

**Portage County Combined General Health District
Board Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2025
6:00 PM**



I. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The Portage County Combined General Health District Board of Health met on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 999 East Main Street, Ravenna, OH, 44266. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Board President Ribelin.

Board Members in Attendance:

Lucy Ribelin, President
James Bierlair, Vice President
Linda Grimm, Member
Amy Everett, Member
Diana Clarke, Member

Board Members Not in Attendance:

Charles Delaney, Member
Dr. Philip Keyser, Member
Brock Kertoy, Member

Staff in Attendance:

Becky Lehman, Health Commissioner
Sarah Meduri, Director Personnel and
Administrative Services
Branden Burns, Director of Finance
Justin Rechichar, Director of
Environmental Health
Amy Cooper, Director of Community
Health
Rebecca Barreca, Director of Nursing
Programs
Natalie Menke, Environmental Health
Supervisor
Amos Sarfo, Environmental Health
Supervisor
Christina Jewell, Administrative &
Account Clerk
Mark Arredondo, Medical Director

District Advisory Council:

Bruce Lange, Charlestown Twp.

Others:

None

Media Present:

None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Board of Health Meeting: On February 18, 2025, Board Member Everett presented a motion to accept the Board Meetings Minutes for January 21, 2025, seconded by Board Member Grimm.

An “aye” vote was cast by all, and the motion carried.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribelin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Absent
Board Member Delaney	Absent	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Absent

III. PORTAGE COUNTY TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION: (District Advisory Council)

Mr. Lange stated that on, the Ohio Township Association had their annual Winter Conference on January 29th – 31st. He shared that there are about 1,300 townships in the state of Ohio and there were over thirty individuals from Portage County who attended the conference.

Mr. Lange stated that the Portage County Township Association met Saturday, February 15, 2025, and reminded the township trustees of the 2025 annual District Advisory Council meeting coming up on March 19th at the Portage County General Combined Health District. He also shared that Mr. Rechichar and Health Commissioner, Ms. Lehman, attended on behalf of the health district and passed out information and invites for the DAC meeting.

He noted that House Bill 86 and Senate Bill 56 regarding medical and recreational marijuana were discussed regarding the State of Ohio opting to take the accumulated funds and add them into a general fund for the state rather than distributing the funds to the townships who voted for the bills under misunderstandings of a 1.7% proceed of funds to the communities, which turned into funding only going towards communities who have a dispensary within their community. He shared that when the bills passed during the election, not a whole lot of information was provided on the final funding. The Ohio Township Association is opposed and not supporting this decision.

Board President Ribelin asked if there were any updates on the bill for the reassignment of the commissioners taking over the District Advisory Council. Mr. Lange shared that there has not been much movement on this as the Commissioners are not in favor of this bill and feel that is would not be a beneficial move. So, nothing more has been shared.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

V. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Expenditure Ratifications \$ 308,564.97

Invoice Batch No.	2274	\$	6,332.20
Invoice Batch No.	2277	\$	13,413.58
Invoice Batch No.	2316	\$	2,504.26
Invoice Batch No.	2326	\$	1,718.27
Invoice Batch No.	2344	\$	43,839.35
Invoice Batch No.	2467	\$	1,112.94
Invoice Batch No.	2568	\$	32,783.80
Invoice Batch No.	2598	\$	9,951.10
Invoice Batch No	2632	\$	719.58
Invoice Batch No	2648	\$	23,153.53
Invoice Batch No	2733	\$	17,531.44
Invoice Batch No	2736	\$	6,784.83
Invoice Batch No	2848	\$	1,410.80
Invoice Batch No	2866	\$	145,469.56
Invoice Batch No	2922	\$	1,391.93
Invoice Batch No	2929	\$	447.80

Mr. Burns requested approval from the board to ratify the payments from this past month. While there was a lapse of time due to the end of the year and beginning of a new year, quite a few expenses were processed, which reflects in batch #2866, which was the first mortgage of the new year, with a bit over \$50,000 added towards the principal balance. Mr. Burns is hoping to have the mortgage paid by 2027.

Board Member Bierlair presented a motion to accept the above expenditures and ratify these expenses, seconded by Board Member Clarke.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribelin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Absent
Board Member Delaney	Absent	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Absent

B. Travel Expenditures

Mr. Burns requested approval for the travel expenditures presented to the Board.

A motion was presented by Board Member Clarke to approve said travel expenditures, seconded by Board Member Everett.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribelin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Absent
Board Member Delaney	Absent	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Absent

C. Resolution #25-14 Amendment to the 2025 Portage County Combined General Health District Annual Appropriations Previously and to be Certified.

Mr. Burns stated that this month's budget amendment is for #8904 (Contract Services) & #8920 (Personnel and Salaries).

A motion was presented by Board Member Everett to Approve Resolution #25-14, seconded by Board Member Bierlair.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribelin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Absent
Board Member Delaney	Absent	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Absent

D. Resolution #25-15 A Journal Entry Reversal / Expense Correction for Portage County Combine General Health District.

Mr. Burns requested approval for the journal entry reversal / expense correction presented to the Board. He noted that this was a small amount for salaries and wages, fee to services and across multiple areas of the agency.

A motion was presented by Board Member Everett to Approve Resolution #25-15, seconded by Board Member Grimm.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribelin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Absent
Board Member Delaney	Absent	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Absent

- E. Resolution #25-16** A Resolution Finding Persons Associated with the Combined Park-Camp Site Operated By and Known As Licensee Nelson Ledges Quarry Park, Ltd Have Engaged In Nuisance Activity on the Combined Park-Camp Property Two or More Times in a Consecutive Six-Month Period and Authorizing the Sending of Notice to the Park-Camp Operator Pursuant to Section 3729.14 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Mr. Rechichar presented a resolution from the Portage County Prosecutor's Office pertaining to the Nelson Ledges Quarry Park, Ltd. He stated that if the Board of Health, PCHD or the Portage County Prosecutors Office receive additional notices of complaints within the 6-month period, a formal board action will be sent. The resolution provides details of indictments and charges for Mr. Coppa and Ms. Whitlock.

Board President Ribelin asked if this resolutions were just informing the campground that the agency is aware of the charges that have been brought to our attention.

Board Member Everett asked if this is just regarding these two individuals listed in the indictments.

Mr. Rechichar stated that PCHD is just informing them that the agency has received notification of these complaints and charges and under the Ohio Revised Code 3729.14, if there is further complaints or charges within a 6-month period, further action will be taken by the Board of Health. Mr. Rechichar plans to serve a notice though USPS and this would give them a 6-month window through the summer.

Several questions were raised regarding the 6-month window and Mr. Rechichar stated that it is for no additional charges within that 6-month period. Anything thereafter the 6-month period would not pertain to this resolution.

A motion was presented by Board Member Grimm to Approve Resolution #25-16, seconded by Board Member Everett.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribclin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Absent
Board Member Delaney	Absent	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Absent

D. Resolution #25-17 The Portage County Board of Health for the Household Sewage Treatment System (HSTS) Variance for OAC 3701-29-03(C)(5) Continuing Education Requirement for the Septic Contractor John Wilson of Wilson Plumbing & Heating.

Mr. Rechichar presented a variance request for CEU's for the septic contractor, John

Wilson of Wilson Plumbing & Heating. Failed to obtain all of CEU's. Six received and needs eight additional for 2025.

A motion was presented by Board Member Grimm to Approve Variance #25-17, seconded by Board Member Clarke.

Board President Ribelin inquired if this is becoming a pattern.

Mr. Rechichar stated that these companies are from surrounding counties and need the CEU's to be obtained to conduct business in Portage County. Mr. Wilson stated that his company endured issues with login information errors and password issues. He had obtained six CEU's so far in 2025 within the terms and conditions. They are requesting the variance program staff recommend approval set variance so that they can get back to business. Mr. Rechichar stated that the majority of the variances that the board sees are actually from separate counties. These variances are for septage haulers, installers, evaluators and such.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribelin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Absent
Board Member Delaney	Absent	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Absent

VI. DISCUSSIONS:

- **Administration:** Ms. Meduri stated that the job postings have all been posted with one offer that was extended for the EHSIT and was accepted. The PHN position is posted, and they are currently assembling candidates and scheduling for interviews. As for the WIC Peer Helper position, Ms. Steighner and Ms. Cooper are working on candidates to interview for the Lisbon location.

Ms. Meduri shared that PEP did a walk through with no recommendations and found us to be premier. It is a busy time of the new year for staff with annual personnel evaluations and cyber security & HIPAA trainings. Ms. Meduri shared that the Pop-Up Food Pantry 2024 partner report stated that PCHD distributed a total of 48,200 pounds food in the months of the Pop-Up Food Pantry. With a retail of \$92,702, reaching out to 1,586 households served, and a total of 4,484 people served from April to December. Ms. Meduri shared that even in the winter months, February's Curbside served 253 families. Incredibly grateful to the Akron-Canton Foodbank, PCHD staff, the KSU Mobile Flashes and the MRC volunteers for all their hard work and dedication every month.

- **Finance:** Mr. Burns shared that the cash basis showed nothing out of the ordinary. He did share that the levy funds will be added in for the month of March. Mr. Burns noted that we are currently at \$2,982,000.00, and we are doing well. Mr. Burns shared that while we

will be having the District Advisory Council meeting in March, we are also planning for the PCHD Open House and Community Health Fair on April 9th from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Ms. Barreca is Vice Chair for the Open House Planning Committee and Ms. Jewell is also on the committee. He stated that we will have health screenings with our community partners, as well as folks from all across the county including some of our state officials to show what PCHD is doing here in Portage County. Mr. Burns stated that the State of the City meeting will be coming soon on February 20th, in the city of Streetsboro and Ms. Lehman will be attending this year.

- **Environmental Health:** Mr. Rechichar shared that monthly report has switched to Clear Impact and putting all stats into Clear Impact. This is a month per month and can see the statuses and build benchmarks. He is requesting staff to input valuable information that can be used later to pull reports with valuable data and timelines for each of the programs. Mr. Rechichar shared that EH applied to present at the AOHC in April and the abstract that was submitted was accepted. He stated that some of the GIS work that Ms. Speck assisted with food program for the fair will be presented.

He also shared that Ms. Menke and Ms. Speck were selected to present at the Ohio Environmental Health Association's annual education conference in April. Mr. Rechichar and Ms. Menke will also be presenting at the National Environmental Health Association conference as well. Mr. Rechichar stated that Mr. Duck was not in attendance for the board meeting as he was in Indiana at the WWETT (Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment, and Transport) show that he was selected for as a scholarship.

Ms. Menke stated that this is the end of year for food licensing and new year starting. Staff is working on the renewals and making sure all inspections are done for the year. The new EHSIT, Mr. Nolte, is doing well, rolling through trainings and leading inspections.

Mr. Sarfo shared that while conducting outside inspections is impossible, he has been working on annual reports for storm water which is due in March and the Streetsboro storm water report is complete and has been sent. The Ohio EPA annual report is completed and was also due in March. The WPCLF's current funding is on hold at the moment. Mr. Sarfo stated that he wrote the grant for \$150,000 for 2025, however it is contingent upon approval and PCHD cannot take new applications at this time. We have established a waiting list with NDS (Neighborhood Development Services) until this is resolved. Mr. Sarfo stated that it could be by June 30th via EPA's timeline. However, it is all contingent on the Federal EPA's funding. While PCHD is listed as tentatively approved for \$150,000 for 2025, it is currently on hold.

Board President Ribelin inquired on if the funding will affect the Chinn Allotment project. Mr. Sarfo stated that while those funds were previously approved but not yet disbursed, he could not personally guarantee that those funds would not be affected. It is all contingent on the outcome for the Ohio EPA's budget.

- **Community Health:** Ms. Barreca who is the Director of Nursing Programs shared that she was happy to be serving Portage County residents. She noted that the Covid numbers are

going down. While the wastewater Covid numbers is high the reported numbers are declining. She stated that this is still a Class B illness and still reported to the Health Departments. The flu cases are really ticking up. Be diligent on hand washing, keeping hands out of mouth, social distancing and staying home if sick.

Ms. Barreca was pleased to have PHN, Ms. Orr back from medical leave and she has personal goals to get increased numbers of home visits and to increase our CMH census, so we are looking forward to more community contacts from. Our clinics are doing good considering the season that we are in. Most people have already gotten their flu COVID. Although. Flu is like at 50% high rate. PCHD also have some information about child fatality review. It is another one of the things that we take care of for bringing in a health educator, Ms. McCracken. She is going to assist us with automobile type accidents, involving child deaths. Ms. Barreca shared that she is bringing in Ms. Card, who has expertise with suicide and suicide prevention, and is excited to welcome them to the team and they are working towards having the media on March 7th.

Ms. Barreca stated that she has been conducting classes on sexual health and the importance of this being a part of our whole being. She was honored to go to the Portage County Root House and Southeast schools to educate all ages of the importance of sexual health. Ms. Barreca stated that the vaccination clinics for the jail was great, with thirty-three vaccinations.

Dr. Arredondo shared information on the regional CDC information. He noted that while Ebola is not in Portage County, they are keeping an eye out on Sudan and the increase of positive cases there. Also, watching Kansas for the breakout of Tuberculosis cases and Texas for the measles cases. He noted that the flu is super high. Flu shots reduce the amount of days and symptoms.

Ms. Cooper was delighted to share the PRC, which is a family support program, and launched the program to assist families with important education. CH has a new health educator, Ms. Belvin, and she has already completed two sessions. She stated that we are providing education and milestones, so it is for six months, one year, 2 year, three-year. They get some safety resources and education. There is a crib, a toddler bed, and some other things. So that program is launching and growing, and we are getting lots of referrals.

Also, we submitted the renewal for the integrated harm reduction. A competitive grant this year. For 2025, it will start in April if awarded. We are really, really optimistic about that. It will allow us to continue some of the initiatives that we are currently doing with Narcan. We now have. 22 Naloxone boxes installed around the county, which has its just easy access for Naloxone in a box. We have them in some community centers. Our House, Hope Town. In terms of the clinic, the last month or so has been a little bit slow, but they are really busy rescheduling for all those that are sick or have some transportation barriers to get here. They are currently planning for DAC and Open House.

Ms. Cooper noted that the reaccreditation is still being processing and are awaiting feedback. She also shared that the CHA / CHIP had a great kick off for the next cycle.

- **Health Commissioner:** Ms. Lehman stated that the annual Animal Bite report was included in the board packet for rabies and animal bites, there were 161 reported in 2024.

The Helmer vaccine freezer for Community Health has been approved by the Ohio Department of Health and will be paid 100% by the EO23 grant funding. Helmer will deliver, calibrate and set it up. Ms. Lehman stated that it was \$7,000 to repair the current vaccine freezer that was well over ten years old and to replace the vaccine freezer was \$11,000. The decision was made to replace the current freezer with a new freezer to ensure it is safe and efficient for vaccine.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Accept the resignation of Shelley Toot, Peer Helper – did not get motions but an aye vote

- Motion made by: Board Member Clarke
- 2nd: Board Member Grimm
- All those in favor – aye vote

b. Permission to post, advertise and hire a Peer Helper – did not get motions but an aye vote

- Motion made by: Board Member Grimm
- 2nd: Board Member Everett
- All those in favor – aye vote

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Accept the resignation of Dan Robinson, Certified Plumber

- Motion made by: Board Member Bierlair
- 2nd: Board Member Grimm
- All those in favor – aye vote

IX. BOARD ISSUES AND DISCUSSION: None

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was moved to adjourn by Board Member Clarke at 6:53 PM and seconded by Board Member Grimm. An “aye” vote was cast by all, a motion was carried.



Rebecca Lehman, MPH, MPA, CHES
Health Commissioner

