

**Hamilton County General Health District  
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH  
November 10, 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  
Elizabeth A. Kelly, M.D., Vice-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 University of Cincinnati students Anna Detterman, Michelle Thiery,  
and Marina Triaritafiley

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Clean Kitchen Awards**

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

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**Dr. Kelly** moved to approve the minutes of October 13, 2025, Board of Health meeting.

**Mr. Miller** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Mr. Miller** moved to approve the minutes of October 13, 2025, Food and Campground Proposed Fee Adjustments public hearing minutes.

**Dr. Kelly** 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 with a focus on newly added metrics. Highlights included disease prevention and surveillance, records requests, access to fentanyl test strips and naloxone, and notices of violation issued. Additional details can be found in Commissioner Kesterman's report.

Commissioner Kesterman updated the Board of Health on the impact of the federal government shutdown. There have been no major changes since the October report regarding federal policy or program direction. HCPH continues to experience a loss of program expertise at the federal level due to the government shutdown. However, staff have been able to maintain operations and continue receiving reimbursements for completed work. An update on Ohio legislation was shared regarding taxing authority including both House Bill 137 and 309. Commissioner Kesterman noted that 11 local health departments' levies all passed this election, which was positive for these health departments.

Details for the 2026-2031 HCPH strategic plan were discussed. The Board planning meeting will likely occur between June and September 2026. It will likely take place in the new office space, and Commissioner Kesterman said that staff would prefer a weeknight rather than a weekend morning. As time gets closer, we will survey the Board to find the most compatible time.

Commissioner Kesterman discussed Resolution H, which is a budget revision for Hamilton County Central commitment. This is the first of two payments of \$250,000 for the new location at Hamilton County Central. The resolution is to adjust the budget to make the first payment, and the second payment will be part of the budget process of 2026.

Commissioner Kesterman discussed the specific language on the requested motion for the revised Board policy on sewage treatment systems. The proposed motion would update our policy on bedrooms to align with the Ohio Administrative Code. It would also adjust when a complete system replacement is required eliminating the local "50 percent or greater wall change rule." Ms. Puthoff asked a question regarding the local policy. Commissioner Kesterman provided additional clarification related to the team's intent and why the adjustment would be beneficial. Ms. Puthoff asked for clarity and an adjustment to the motion's wording for accuracy. Commissioner Kesterman indicated that the motion's intent was to eliminate the additional bedroom definition and local 50 percent wall change rule. Ms. Puthoff gave clarity to this motion, which would repeal the Board's policy to further define bedroom as specified in Resolution B-2016 and to repeal the Board's policy Resolution A-2022, Section A(3)(e)(v)(3)(a) and the lead-in clause and G(2) to remove the structural change-based replacement requirement.

Commissioner Kesterman finished his report by displaying pictures of Hamilton County Central, Hamilton County Public Health's future home. He noted that the project is still on track. Mr. Meloy asked when HCPH will move in, and Commissioner Kesterman stated that HCPH will move in April.

## **Staff Reports**

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

Medical Director Dr. Steve Feagins began his report by giving an update on the seasonal influenza predictions based on the southern hemisphere activity. He noted that the southern hemisphere season gives clinicians predictions for the upcoming season. He noted that Australia reported its worst flu season on record in 2025.

Dr. Feagins then presented the fall 2025-2026 immunization recommendations for the RSV vaccine. He noted that the CDC recommended an RSV vaccine for all adults 75 and older. The vaccine can help protect against severe illness, hospitalization, and death from RSV, and a single dose is currently recommended. Three RSV vaccines are currently available for adults. Ms. Puthoff asked what the danger of severe RSV is and for whom specifically it would be applicable. Dr. Feagins noted that RSV vaccines are especially necessary if you have an underlying condition like COPD.

Dr. Feagins then presented information on the anticipated norovirus outlook for this winter. Outbreaks typically increase between November and April. The 2024-2025 season saw a significant increase in norovirus outbreaks compared to previous years.

Legionnaire's disease in the U.S. has increased, as the rate of reported cases has grown by five and a half times since 2000, Dr. Feagins reported. The rise represents increased testing and increased Legionella in the environment, or some combination of factors. He noted the leading causes of reported waterborne disease in the U.S. He also noted that smokers are extremely susceptible to Legionnaire's infection. He then provided a graph of Legionnaires' disease in the U.S. Dr. Feagins clarified that Legionnaires' disease is not spread person to person but is often associated with water systems. Some examples of susceptible water systems are in hospitals, long-term care facilities, hotels, and cruise ships. He noted that as of the end of October, there have been 29 confirmed cases in Hamilton County and 64 in Southwest Ohio. Mr. Miller asked if the cases are clustered geographically or if they are random. Dr. Feagins noted that they are often randomly located cases.

The epidemiology team's monthly communicable diseases report was provided in the Board packet.

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

Assistant Health Commissioner Jackie Lindner began her report by noting that there were multiple community outreaches and presentations since the October Board of Health meeting. On October 31, HCPH hosted a coffee chat at the Summit Hotel for a Recovery Friendly Hamilton County networking and resource opportunity. Twenty-two businesses participated, and Ms. Lindner noted that The Summit Hotel was a RFHC business.

Ms. Lindner stated that two epidemiologists, Azrael Rasnake and Sarah Huber, presented safe sleep trends at the Cradle Cincinnati Sleep Summit. The attendees ranged from local community partners to state and national organizations. Senior epidemiologist Sarah Huber also participated in a panel on the Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) Prevention Learning Collaborative, hosted by CDC/MPHI for other jurisdictions participating in the SUID/SDY grant.

Ms. Lindner stated that the WeTHRIVE! team was recognized by CareSource and presented with the CareSource Community Impact Award, which highlights the influence WeTHRIVE! has on residents of Hamilton County. In presenting the award, CareSource shared, "The WeTHRIVE! initiative has been a beacon of hope and change, working tirelessly with communities, schools, early care and education providers throughout Hamilton County."

Ms. Lindner talked about the WeTHRIVE! recognition open house reception. This event will honor WeTHRIVE! community, school, and child care providers who have met annual recognition requirements. The reception will be held 3-4 p.m. Dec. 8 in the DOES conference room. She noted that the Board of Health is invited, and she is seeking a motion to authorize the staff to sign a recognition proclamation with the Board of Health's digital signature. Commissioner Kesterman requested Ms. Lindner to provide the Board of Health with an invitation flyer to the open house reception .

Ms. Lindner continued her report by noting that HCPH partnered with the 513Relief Bus to offer flu shots twice in October. While participation was low, staff appreciated the opportunity to partner. The remaining flu vaccines in our inventory will be given to patients through the clinic.

Ms. Lindner finished her report by stating that the Harm Reduction team is doing a winter coat drive on December 18. The drive entails collecting winter clothes which will help participants in the syringe program. Ms. Lindner will provide the Board of Health with both invitations for the WeTHRIVE! open house reception and the clothing drive.

Mr. Meloy thanked Ms. Lindner and her team for their efforts.

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

Assistant Health Commissioner Craig Davidson began his report by providing information on the roll-off dumpster rental assistance program. Mr. Davidson noted as of early October, the team has coordinated placement for 14-, 25- or 30-yard dumpsters at eight different properties across Hamilton County, saying that several properties have required multiple dumpsters. The dumpsters have been used to clean up homes and property to resolve outstanding issues within the housing and nuisance program. He noted that this program has a positive impact on properties that are potentially facing condemnation.

Mr. Davidson continued his report by noting that on August 21, the Ohio Department of Health conducted a site visit with the Waste Management division to determine HCPH's public health Lead investigation program's compliance with Ohio Administrative Code. The team passed the review with no concerns noted. A copy of ODH's summary report was included in the Board packet.

Mr. Davidson noted that in mid-October, counsel from the Ohio Attorney General's (OAG) office notified HCPH's team and colleagues at Ohio EPA that an agreement had been reached with Evans Landscaping regarding HCPH's appeal of the charges in contempt against Evans regarding alleged violations of prior court orders involving environmental remediation work at the Mount Carmel site. Although the court did not make any findings of contempt, Evans is required to pay \$140,000 to HCPH, with potential reductions if they meet certain compliance milestones. The order allows for partial forgiveness of up to \$105,000 of the penalty if Evans meets specified construction deadlines. The OAG's office retains the

right to bring future contempt actions if Evans fails to comply with this agreement or the earlier consent order.

Mr. Davidson shared information about Ohio Senate Bill 56 regarding intoxicating hemp regulation. The bill makes changes to voter-passed marijuana legalization laws and addresses the intoxicating hemp industry. A conference committee will now likely be appointed to work through the differences between the House and Senate versions. This is an update following Governor DeWine's executive order, and Mr. Davidson noted that a temporary injunction is still in place. Should the Ohio Departments of Agriculture and Health issue revised guidance for our team to conduct inspections for intoxicating hemp products at licensed retail food establishments and/or food service operations, the team stands ready to do so. Mr. Miller asked if HCPH normally does these inspections. Mr. Davidson said these are facilities we license and normally inspection per the food code, but checking for the intoxicating hemp products would be new component of inspecting these facilities. Ms. Puthoff asked about the status of the injunction. Ms. Chin noted that Dec. 2 is the hearing date for the injunction, and the executive order cannot be enforced at this time.

Environmental Health enforcement updates are included in the Board packet.

## **8. Finances**

The October 2025 disbursement reports are included in the Board packet.

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

**Dr. Kelly** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

## **9. New Business**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to approve Regulation 4: Local Fees for Food Service Operations and Retail Food Establishments including Temporary, Vending, and Mobile Operations.

**Mr. Knapp** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Mr. Miller** moved to approve Regulation 5: Local Fees for Recreational Vehicle Parks, Recreation Camps, Combined and Temporary Park Camps and Resident Camps.

**Dr. Kelly** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Ms. Puthoff** moved to repeal the Board's policy to further define bedroom as specified in Resolution B-2016 and to repeal the Board's policy Resolution A-2022, Section A(3)(e)(v)(3)(a) and the lead-in clause and G(2) to remove the structural change-based replacement requirement.

**Mr. Knapp** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**Mr. Knapp** moved to approve Resolution H: Resolution to Approve Budget Revision for the Hamilton County Central Commitment.

**Dr. Kelly** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – Mr. Miller Nay, motion carried.**

**Dr. Kelly** moved to authorize staff to use the Board of Health's digital signature on the WeTHRIVE! proclamations for communities, schools, and child care centers.

**Mr. Meloy** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

**10. Adjournment**

**Mr. Knapp** moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:59 p.m.

**Dr. Kelly** seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote – All Aye**

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

  
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Dan Meloy, President  
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Greg Kesterman, Secretary  
Health Commissioner