

**Portage County Combined General Health District
Board Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2025
6:00 PM**



I. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The Portage County Combined General Health District Board of Health met on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 999 East Main Street, Ravenna, OH, 44266. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by Board President Ribelin.

Board Members in Attendance:	Lucy Ribelin, President Linda Grimm, Member Diana Clarke, Member Dr. Philip Keyser, Member Amy Everett, Member James Bierlair, Vice President
Board Members Not in Attendance:	Chad Delaney, Member Brock Kertoy, Member
Staff in Attendance:	Becky Lehman, Health Commissioner Sarah Meduri, Director Personnel and Administrative Services Branden Burns, Director of Finance Amy Cooper, Director of Community Health Danielle Steighner, WIC Supervisor, Lisbon Kylee McCracken, Health Educator Justin Rechichar, Director of Environmental Health Natalie Menke, Environmental Health Supervisor
District Advisory Council:	None
Others:	None
Media Present:	None

II. BOARD OF HEALTH EDUCATION:

Per the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3701-36-05, which outlines board responsibilities, including trainings; A 30-minute educational session presented for the Board of Health CEUs (0.50 CEU) on “Project Dawn and Integrated Harm Reduction”. Presented by Ms. Kylee McCracken, Health Educator.

Ms. McCracken gave an educational presentation explaining what the purpose is for Project DAWN. Project DAWN is a community health initiative focused on reducing opioid overdoses through education, resource distribution, and harm reduction strategies. The program leverages grant funding to implement practical solutions that improve accessibility to life-saving tools. A summary of the current initiatives discussed were:

Narcan Kit Distribution & Training

Kits distributed to individuals, community groups, and first responders.

Training sessions are provided for small and large groups to ensure proper overdose response.

Ms. McCracken spoke about the distribution of naloxone boxes (NaloxBox) that have been placed in 22 locations throughout Portage County, equipped with red naloxone cabinets (NaloxBox), typically near AED machines. Each cabinet includes:

- Two Narcan kits
- Two pairs of gloves
- Two face shields
- Two Resource guides

Harm Reduction Vending Machines

Two locations (PCHD & UH Portage Emergency Department). Machines are stocked with:

- Naloxone kits (Averaging 25 kits distributed in a 2–3-week period).
- Pregnancy tests
- Condoms (Averaging 10-20 packs distributed weekly)
- Tobacco cessation products
- Sharps containers
- Hygiene kits
- Additional harm reduction supplies

Partner Agencies:

- Mental Health & Recovery Board
- Portage County Sheriff's Office
- Portage DD Board
- O.U.R Place (Open United Recovery Place) Distributes 100–200 kits monthly at community events.

Total monthly distribution: **200–300 kits.**

Currently on track for **2,000 kits distributed in 2025.**

Ms. McCracken ended her presentation with a visual demonstration showing how to administer a Narcan kit and explained the key signs to look for when an opioid overdose is suspected. The board members were very pleased and impressed with the knowledge Ms. McCracken provided during the education presentation.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Board of Health Meeting: On December 9, 2025, Board Member Dr. Keyser presented a motion to accept the Board Meetings Minutes for November 18, 2025, seconded by Board Member Clarke.

A vote on the motion is as follows:

Board Member Ribilin	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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

IV. PORTRAGE COUNTY TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION: (District Advisory Council)

Not in attendance.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

VI. ACTION ITEMS:

B. Expenditure Ratifications \$255,133.49

Invoice Batch No. 7271	\$ 11,726.79
Invoice Batch No. 7348	\$ 683.12
Invoice Batch No. 7388	\$ 11,624.67
Invoice Batch No. 7422	\$ 7,217.37
Invoice Batch No. 7473	\$ 32,214.38
Invoice Batch No. 7496	\$ 58,066.34
Invoice Batch No. 7641	\$ 64,666.09
Invoice Batch No. 7665	\$ 17,260.91
Invoice Batch No. 7721	\$ 8,539.75
Invoice Batch No. 7763	\$ 43,134.07

Mr. Burns requested approval from the board to ratify the payments from this past month's expenses. ratifications of payments totaling **\$255,133.49**, representing the final

check run for the year. This amount encompasses all payments processed through the end of 2025. Key expenditures included:

- **\$52,000** for the outright purchase of copiers, eliminating the need for continued leasing.
- **\$29,000** for acquisition of a new Ford Maverick vehicle.
- **\$56,000** applied toward an existing lease agreement.

Mr. Burns stated that these strategic investments were made to position the organization for long-term operational efficiency. The complete itemized breakdown is available in the supporting documentation.

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

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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

C. Travel Expenditures

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

A motion was presented by Board Member Grimm to approve said travel expenditures, 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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

D. Resolution #25-88 A Journal Entry / Expense Correction for Portage County Combined General Health District Annual Appropriations for Revenue Previously Certified.

Mr. Burns explained that this resolution addresses adjustments related to the integrated harm reduction and the tobacco cessation grants for supplies in the vending machines. There were adjustments made to the Mosquito grant and transferring of to the new year, adjusting employee changes and salary adjustments for grant funding. Specifically for Ms. Barreca, Ms. Gill and the WIC staff to apply their salaries to the appropriate grant fund.

A motion was presented by Board Member Bierlair to Approve Resolution #25-88, 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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

E. Resolution #25-89 A Resolution to Approve the Portage County Health District Cybersecurity Policy in Compliance with Ohio Revised Code § 9.64.

Ms. Meduri presented a resolution to adopt and approve a new personnel policy pertaining to the Ohio Revised Code § 9.64, enacted through House Bill 96, requires all political subdivisions and all other entities to adopt and implement cybersecurity standards designed to safeguard information systems and protect against cybersecurity threats and ransomware attacks; the statute further requires political subdivisions to notify the Executive Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Division of Homeland Security within seven days of discovering a cybersecurity or ransomware incident, and to notify the Auditor of State within thirty days of such discovery; and must be compliant by July 1, 2026. Ms. Meduri stated that PCHD has partnered with Quality IP for developing a cybersecurity risk assessment with security enhancements, and annual staff training requirements which have been reviewed by Clemans, Nelson and Associates for legal guidance on policy development. Additional information on the policy is highlighted in the resolution itself.

A motion was presented by Board Member Dr. Keyser to Adopt and Approve Resolution #25-89, 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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

F. Resolution #25-90 A Resolution Requesting the Portage County Board of Health's Permission to Enter into Agreement Between the Portage County Board of Commissioners and the Portage County Combined General Health District for the Purpose of Cooperation and Coordination as it Relates to the Execution of the Responsibilities of the Portage County Storm Water District.

Mr. Rechichar requested approval for a resolution to authorizes acceptance of an agreement with the Portage County Board of Commissioners and permit Rebecca Lehman, Health Commissioner, to sign the agreement for the Portage County Storm Water District which would be from January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026.

A motion was presented by Board Member Everett to Approve Resolution #25-90, 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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

G. **Resolution #25-91** The Portage County Combined General Health District to Enter into an Agreement with Clonch & Sons, Inc., for the 2024 Water Pollution Control Loan Fund Designer & Installer Contract for 3673 Lovers Lane, Ravenna Township.

H. **Resolution #25-92** The Portage County Combined General Health District to Enter into an Agreement with Clonch & Sons, Inc., for the 2024 Water Pollution Control Loan Fund Designer & Installer Contract for 4036 Universal Drive, Palmyra Township.

Mr. Rechichar presented two WPCLF contracts. Both contracts received winning bids from Clonch & Sons Excavating, LLC. Both contracts would be funded by the homeowner and the WPCLF grant funds.

A motion was presented by Board Member Bierlair to Approve Resolutions #25-91 and #25-92, seconded by Board Member Dr. Keyser.

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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

I. **Resolution #25-93** Declaring a Public Nuisance Located at 667 Mishler Road, Suffield Township and Approving the Civil Prosecution for Violation(s) of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Chapter 3718 and Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) Chapter 3701-29 Sewage Treatment Systems.

Mr. Rechichar presented a resolution for a nuisance complaint. On June 12, 2025, the Portage County Health District inspected a sewage treatment system (STS) at the specified property after receiving a complaint. The inspection revealed that the STS discharges into a dry well, which is prohibited and violates septic regulations. Despite sending two certified violation notices to the homeowner, no documentation or plans for a replacement system have been provided. Therefore, Mr. Rechichar requested approval to proceed with civil prosecution against the homeowner.

A motion was presented by Board Member Bierlair to Approve Resolution #25-93, 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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

J. Resolution #25-94 Revising the Household Sewage and Private Water System Home Sale Inspection Program Fee Schedule for the Inspection, Testing and Sampling Services Required, to be Effective January 1, 2026.

Mr. Rechichar presented a cost methodology to the board on the fees that he is requesting the board for approval to adjust. He noted that the last fee updates were 17 years ago.

A motion was presented by Board Member Grimm to Approve Resolution #25-94, 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 Dr. Keyser	Yes

VI. DISCUSSIONS:

Administration:

Ms. Meduri recognized Olivia Card, MA, Epidemiologist, for receiving the Excellence in Epidemiology Award at the Ohio Public Health Association Conference. This award highlights public health professionals who demonstrate exceptional skills in research, surveillance, education, and innovation that improves population health across Ohio." Environmental Health Supervisor of Water Quality, Will Duck, was recently featured on

Episode 2 of the Leadership Portage County podcast. During the interview, Will discussed leadership, teamwork, and his commitment to making a positive impact in Portage County.

Ms. Jewell completed an inventory update of all equipment and technology, resulting in a \$3,220 credit from trading old equipment to AT&T, towards our wireless bill. Ms. Meduri also shared that PCHD is expanding partnerships, including collaborations with the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank and local libraries to collect and distribute food and pet supplies at pop-up pantries. In September, PBS visited the Portage County Health District to film a regional segment titled “Feed Our Region.” The feature highlights the work of four major regional food banks including the Akron Canton Regional Foodbank.

During their visit, the film crew interviewed Becky Lehman, Sarah Meduri, and Todd from the Akron Canton Regional Foodbank onsite at our Pop Up Food Pantry. The segment showcases the live distribution taking place and the collaborative, community centered approach PCHD brings to addressing food insecurity in Portage County.

Ms. Meduri attended the Ravenna Chamber of Commerce meeting and is working to schedule with additional chambers across the county to build relationships and promote programs and services.

Finance:

Mr. Burns presented the cash basis report indicates that year-end expenses remained steady or slightly increased, while revenue declined, which was expected. Despite this, the organization will end the year with a healthy carryover of approximately \$3.5–\$3.6 million, up from \$3.2 million at the start of the year, thanks in part to prepayments for future items. Despite the uncertainty, we believe we’re positioning ourselves well. If property taxes are reduced or eliminated, we’re prepared. If they remain in place, we’ll be in a position to move forward with new projects Ms. Lehman has been planning.

Interest allocations totaled \$170,000 and is projected to remain just under \$200,000 for the year. Mr. Burns had anticipated reaching \$300,000 from MAC funds; however, the fourth-quarter payment did not arrive as expected. Mr. Burns noted that this payment is still anticipated soon. That interest allocations has allowed us to make additional payments on the building loan — approximately \$260,000 this year — helping reduce long-term debt for the agency.

Environmental Health:

The team hosted a Certified Pool Operator (CPO) class with 20 attendees, resulting in three failures, none of from our staff. PCHD EH sanitarians all passed. The food inspections for the licensing year are nearly complete, with one pool inspection remaining. Preparations are underway for next year’s mosquito control grant and NEHA’s voluntary retail food standards program.

Mr. Rechichar stated that staff training continues to align with FDA standards, training inspectors will require additional stages and standards to meet prior to individual inspections, such as requiring completion of training and having a sign-off chart before inspections can be completed on their own. Mr. Rechichar shared that the plumbing inspections have significantly increased since hiring a new inspector, Aaron Belknap. Additionally, the department's journal article was published in the FDA Food Digest and archived in the Food Shield repository, marking national recognition. Lastly, the team acquired a new Ford Maverick vehicle which replaced a vehicle from the PCHD fleet.

Community Health:

Ms. Steighner gave an update on her staff and events for the WIC Lisbon location. Ms. Cooper also gave an update on her staff and events for the WIC Ravenna location, including both locations preparing for two holiday gatherings scheduled at separate locations in the upcoming weeks. The events include entertainment featuring a performance by Ms. Lehman's daughter and an appearance by Santa Claus.

Ms. Cooper stated that the caseloads for both locations have experienced minor fluctuations over the past month, which is said to be typical for this season due to shorter daylight hours and colder weather. Program participation has declined, particularly among senior populations, who have been less engaged in activities such as car seat inspections and other community health initiatives.

Ms. Cooper gave an update on the SNAP benefit changes pertaining to the recent modifications and temporary suspensions of SNAP benefits, which resulted in an increase in inquiries; however, overall caseloads did not rise as anticipated. While some participants returned to the program, others did not, resulting in a negligible net change. Both clinics have reported high activity levels this week, and participation is expected to increase during December.

Ms. Cooper reported that the annual Child Fatality Review Team meeting was conducted to examine all fatalities within Portage County. Staff collaborated with law enforcement agencies and multiple community partners to complete and submit the required report. The accreditation site visit is scheduled for January 14–15 and will be conducted virtually. Mr. Sexton and several PCHD staff have been enduring preparatory efforts, compiling documentation. An audit is scheduled for Thursday and will follow a hybrid model. The auditor will conduct observations on participant certification processes and review paper charts. Additional documentation and required information will be uploaded for further review over the next couple of weeks following the initial visit. The tentative date for the Board-related session is January 15. Once the agenda is finalized, three Board members will be asked to join via Zoom for the session.

Lastly, Ms. Cooper shared the planning for the upcoming Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) cycle, which has progressed significantly in recent weeks. Ms. Lehman plans to provide further details in her forthcoming report.

Health Commissioner:

Ms. Lehman gave updates on the CHIP planning, building updates, ADA compliance and the proposal to form a finance work group consisting of 2-3 board members.

CHIP Planning:

The next Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) cycle begins January 1, 2026, with three priorities:

1. Chronic Disease
2. Mental Health & Addiction
3. Population Health & Safety

Recent meetings for each priority were well attended, and action steps are being developed (e.g., reducing hypertension and heart disease). The next meeting is planned for early January.

Building Updates:

HVAC issues caused heating failures; emergency repairs were made, and further work is needed on VAVs and boilers. Roof replacement is estimated at over \$100,000, and a two-year plan will be created to fund it.

ADA Compliance:

The State of Ohio updated ADA requirements for websites, forms, and social media. Deadline is April 2026, though an extension to April 2027 may apply for special districts. Current website accessibility score is 3/10; improvements will be integrated into the strategic plan.

Finance Work Group:

Proposal to form a Finance Work Group with 2-3 board members to meet quarterly for informal advisory discussions. First meeting suggested for February before the regular board meeting.

VII. OLD BUSINESS: N/A

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Accept the Resignation of Amos Sarfo, REHS, Stormwater Coordinator, Effective December 5, 2025.

Motion made with regrets, by Board Member Bierlair

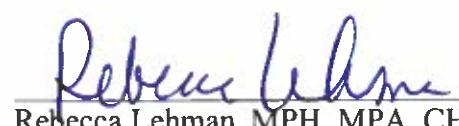
Motion seconded by Board Member Grimm

An “aye” vote was cast by all; a motion was carried.

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was moved to adjourn the meeting by Board Member Grimm at 7:07 PM and seconded by Board Member Bierlair.

An “aye” vote was cast by all; a motion was carried.



Rebecca Lehman

Rebecca Lehman, MPH, MPA, CHES
Health Commissioner

