

Geauga Public Health  
Board of Health Meeting Minutes  
April 21, 2020, 5:00 p.m.  
470 Center Street, Bldg. 8, Chardon, OH 44024

1. Call to Order

Mr. David Gragg, President, called the monthly meeting of the Geauga County Board of Health to order at 5:09 p.m.

A roll call found the following Board members present: Mr. David Gragg (via WebEx) Mr. Richard Piraino, Pro-Tem, Mrs. Catherine Whitright (via WebEx), and Ms. Lynn Roman (via WebEx).

Staff members present: Thomas Quade, Health Commissioner, David Sage, Director of Environmental Health, Alta Wendell, Director of Administration, and Dr. Christine Wyers, Director of Population Health.

Others present: Adam Litke, Fiscal Consultant

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Gragg asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Board Minutes

**Ms. Roman moved to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2020 regular meeting. Mr. Piraino seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

4. Environmental Health Update

Mr. Sage reported the Environmental Health staff have been repurposed. They are providing support for the contact tracing and case contact calls. They are doing inspections for emergency sewage and private water issues. The plumbing inspector has been doing the majority of his inspections remotely using video and pictures from the contractors.

Mr. Sage stated he has been working with the Geauga County Prosecutor's Investigator doing compliance checks and enforcement. These checks are for distancing, hand sanitizing and other COVID-19 related issues.

5. Population Health Update

Dr. Wyers reported that most of the programs have been suspended to focus on the pandemic. There is a large amount of information that comes in daily. The Population Health team are working hard making the contact calls and doing follow-up of contract tracing calls. She stated she was very appreciative of the help the EH staff has provided.

The new epidemiologist started her employment with Geauga Public Health within the last few weeks. She is getting slowly acclimated. Mr. Gragg asked how the programs will begin starting the transition back in to regular business. Dr. Wyers said she does not anticipate restarting any Population Health programs because of the need for staff to work on COVID. They are handling individual needs on a case-by-case basis. Naloxone and car seats are being distributed if a resident contacts the office.

Mr. Sage stated that inspections that were scheduled and had to be cancelled would be handled first. Some programs are still on hold per ODH guidelines. At this point, the plan is to begin scheduling EH inspections on May 4, 2020.

Mr. Quade explained that there has not been a specific list of what will be re-opening. It will be a balancing act between keeping people safe and getting the economy back on track. He anticipates with the re-opening that there will be an up-tick in cases. The messages of hand washing and social distancing will continue to be expressed.

He expects that masks may be mandatory in one way or another. We need to shift the idea of what do we need to do keep ourselves safe to do what we need to do to keep everyone safe. The masks would help with transmission from one person to another.

To date, Geauga County has 113 cases, 23 hospitalizations and 9 deaths. He encouraged the Board to visit the ODH website [www.cornavirus.ohio.gov](http://www.cornavirus.ohio.gov) for other data and useful information.

6. Administration Update

a. Finance Report

Mr. Litke explained variations in the revenue and expense items shown on the finance report.

Because conferences and trainings have been cancelled without any foreseeable re-scheduling, funds in the travel line in the Workforce Development fund have been moved to other expense to cover some equipment needed for remote working.

Ms. Roman asked how revenue would be affected. Mr. Litke stated he is working with Tom and the Directors to see where adjustments need to be made in the budget. It likely will depend on what reopens, when it reopens and if establishments reopen. Mr. Quade stated that we would need to see how ODH handles the grants for the rest of the year. We have received some funding for COVID so some of that will offset any revenue lost.

**Mr. Piraino moved to approve the April 2020 financial report as recommended by the health commissioner. Ms. Roman seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

Mrs. Wendell reported that some of the Administration staff have been repurposed to help with the contact tracing. The other staff are handling the operating the phones, answering questions and fielding calls. Because the offices are closed to the public, they are also able to catch up on work that has been delayed for quite some time because of workload.

7. Health Commissioner Update

Mr. Quade expressed his appreciation to the other county departments. Everyone has been cooperating in supporting the health department with investigations. There may be a sharing of services in that the county has staff on paid administrative leave. There have been discussions that those staff members may be used for investigations in some way under our direction. They would note their observations and report those observations back to the health department.

The county maintenance department is working to get barriers in place for public and staff. They have done an excellent job cleaning and sanitizing the offices.

We have pushed out PPE to the Department of Emergency Services for them to use for first responders and the nursing homes.

The plan for the Environmental Health staff is to return to their duties in May. Working remotely is being explored and processes are being worked out. We have purchased some new equipment to facilitate this change. This will limit the amount of people within the health department at any one time. Population Health staff will be doing something similar.

Mr. Quade explained that the Accreditation process has been pushed out 90 days. He is not sure we will be through the process in 2020. There will be some challenges because of this delayed because of length of time of the delay.

The March HDAC meeting was postponed. No date has been set. Mr. Quade sent the budget to the HDAC.

The Budget Commission meeting will be June 16, 2020. Mr. Quade does not feel there they will have any issues with the 2021 budget approval process.

Mr. Piraino commended Mr. Quade on an interview he did with the Chagrin Valley Times. Mr. Quade stated he has done quite a few interviews with the newspapers as well as television stations. He updates the Facebook page for Geauga Public Health twice per day.

There is a newsletter now being distributed called "Straight from the Source". He commended the new health educator, Jodi Gearhart for working on this valuable resource. There is now more than 300 email addresses on the mailing list for the newsletter.

a. Appropriation Transfer Request- 6041 Workforce Development

As previously mentioned, funds were transferred from the Travel line to the Other Expense line to cover purchases of equipment. Mr. Quade authorized the transfer between the lines.

b. Board Reimbursement Waiver

Mrs. Wendell explained that a new waiver was being sent to the Board for 2020 reimbursements to Board of Health meetings and asked the Board to send the form back.

8. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

9. New Business

a. Vehicle Purchase

**Mrs. Whitright moved 4.21.20-a to approve the purchase of 2 vehicles from 6005 Food Service, not to exceed \$48,198.00 and 1 vehicle from 6023 Sewage, not to exceed \$24,099.00. Mr. Piraino seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

b. Resolution 2020—10 – Land Application Resolution

**Mr. Gragg moved 4.21.20-b to adopt Resolution 2020-10 prohibiting, restricting or limiting the land application of septage within Geauga County. Mr. Piraino seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

10. Meetings

Regular Board of Health Meeting, **Wednesday, May 27, 2020** at 5:00 p.m. at 470 Center St., Bldg. 8, Chardon, Ohio.

Annual Health District Advisory Council meeting, to be determined

Annual Budget Commission meeting, **Tuesday, June 16, 2020** at 10:00 a.m. at the Auditor's office.

11. Adjourn

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Quade  
Secretary, Geauga County Board of Health

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