at no cost.

Mr. Davidson noted that there was a confirmation of West Nile virus in a sample of mosquitoes collected in the Wyoming area of Hamilton County. He reviewed HCPH's response and mosquito testing protocols. Full details of HCPH's response are included in the Board packet. HCPH will continue to collect mosquito samples and submit to ODH for testing for West Nile virus until late summer / early fall.

Details of the most recent TAP Health Summer Academy session hosted at the HCPH clinic were shared. Students from this Health Collaborative program were able to learn from different HCPH directors and experience the ins and outs of seeking a career as a physician, registered, nurse, or any career within the broad spectrum of healthcare.

Mr. Miller asked a question regarding special assessments and annual inspections of sewage systems. Mr. Davidson noted that the delinquent sewage fees are from various properties incurred as a result of inspections performed throughout the year.

Environmental Health enforcement updates are included in the Board packet.

## **8. Finances**

The July 2025 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet.

**Mr. Knapp** moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

**Mr. Miller** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**9. New Business**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to hold a public hearing for the proposed food service operation and retail food establishment program fee adjustments at 3:45 p.m. on October 13, 2025, at Hamilton County Public Health offices located at 250 William Howard Taft Road, Cincinnati, OH.

**Mr. Kapp** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to approve Resolution C: Certification of Delinquent Sewage Fees.

**Mr. Miller** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**10. Executive Session pursuant to RC Section 121.22 (G)(2) to discuss the acquisition of property**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to go to Executive Session to discuss the acquisition of property at 4:52 p.m.

**Mr. Meloy** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

The Board came out of Executive Session at 5:00 p.m. with no decisions being made.

**11. Adjournment**

**Mr. Knapp** moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

**Mr. Miller** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

Next Board of Health meeting: September 8, at 4 p.m.



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Dan Meloy, President



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Greg Kesterman, Secretary  
Health Commissioner

