

Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
January 8, 2024 – 4 p.m.
Minutes

1. Call to Order

At 4 p.m., Elizabeth A Kelly, 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: Elizabeth A. Kelly, M.D., President
Dan Meloy, Vice President
Mark A. Rippe

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

Guests Present: None.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Clean Kitchen Awards

Craig Davidson read the list of two 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. Meloy moved to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2023, Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Rippe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote –All Aye

6. Public Comment: None.

7. Health Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Kesterman began his report by announcing the move is complete into the new Section Avenue location and shared pictures of various positions in the building. All pictures of the staff offices, break rooms, and conference rooms are included in the board packet. Commissioner Kesterman formally invited the Board to the Open House on February 8, 2024, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the new 5050 Section Avenue location.

Commissioner Kesterman continued his report by stating that the Main Street location has a tentative potential lease suitor. He noted that regardless of if a new tenant moves into the

Main Street location, the HCPH team is moving out effective January 26. He noted that for a period this year, HCPH will be paying rent on two locations until the Main Street location is occupied.

Staff Reports

(a) Medical Director's Report

Dr. Steve Feagins, Medical Director, began his report noting his team is very appreciative of the new clinic and are excited about new opportunities with the facility. He shared a picture of the sexual health and tuberculosis clinic.

Dr. Feagins outlined several public health clinician education opportunities in 2024 that include latent TB infection treatment education for primary care clinicians, quarterly harm reduction education and updates for primary care clinicians, public health grand rounds education for internal medicine and surgery residents, and an opportunity to utilize the clinic for internal medicine residents as a clinical rotation site.

The Infectious Disease Working Group meets weekly and shares its notes with local health systems and The Health Collaborative. In 2024, this group will continue to meet weekly and include education. The agenda is set by health department medical directors from southwest Ohio, northern Kentucky, and guests from ODH.

In his report, Dr. Feagins outlined Influenza, COVID-19, and RSV emergency department visit numbers. He also noted that many health systems are challenged by the sickness of staff which creates pressure for patient capacity. Dr. Feagins also detailed local Mpox cases in southwest Ohio which had a total of 33 confirmed cases in 2023.

The State Medical Board of Ohio is getting inquiries about attending physicians signing death certificates. Dr. Feagins explained there is a 48-hour window for the funeral director or other person in charge of final disposition to obtain the attending physician signature. The attending physician is not required to be present at the death. He outlined the challenges and shared with the Board the forms required to fill out for death certificates.

The monthly Communicable Diseases Epi report was provided in the Board packet.

(b) Department of Community Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner, Ms. Lindner, began her report by sharing the final harm-reduction vending machine was installed at the University of Cincinnati ER on Friday, January 12. Ms. Lindner also noted that the other two harm-reduction vending machines have seen increased traffic and use.

On January 4, 2024, HCPH in conjunction with the Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition, issued an increased overdose activity alert. The increase in overdoses was first noted on December 31, 2023, and then overdoses on January 2 rose to 12 cases with 3 suspected deaths by the coroner. The alert was distributed to a network of partners via the Office of Addiction Response and HCPH to raise awareness and allow for increases in response capacity if needed.

Ms. Lindner also noted in her report the new clinic is open and seeing patients.

(c) Department of Environmental Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner, Mr. Craig Davidson, began his report noting that there are alerts issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and United States Food and Drug Administration concerning potential cases of high blood lead levels in children who had consumed recalled cinnamon applesauce pouches. A total of 17 stores were identified and visited by Waste Management (WM) staff and corrective actions were initiated in accordance with guidance issued by the Ohio Departments of Health and Agriculture. All locations either disposed of the product, pulled them from shelves to be disposed of, or did not carry the product. Each attested to either not having received or voluntary destruction of the product. These details were documented and provided back to ODH and ODA as requested. As of December 29, CDC has received reports of elevated lead blood levels in 80 confirmed cases, 187 probable cases, and 20 suspected cases for a total of 287 cases from 37 different states.

Mr. Davidson noted that the Waste Management team overseeing the Lead Hazard Reduction Grant from HUD is conducting more outreach in the community. The team has participated in more community events to distribute information about resources provided by the program and how to apply. He noted that this grant will now run for an additional year, ending in the second quarter of 2025. Mr. Davidson also noted the changes to the budget and benchmarks for this extended grant were approved by the HUD grant officer.

Mr. Davidson also highlighted that the Loveland Landfill is making progress toward closing and redeveloping the site. HCPH has been informed through a third-party consultant that there has been considerable progress in 2023 toward redeveloping the area. He also noted that there is a new buyer that has come forth and will have to ensure full and final closure prior to redevelopment of the site.

Mr. Davidson explained why H. Hafner and Sons facility is non-compliant, and licensing postponed. Mr. Davidson stated that the facility is moving forward, and WM staff continue to work with the facility and the bank to find a resolution.

Mr. Davidson noted that there was a local emergency preparedness exercise with partners who participate in the BioWatch program. Federal, state, and local partners participated in this exercise. The exercise scenario assessed the Cincinnati BioWatch Advisory Committee's capability to respond to a potential bioterrorism threat.

Mr. Davidson concluded his report with the environmental health enforcement updates included in the Board packet.

8. Finances

The December 2023 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet.

Mr. Rippe moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

fGreg Varner, Finance Officer, presented the 2023 fourth quarter financial report. Mr. Varner discussed details of year-end revenue, expenses, budget, fund balances, and grant activity. Mr. Varner noted that much of the general fund deficit was due to budgeting

revenue incorrectly for plumbing, year-end expenditures using past funds in harm reduction, and a small deficit in disease prevention for Section Avenue needs. Mr. Varner presented a financial update on Section Avenue. Mr. Varner concluded his report with an up-to-date summary of HCPH grants; one grant ended, two new grants were awarded, and three grants were extended.

9. New Business:

Dr. Kelly moved to approve the Proclamation recognizing Phil VanBenschoten.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote- All Aye

Mr. Rippe moved to approve Resolution A: Construction and Demolition Debris Fund Budget Adjustment.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote- All Aye

Mr. Rippe moved to approve Commissioner Kesterman's request to attend and expense the AOHC spring and fall conference. In addition, he is authorized to attend the National Association of County and City Health Officials conference.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote- All Aye

Commissioner Kesterman distributed three resumes to Board Members and recommended that he would offer a meeting with his leadership team to these three prospective board candidates. After discussion, Commissioner Kesterman recommended a formal invitation to come observe the February Board Meeting. The Board discussed questions that prospective candidates would be asked. Commissioner Kesterman will provide candidates two questions in advance of the meeting and will share them with the Board in advance.

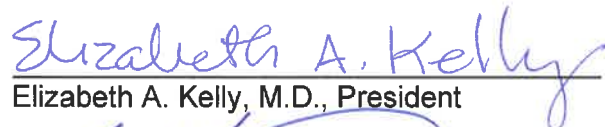
10. Adjournment

Mr. Meloy moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:11 p.m.

Dr. Kelly seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: February 12, at 4 p.m.


Elizabeth A. Kelly, M.D., President


Greg Kesterman, Secretary
Health Commissioner