

**Hamilton County General Health District
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH
April 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
Eric Knapp
Max Miller

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: Semone Grigsby (Alphabet Academy)

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Clean Kitchen Awards

Assistant Health Commissioner, Mr. Davidson, read the list of six Clean Kitchen Award recipients and congratulated them for their efforts to maintain a high level of sanitation and staff education. Mr. Davidson personally thanked Semone Grigsby from Alphabet Academy of Springfield Township who received the award in person.

5. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Knapp moved to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2024, Board of Health meeting.

Mr. Miller seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

6. Public Comment: None.

7. Health Commissioner’s Report

Commissioner Kesterman updated the Board on the flood that occurred at the 5050 Section Avenue property where the new clinic is located. A partially obstructed drain in the parking lot backed up and water came into the building. The flood damage reached the patient lobby, customer service seating, and pharmacy. No patient rooms were affected. The building owner has taken responsibility. Commissioner Kesterman reported that repairs to

the flooded space are nearly complete. The HCPH team all pitched in to help. Commissioner Kesterman noted that there was minimal damage to HCPH possessions.

Commissioner Kesterman welcomed Eric Knapp and Max Miller who were appointed to the HCPH Board by the District Advisory Council and noted that a new President and Vice-President vote is on tonight's agenda under new business. Commissioner Kesterman provided clarification on the Bylaws of the General Health District Board of Health. He noted that two hours annually are required for the Board's continuing education credits and that staff will present topics that would fulfill the requirement throughout the year.

Commissioner Kesterman concluded his report by giving details on employee retention. With six departures in the first quarter, the employee count is still one above this time last year. He noted that there were no current trends for employee transitions.

Staff Reports

(a) Medical Director's Report

Dr. Steve Feagins, Medical Director, began his report with the Regional Measles Planning meeting that included representatives from several counties. They are collaborating on Measles outbreak response and will be learning from Dayton Montgomery County and its recent measles response. Dr. Feagins shared the Regional Measles Planning meeting will be held April 17 for physicians, public health, and other health care providers at the 5050 Section Road location.

Dr. Feagins continued his report by discussing a highly pathogenic Avian Influenza A (H5N1). Dr. Feagins noted that these viruses are circulating among wild birds and associated outbreaks among poultry and backyard flocks, with sporadic infections in mammals. Dr. Feagins provided information to the Board regarding these infections.

Dr. Feagins reported that a health advisory alert was issued by the CDC for an increase in invasive meningococcal disease.

Dr. Feagins noted that health professionals are looking out for eye injuries related to today's eclipse. Epicenter is following emergency department chief complaints of eye related injuries this week.

Dr. Feagins shared the Ohio General Assembly's Joint Committee on Agency Rule approved emergency departments reporting non-fatal drug overdoses to ODH via OAC 3701-3-16 effective today. CliniSync, Ohio's health information exchange (HIE), will report on behalf of participants, which includes all local health systems.

Dr. Feagins stated that the Mercy Health Medical Residency Program's collaboration with Hamilton County Public Health will begin with the first resident rotating in the HCPH Sexual Health Clinic in May. The resident is a family medicine resident who will be starting a women's health fellowship in August. The resident curriculum includes sexually transmitted infection treatment and the evaluation and treatment of contacts.

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

(b) Department of Community Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner, Ms. Lindner, highlighted from her report the Harm Reduction Division staffing updates. The UC harm reduction vending machine is seeing a lot of traffic, and UC is asking for more supplies for the machine to now include fentanyl test strips, deterra bags and naloxone. Ms. Lindner noted that the Community Outreach Coordinator is continuing to distribute fentanyl test strips in stores, restaurants, and other businesses. In 2023, 75,587 fentanyl test strips were distributed through 86 community partners. Each of the test strip packets has a QR code linked to a survey. In 2023, 310 survey responses were received. From those results, 70 percent of participants shared that knowing what was in their drug changed their behavior. Ms. Lindner noted that 82 percent of overdoses in our area last year were associated with fentanyl, so this program is important. Ms. Lindner shared the Community Outreach Coordinator hopes to come to the June Board meeting to present the program.

Ms. Lindner also highlighted the pharmacy relocation inspection by the Board of Pharmacy. The inspection is to ensure correct medication storage and dispensing. The inspection also includes verifying that only licensed medical professionals are allowed in the pharmacy. Ms. Lindner was pleased that the pharmacy passed the inspection, and she praised the staff for their efforts.

(c) Department of Environmental Health Services

Assistant Health Commissioner, Mr. Davidson, asked the Board to revisit the February 2020 discussion regarding a policy to enforce orders for sewage treatment system violations. Mr. Davidson noted that enforcement for certain properties with out of state homeowners or LLC ownership is challenging when there are sewage treatment system violations. Mr. Davidson noted that there are currently some 60 active cases. Commissioner Kesterman noted that there was an increase due to the economic challenges during the pandemic. Mr. Davidson outlined a potential process of sewage treatment inspection for homeowners. Mr. Davidson noted that if owners are still non-compliant after the education and information period that protocol will involve the Prosecutor's office. Ms. Chin noted that the process still needs to prioritize education over enforcement. Mr. Davidson noted that the approximately 60 sewage violation cases are currently in various stages of progress. Commissioner Kesterman outlined different options such as tax liens and other legal processes. Ms. Chin noted the challenges with property owners that are out-of-state and are not responsive to notices. Some owners wait until the very end of the period specified in the letter issued by her office and only then will engage in working towards resolution.

The Board expressed concerns for the tenants of the property as they are often not the cause of the violation. They expressed a desire for the burden to be on the homeowner rather than the tenant. Commissioner Kesterman noted that the policy of HCPH is not to condemn any property with sewage system deficiencies. Commissioner Kesterman noted that one option the Board of Health could consider would be to authorize staff to conduct a trial of initiating the process of condemning the three highest priority properties. Results of the process could be shared back at a future meeting to determine the success of the process. He noted that the condemnation of the properties would still give homeowners ample time to remedy violations before requiring the property to be vacated.

Mr. Davidson highlighted from his report that overall food license numbers are increasing, notably mobile food units. Mr. Davidson noted that the mobile food units increase correlates to the economic conditions recently.

Mr. Davidson reported that water sampling is continuing at Great Parks to monitor for excessive bacterial levels.

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

8. Finances

The March 2024 Disbursement Reports are included in the Board packet.

Dr. Kelly moved to approve the monthly disbursements.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Greg Varner, Finance Officer, presented the first quarter financial review. Mr. Varner discussed details of revenue, expenditures, budget, fund balances, and grant activity. HCPH had a strong first quarter financially as we received indigent care levy funds, 50 percent of the assessments from townships, villages, and contract cities, much of our state subsidy funds, and much of our food service operation renewals. He noted expenditures in the first quarter for furniture, moving, and transition costs to the Section Avenue site that were encumbered in 2023. Mr. Varner provided information for the 2023 Audit Fraud Risk Assessment questionnaire, noting that communication to Board Members from the State Audit Team will take place. This form is sent every year to Board Members and key staff members. The State Auditor is looking for conflict of interest situations Board Members may have with HCPH. The State Auditor is also looking to understand the Board members' knowledge of HCPH internal controls to mitigate potential fraud.

New Business:

Dr. Kelly moved to nominate Dan Meloy as President of the Board of Health of Hamilton County General Health District.

Mr. Knapp seconded the motion.

Roll Call – All Aye; Mr. Meloy abstained

Mr. Meloy moved to nominate Elizabeth A. Kelly as Vice-President of the Board of Health of Hamilton County General Health District.

Mr. Miller seconded the motion.

Roll Call – All Aye; Dr. Kelly abstained

Dr. Kelly moved to approve the Board of Health meeting schedule: Second Monday of each month at 4 p.m. at the offices of Hamilton County Public Health located at 250 William Howard Taft Road.

Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

9. Adjournment

Dr. Kelly moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:26 p.m.
Mr. Meloy seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: May 13, at 4 p.m.



Dan Meloy, President



Greg Kesterman, Secretary
Health Commissioner

