

**Portage County Combined General Health District  
Board Meeting Minutes  
June 17, 2025  
6:00 PM**



**I. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

The Portage County Combined General Health District Board of Health met on Tuesday, June 17, 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  
Amy Everett, Member  
Linda Grimm, Member  
Dr. Philip Keyser, Member  
Diana Clarke, Member  
Chad Delaney, Member  
Brock Kertoy, Member

Board Members Not in Attendance:

None

Staff in Attendance:

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

District Advisory Council:

None

Others:

None

Media Present:

None

## II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. Board of Health Meeting: On June 17, 2025, Board Member Dr. Keyser presented a motion to accept the Board Meetings Minutes for May 20, 2025, seconded by Board Member Grimm.

Mrs. Grimm requested an edit to the board of health meeting minutes from May 20, 2025. There was a date error on the footer of the meeting minutes in the board of health packet. Ms. Jewell stated that she would make those edits prior to Ms. Lehman, the Health Commissioner, signing them.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribelin	Yes	Board Member Grimm	Yes
Board Member Bierlair	Yes	Board Member Kertoy	Late
Board Member Delaney	Yes	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Late	Board Member Dr. Keyser	Yes

## III. PORTAGE COUNTY TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION: (District Advisory Council) N/A

## IV. PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

## V. ACTION ITEMS:

### A. Expenditure Ratifications \$146,491.76

Invoice Batch No.	4477	\$	82,773.53
Invoice Batch No.	4512	\$	5,051.25
Invoice Batch No.	4541	\$	7,047.65
Invoice Batch No.	4621	\$	4,501.28
Invoice Batch No.	4727	\$	1,752.59
Invoice Batch No.	4732	\$	22,174.69
Invoice Batch No.	4802	\$	12,591.07
Invoice Batch No.	4824	\$	9,187.76
Invoice Batch No	4825	\$	1,411.94

Mr. Burns requested approval from the board to ratify the payments from this past month's expenses.

Board Member Dr. Keyser presented a motion to accept the above expenditures and ratify these expenses, seconded by Board Member Delaney.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

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

#### **B. Travel Expenditures**

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

A motion was presented by Board Member Grimm to approve said travel expenditures, seconded by Board Member Delaney.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

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

#### **C. Resolution #25-40 Amendment to the 2025 Portage County Combined General Health District Annual Appropriations Previously and to be Certified.**

Mr. Burns stated that this budget amendment was to allocate funds for various fees associated with contract services, and allocate some funds in the eights for our second mortgage payment of the year. He also noted that we are now budgeting to pay towards the first payment in 2027. However, we do not know exactly where we will be in 2027, funding wise, so he's just allocating money, and Ms. Lehman will make the final decision at that point.

Board President Ribelin inquired on what the timeline on the mortgage would be in 2027. Mr. Burns explained that it would be ½ way through the 10-year mortgage. Mr. Burns also noted that this is a goal for the agency to pay off the mortgage sooner than the mortgage term. However, current financial issues could arise in the future to push this goal back.

A motion was presented by Board Member Everett to Approve Resolution #25-40, 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	Yes

Board Member Delaney	Yes	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Yes

**D. Resolution #25-41** A Journal Entry / Expense Correction for Portage County Combined General Health District.

Mr. Burns stated that this expense correction was for a fee correction and salary adjustments for the CMH programs and adding nurses to the CMH fund to cover their salaries. The county auditor's office erroneously placed the funds in the incorrect funding account, so this correction will move those funds to the correct funding account.

A motion was presented by Board Member Bierlair to Approve Resolution #25-41, 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	Yes	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Yes

**E. Resolution #25-42** A Resolution Declaring a Public Health Nuisance, Ordering Abatement of that Nuisance, and Approving the Civil Prosecution for Violation(s) of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 3707.01 at 2884 Brady Lake Rd., Ravenna Twp.

Mr. Rechichar explained that this resolution was for a complaint that was made by the zoning inspector. Mr. Rechichar commended Ms. Mellott regarding all the information provided on this location. Mr. Rechichar stated that the conditions of the property were harboring conditions for rodents, and it provided food, shelter, and water for these conditions to worsen. Pictures were provided with the resolution of the property's conditions. Mr. Rechichar has yet to receive a response from the property owners, so he is requesting approval from the board to have this location declared a public nuisance and pursue civil prosecution. The board inquired if this location is vacant and Mr. Rechichar stated that it is indeed vacant.

Board President Ribelin inquired on what would happen if there were no response from the property owner. According to Mr. Rechichar, the property owners would have 30 days to comply with the board order. At that point it would be handed over to the prosecutor's office for civil prosecution. However, if continued for a longer period, the township could attempt to utilize the land bank to take over the property and have the grounds maintained.

A motion was presented by Board Member Clarke to Approve Resolution #25-42, 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	Yes
Board Member Delaney	Yes	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Yes

- F. **Resolution #25-43** A Resolution Declaring a Public Health Nuisance, Ordering Abatement of that Nuisance, and Approving the Civil Prosecution for Violation(s) of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 3707.01 at 6527 Park Avenue, Franklin Twp.

Mr. Rechichar stated that this complaint came by way of an administrative search warrant signed by Judge Doherty of the Portage County Courthouse who commanded the inspection of the property and structure. The inspection was completed by the Franklin Township Fire Department, the Portage County Building Department and the Franklin Township Trustees who determined it to be unfit for human habitation and dangerous to life and safety. Mr. Rechichar stated that the property owners have been unresponsive. He also noted that this property will be processed through the land bank since it was initiated by the administrative search warrant. He is requesting approval to declare this property a public nuisance by way of code ordinances.

A motion was presented by Board Member Kertoy to Approve Resolution #25-43, 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	Yes
Board Member Delaney	Yes	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Yes

- G. **Resolution #25-44** A Resolution Ordering the Connection to Sanitary Sewer and Approving the Civil Prosecution for Violation(s) of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Chapter 3718 and Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) Chapter 3701-29 Regulating Sewage Treatment Systems at 4552 Rootstown Road, Rootstown Twp.

Mr. Duck stated that this property was a nuisance complaint that was received on October 30, 2024. The complaint claimed of a failing sewage treatment system with odor and coloration. According to Portage County Water Resources, the property is available and accessible to sanitary sewer and therefore shall be connected to the sewer. Two notices of violation were sent via certified mail to the property owner and were not claimed. PCHD followed each unclaimed letter with the letter being sent by regular mail. The property owner has not contacted PCHD and has not made any effort to connect to the sanitary sewer. Mr. Duck is requesting permission from the board to proceed with enforcement

orders.

A motion was presented by Board Member Bierlair to Approve Resolution #25-44, 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	Yes
Board Member Delaney	Yes	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Yes

- H. Variance #25-45** A Variance for Household Sewage Treatment System Variance Request to Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3701-29-15(G) Household Sewage Treatment System Variance Request to Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3701-29-15(G) at 8745 Newton Falls Road, Paris Twp.

Mr. Duck stated that this variance is for the property that was evaluated by a certified professional soil scientist. The soil evaluation deemed a perched seasonal water table seven inches from the ground surface. Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3701-29-15 (G) requires that unless otherwise established by the board of health, the vertical separation distance to the seasonal water table shall be twelve inches, and the required minimum thickness of in situ soil beneath the infiltrative surface shall be eight inches when effluent is discharged to the soil absorption component. Portage County Health District has not established a vertical separation distance of less than eight inches. Therefore, without this variance to the vertical separation distance from the perched seasonal water table the property will not be able to site a sewage treatment system and therefore making the property unbuildable.

Mr. Duck explained that the property owner is knowingly requesting a variance to OAC 3701-29-15 (G) to utilize the seven inches of in situ soil for sewage treatment, instead of the required eight inches of in-situ soil for a new two (2) bedroom dwelling on the lot.

According to OAC 3701-29-22, the board of health shall not grant a variance that would defeat the spirit and general intent of this chapter or is otherwise contrary to the public interest, adversely affect the public health, cause contamination of the environment, or not comply with the requirements of Chapter 3718. of the Revised Code. The environmental division staff supports the approval of the variance to OAC 3701-29-15 (G) as prescribed in OAC 3701-29-22 with the attached terms and conditions as allowed in accordance with OAC 3701-29-09(B)(5) and is requesting approval by the board of health.

A motion was presented by Board Member Bierlair to Approve Variance #25-45, 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	Yes
Board Member Delaney	Yes	Board Member Clarke	Yes
Board Member Everett	Yes	Board Member Keyser	Yes

## VI. DISCUSSIONS:

- **Administration:** Ms. Meduri shared that this month there were no major updates. The food pantry continues to grow with community partners offering services now that we are market style for the summer. She noted that the social media has grown significantly, sharing that just last month there were 46 posts. Ms. Meduri spoke about the Thrive Together farmers market that will be every Tuesday until September and is paired with the Tasty Tuesdays.
- **Finance:** Mr. Burns presented the cash basis report. He noted that he's continuing with the long-term planning and forecasting. Below are the financials from the cash basis report.

General Fund Unassigned	\$1,713,255.87
General Fund Assigned	\$1,300,712.82
General Fund Advances Out	\$340,000.00
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>\$3,353,968.69</b>
Special Revenue Funds	\$1,007,817.75
General Fund Advances In	-\$340,000.00
<b>Total Special Revenue Funds</b>	<b>\$667,817.75</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>\$4,021,786.44</b>
<b>Net Change In Funds</b>	<b>(\$132,385.92)</b>

- **Environmental Health:** Mr. Rechichar gave an update for the EH division. This month's report has an active hyperlink in the digital packet for the data and statistics in Clear Impact. Mr. Rechichar stated that there will be some trainings coming up soon for staff with Clear Impact on how to utilize the tools more efficiently.

Mr. Rechichar gave an update on the ODA (Ohio Department of Agriculture) Survey. He stated that an action plan was submitted and approved by ODA. PCHD has about 6 months to a year to be resurveyed. Mr. Rechichar stated that Ms. Lipchik, a Sanitarian, received a NEHA internship scholarship (National Environmental Health Association), which includes registration and membership for a year).

Mr. Rechichar provided an update regarding the legislation of home cooked foods (micro enterprise kitchens). Board President Ribelin inquired on how the micro enterprise kitchens differ from the Cottage Foods. Mr. Rechichar stated that cottage foods typically are jellies, jams, fruit chutney, breads, baked goods, and dry herb mixes. Whereas micro enterprise kitchens you can make full meals, such as lasagnas, soups, etc. He explained that the current legislation reads that there's a \$25.00 fee, or up to \$50.00 and they provide one inspection per registration. So, essentially, you could register once and pay a fee, this allows the Department of Agriculture to have regulatory authority. However, any time that applicant would need to go for an inspection, they could be compelled to go to the courts to obtain an administrative search warrant. He stated that this is modeled from two states that currently do this. These states are believed to be California and Utah. Mr. Rechichar stated that about 11 states in total tried these and those few who were successful were obviously not supportive of that change. Otherwise, Mr. Rechichar stated that this is a busy time right now. Lastly, he shared that his division has started on the cost methodologies and are almost finished with sewage.

Ms. Menke shared that the new seasonal worker, Hannah Dean, is now out on her own and doing a great job. PCHD will host a total of four tire amnesty events with three of them completed, (Aurora, Streetsboro, Deerfield), and the last being held here at PCHD on June 26<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 3pm. Ms. Menke stated that this is their busy time. There are fairs and festivals starting, pop ups and temporary licenses as well as pool season. She plans to have some cross-training events so we can have more staff trained to assist the agency as needed.

Mr. Duck shared that the water quality is pretty consistent. The septic systems are going in, wells are going in, and the weather is cooperating so far.

- **Community Health:** Ms. Barreca gave an update on nursing, explaining that the clinic billing for CMH was reported at \$32,508, which she anticipates being off about \$5-6k per the remittance, making this closer to \$26,000 billed for CMH. Ms. Cole, our PHN, is doing a great job. Noting that the new PCHD staff have been coming through and receiving their vaccine consultations, which provide them with information on what vaccines they will need to update their records. She also shared that there have been some measles scares but nothing reportedly positive.

Ms. Steighner spoke about the WIC Lisbon state award for "Friends of WIC", she explained that there is a local pastor who was nominated for the award who really is an asset to the Guatemalan WIC participants with interpretations, ensuring they make it to their appointments and assisting in taking them to the grocery stores to shop. Ms. Steighner was pleased to learn that he was chosen for the "Friends of WIC" award. Ms. Steighner shared that the BAM (Breastfeeding Awareness Month) event will be held for both clinical locations in Ravenna and Lisbon on August 1<sup>st</sup> & August 8<sup>th</sup>. She noted that they received a number of donations to assist those events through CareSource, Molina Health, Humana and United Healthcare, explaining that it is about \$3,300, to put this event together. Ms. Steighner shared that she recently attended a meeting at the state level for Recruitment and



Retention. This discussed the issues of ensuring the participant can make it to the appointment and receive their funding.

Ms. Cooper shared the newest information on the fiscal WIC grant for 2026, which appears to show that there will be additional funding coming. Noting that we should know for sure by October. She shared that there were over 70% of cuts according to last year with only 180 vouchers for farmers markets for both counties. Ms. Cooper stated that the 1<sup>st</sup> farmers market was today on the front lawn. She added that it was so nice to see fruition come to light for her and Ms. Lehman's dream. There was quite a bit of traffic by people driving by and others from social media. She is hoping for it to grow.

Board President Ribelin gave a warm congratulations to Ms. Cooper, for great vendors and staff that were at the 1<sup>st</sup> farmer's market.

Ms. Cooper stated that there was a lot of positive feedback from the market so far. Lastly, Ms. Cooper mentioned that the community health assessment has been received. She added that this is a project that the agency has been working on every 3 years. A health assessment with cooperation and collaboration with University Hospitals Portage Medical Center, Kent City Health Department, Mental Health and Recovery Board. The preliminary health assessment has been kind of pulled apart by a team of four, who are reviewing everything and kind of reviewing the data. She and Ms. Lehman plan to initiate a call with Illuminology to discuss the data.

- **Health Commissioner:** Ms. Lehman shared an update on the PHAB preliminary report. She stated that 14 items did not meet the mark, and she met with the document collection team and discussed those issues. She stated that Mr. Sexton is working with the PHAB Intake Specialist to see what needs to be completed by the deadline of August 18<sup>th</sup> although, the team is aiming for August 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Lehman also shared the updates on the funding regarding the PHEP grant. The weekly call stated so far that there is a 28% cut from what was previously awarded. There may be a chance to receive an additional 28% by the end of the quarter, depending on the funds available. Lastly, Ms. Lehman shared that she will be out of the country for a week and Mr. Rechichar will stand in as the Interim Health Commissioner during her absence.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS: None**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Permission to promote Julie Seifert to Health Professional 3, Breastfeeding Coordinator at the WIC Lisbon Location.
  - Motion made by: Board Member Bierlair.

- 2nd: Board Member Grimm.
  - All those in favor – aye vote.
- b. Permission to hire Aaron Belknap, Certified Plumbing Inspector for the Environmental Health Division, pending background check and drug screen. Mr. Belknap will work a 20 hour work week, part time, under a 2-day work week/10 hours per day until the end of September and then transition to 30 hours a week, working a 3-day work week/10 hours per day for full-time status.
- Motion made by: Board Member Dr. Keyser.
  - 2nd: Board Member Delaney.
  - All those in favor – aye vote.

**IX. BOARD ISSUES AND DISCUSSION:**

Board member Kertoy inquired on the high population of ticks this season and if there have been any reports of Lyme disease. Ms. Menke shared that there are quite a lot more this year due to mild weather and lots of rain. She also shared that there are five parks in Portage County that have tick collection stations which have jars to drop them in and submit to the state to track and identify them. There is also a QR code to track it online. There has been a species of ticks that are becoming invasive in farms across the South. It is the Asian long-horned tick. It attacks cattle farms in swarms and will feed until the animal dies of blood loss. Although none have been spotted here in Ohio, it is being watched. It was also noted that ODH (Ohio Department of Health) has a tick page with valuable information and tracking and if you have a tick contained, you can also bring it to PCHD to have it analyzed and identified.

It was found through research with ODH that there are currently no vectors for ticks carrying Lyme disease in Portage County. Dr. Arredondo stated that if a tick has been attached to the host for at least 36hrs an antibiotic such as Doxycycline is needed.

**X. EXECUTIVE SESSION: N/A**

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was moved to adjourn by Board Member Bierlair at 6:47 PM and seconded by Board Member Clarke. An “aye” vote was cast by all; a motion was carried.



Rebecca Lehman, MPH, MPA, CHES  
Health Commissioner