**Hamilton County General Health District**
**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF HEALTH**
**1701 Patricia McCollum Way; Cincinnati, Ohio 45237**
**October 12, 2026**

## 1. Call to Order

At 3 p.m., Dan Meloy 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
- Max Miller – Vice President
- Elizabeth A. Kelly, M.D.
- Eric Knapp
- Mark Rosenberger

**District Staff Present:**

- Greg Kesterman, Health Commissioner
- Jackie Lindner, Assistant Health Commissioner
- Craig Davidson, Assistant Health Commissioner
- Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
- Stephen Feagins, M.D. Medical Director
- Greg Varner, Financial Officer
- Allison Babka, Public Information Officer

**Guests Present:**
Courtney Gibson, A.M. Banfield, Tyler Craddock, Sarah Kneis, Parker Wood, Ella Chillag, Katie Zellner, Jessica Mitchell, Hannah Stih, Shawnli Casey, and Matthias Turay.

## 3. Pledge of Allegiance

## 4. Clean Kitchen Awards

Assistant Health Commissioner Craig Davidson read the list of 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 the September 14, 2026, Board of Health regular meeting.
Mr. Rosenberger seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Dr. Kelly moved to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2026, Board of Health public hearing to consider food fees.
Mr. Miller seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

**6. Public Comment**

There were no comments provided by those in attendance or in advance of the board meeting.

**7. Reports**

**a. Health Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Kesterman provided an overview of a recent salary survey conducted by the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners. He shared that HCPH is very competitive with the benefits offered to employees. One of the few benefits that some health departments pay but HCPH does not is professional licenses. Mr. Miller asked whether paying for licenses would be a benefit worth providing. Commissioner Kesterman and Mr. Varner indicated that they would research the matter and share their findings back with the Board. Dr. Kelly asked how the paid lunch works. Mr. Kesterman shared that paid lunches are offered mostly at small health departments, where staff work 37.5 hours to accommodate the paid thirty minutes.

Mr. Kesterman shared that HCPH's turnover and separation rates compared favorably to the State of Ohio. He also presented salary data for four positions — nursing, environmental health, health education, and support — and noted that HCPH's current scale is competitive for all four. The median pay for health education is slightly behind that of other local health departments; however, the

average tenure with the agency for HCPH staff is lower than in other jurisdictions.

**b. Medical Director's Report**

Dr. Feagins reported a positive human West Nile virus case in Symmes Township, locally infected in mid-September, and noted 16 human cases in Ohio for 2026 and 35 positive mosquito pools in Hamilton County. He added that there is one positive blood donor in the county.

Dr. Feagins discussed a potential Class A case of infant botulism in a two-month-old, with the suspected exposure being spores released from construction near the home; the infant was treated with BabyBIG, with confirmatory testing pending at the CDC. He also reported a potential Class A diphtheria case with toxin confirmation pending.

Dr. Feagins reported that the FDA updated every component of the 2026–2027 influenza vaccine. Reviewing the 2025–2026 season, he cited roughly 24,000 deaths, including 192 pediatric deaths, and local respiratory hospitalizations of 1,352 for influenza, 543 for RSV, and 740 for COVID-19.

He closed with the 2026 congenital syphilis summary, which included eight county cases across several categories. Dr. Kelly asked whether the congenital syphilis committee makes recommendations. Ms. Lindner responded that it does, and that she would follow up with the director of disease prevention and staff to discuss how those recommendations are shared beyond the meeting attendees. Dr. Kelly asked whether the recommendations could be pushed out to county obstetricians given that the rate is not good. Dr. Feagins said he would work with Ms. Lindner to find an effective avenue and that the team continues to work hard on partners and sharing information.

**c. Department of Community Health Services**

Ms. Lindner provided a summary of the recent measles contact investigation that resulted from an exposure to active measles at the CCHMC emergency department on September 14. In total, epidemiology staff had 80 individuals identified as residing in HCPH's jurisdiction for whom there was need to notify of their exposure and determine immunity status. While most had evidence of immunity via vaccination records or titer testing, there were 15 individuals who were placed in quarantine for 21 days and another 4 individuals who received IG and therefore had to quarantine for 28 days. The afternoon of October 12 marked

the end of the last quarantine period with no known secondary cases identified. HCPH hopes to meet with other impacted LHDs in the near future to discuss successes and opportunities related to this and future measles investigations. The epi staff were recognized for their quick and thorough response and diligence in completing this investigation.

Ms. Lindner also reported that the clinical staff have been busy with a recent flurry of active TB cases. One particular case required involvement from Ms. Chin's office due to non-compliance with TB treatment; however, we have since learned this patient has moved out of HCPH's jurisdiction, so their case will be followed by another health department moving forward. Additionally, staff have some concern about a potential multi-drug resistant case of TB (MDR TB) among the new cases, although test results are still pending in this situation. Ms. Lindner shared that TB cases can be very complex and involved, and that patients often come with a variety of individual barriers and needs that the staff work diligently to address in an effort to ensure patients receive the treatment they need.

HCPH staff are tabling this week in the lobby of 1701 Patricia McCollum Way in recognition of Safe Sleep Month. Staff are providing education and resources to families and caregivers of infants to ensure they are aware of safe sleep measures to prevent adverse outcomes. Resources being provided include onesies, books, brochures and more.

Lastly, Ms. Lindner advised the Board members that the Health Promotion and Education division will be holding the annual WeTHRIVE! recognition event on the same day as the December BOH meeting. A proclamation will be shared with the Board members to sign at next month's meeting, and all Board members are invited to attend the event. Additional details will be shared at the November BOH meeting.

**d. Department of Environmental Health Services**

Mr. Davidson reported that cost methodologies were completed for the public campground and swimming pool programs to assess potential license fee adjustments, similar to the food program. He explained that the team used ODH-provided spreadsheets to input program time and costs in accordance with OAC and ORC requirements, and that, based on the results, staff do not recommend an adjustment to either program's license fees.

Mr. Davidson shared that EP Director Christa Hyson was honored with the Preparedness Champion Award at the Hamilton County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency's 10th annual Partners in Preparedness Meeting. He noted that Director Crossley recognized Ms. Hyson for her strong support for and expertise in crisis communication, and for the major role she plays in the County Emergency Operation Center and Joint Information Center. Mr. Davidson added that the recognition was well-deserved and that the agency is very proud of her.

Mr. Davidson reported that the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency conducted its annual survey of the Solid and Infectious Waste and Construction and Demolition Debris programs this past July, covering July 2025 through July 2026. He shared that there were no findings or deficiencies, that the programs were found to be in substantial compliance, and that the OEPA was complimentary of the team.

Mr. Davidson reported that the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund received $150,000 this year. He explained that the selection committee, comprised of Waste Management, Epidemiology, and Ms. Chin, selected four projects. He noted that all selected applicants and contractors have been notified and are working through the contract execution process before notices to proceed are issued.

Mr. Davidson concluded with an enforcement update, reporting two condemnations this month, one in Colerain Township and one in Anderson Township.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Meloy offered congratulations for Ms. Hyson and expressed appreciation for the Preparedness Champion Award received from Director Crossley and the Emergency Management Agency.

**8. Finances**

**a. Disbursements**

The September 2026 disbursement reports are included in the board packet.

Dr. Kelly moved to approve the September monthly disbursements.
Mr. Knapp seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

**b. 3rd Quarter Financial Report**

Mr. Varner reported that, on a consolidated basis, total revenues were 88% of the total revenue budget for 2026 and total expenses were 71% of the total expenditure budget, noting that fund balances are strong through the third quarter of 2026.

Mr. Varner shared that overall personnel costs were 72% of the total 2026 personnel budget and other expenditures were 87% of the total budget. He noted that these expenditures include approximately $30,000 in costs related to the agency's move from its former office at 250 William Howard Taft to its new location at HC Central, against a budget of nearly $83,000 for moving-related costs in 2026. He added that fund balances remain stronger than budgeted.

Mr. Varner reported that grants continue to be strong, with total active grants of $15.20 million. He noted that several renewals have taken place and that the Workforce grant received an additional $90,000.

Mr. Varner also reported on the fiscal audit, providing an overview of what was included and sharing that there were no findings. He noted that the one recommendation was to make adjustments to the tracking of clinical payments and funds to more easily identify why the client an amount from any sample of receipts pulled in an audit, and that the agency has added two positions that are working on this.

**9. Unfinished Business**

**a. Board of Health Meeting Time Discussion**

The Board continued its discussion of the Board of Health meeting time. It was agreed to meet at 3:00 p.m. for future meetings.

Mr. Meloy moved to continue holding Board of Health meetings at 3:00 p.m.
Mr. Miller seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

**10. Executive Session**

Mr. Knapp moved to enter executive session pursuant to R.C. 121.22(G)(1) to discuss personnel matters at 4:01p.m.

Mr. Rosenberger seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

The Board returned to regular session at 4:09 p.m. No action was taken.

**11. Adjournment**

Mr. Miller moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:10 p.m.
Mr. Knapp seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote – All Aye

Next Board of Health meeting: November 9, 2026 at 3 p.m.

Dan Meloy, President

Greg Kesterman, Secretary
Health Commissioner