



SHARONVILLE CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

January 14, 2015

Meeting called to order at 6:34 PM.

<u>Roll Call:</u>	Mayor Hardman	Present
	Joyce Banks	Present
	Eric Head	Present
	Kevin Kellner	Present
	Tim Schmidt	Present
	Vacant Seat	

Also present are council representatives Paul Schmidt, Greg Pugh, Rob Tankersley, Kerry Rabe, and Matthew Eggenberger; health department staff Jane Tomcisin, Margaret Locasto, Jean Nelson and Interim Health Commissioner Margaret Sheldon by phone; and Sharonville resident Kathy Weisenberg.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. MINUTES OF DECEMBER 10, 2014

There are no additions or corrections. The minutes stand approved as printed and distributed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Hardman welcomes Eric Head who was appointed by the mayor and confirmed by city council on January 13, 2015. Eric has been a resident of Sharonville for 14 years. He is a food scientist by profession. Eric works at Givaudan Flavors where he is involved with food safety. Eric says he is glad to be of service to the community.

Reference: Mayor Kevin Hardman’s memo, undated, distributed to Margaret Sheldon, RN, Interim Health Commissioner, and the Sharonville Board of Health on January 9, 2015.

“I look forward to working with all of you at our regularly scheduled meeting next Wednesday at 6:30. I expect that this issue will take a large portion of our agenda. Therefore, I am requesting that our usual reports be submitted in writing and our agenda simply consist of discussion of the 2015 budget and our Board of Health’s decision on moving forward in service to the City of Sharonville.”

Written reports are included with these minutes.

1. HEALTH COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

a. Expenses and Revenues

Margaret Sheldon states she left town in a hurry (family emergency) and cannot report without her notes.

b. Christmas Fund Adopt-A-Family

Jane Tomcisin thanks the Adopt-A-Family volunteers, among them Tim and Joyce. Tim Schmidt thanks the community sponsors for all the gifts. Joyce Banks comments it was pleasant not having to deal with groceries. The whole process went a lot smoother and it was much easier on Public Works.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL

a. Environmental Activity Report

Jane welcomes the following new food service establishments to Sharonville: the Brick House, Mi Ranchito Mexican restaurant, and Chamoda's Candy Café. Chamoda Palmore was a Lakota grad and UC football player who died in a motorcycle accident. His father opened this candy store in his memory. It is located in the old Captain D's on Chester Road which has been vacant for years.

3. NURSING

a. Nursing Activity Report

Lots of flu shots have been administered.

4. UPDATE ON THE CLOSING OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Mayor Hardman has previously recommended that Sharonville contract with Hamilton County Public Health. The 2015 budget reflects this. A copy of a revised contract between Hamilton County Public Health and the Sharonville Board of Health is distributed to the board. The contract is exactly the same as before, with exception of the start date, the contract partners and that the part-time public health nurse will be employed by Sharonville. The appropriations before council right now do not include funding the department past June. If the contract is not signed, how will the city provide public health services to Sharonville? The contract with Hamilton County Public Health will provide everything the city wants, and gives Margaret and Jane time to find new jobs. Based on conversations with civil service, Jean will be transferred to administration on Tuesday. Mayor Hardman expects to prevail in November, if the referendum even makes it to the ballot. There is an opening currently on the Board of Health (health department staff) and those funds could be used to hire a part-time sanitarian, but there will be no clerical or administrative support.

Tim Schmidt states the Board of Health has never been asked to approve a budget. The health commissioner always presented the budget that city council already approved. Council has never asked the Board of Health to vote on a budget for the department. Tim feels the health department needs an administrative assistant to function. Food license renewals go out soon. The current budget can appropriate additional funds. That happens all the time. Tim doesn't understand the hurry to close the department. The referendum collected enough signatures and will probably make it to the ballot. This Board of Health passed a resolution to ask for extra time. It was voted on, passed and has since been ignored.

Mayor Hardman states that part of the problem is the lack of disconnect between the city and the Board of Health. Mayor Hardman's research found that a board of health should approve their budget, then, through the health commissioner, present that budget to city council. City council then approves a budget for the department. This has not happened with this board in the past and that has been an error. It is a give and take, but ultimately city council's decision on funding is final.

Joyce Banks states that city council approved a budget not knowing that the health department might still be here in January. The city has to provide public health services to the community. Mayor Hardman states the contract with Hamilton County Public Health will do that. Joyce believes the contract is not an option and was an awful decision. This Board of Health should go to city council and ask for money to fund the department until the vote in November. If city residents vote to keep the health department there will have to be a budget for 2016. Matt Eggenberger asks how much more funding would be needed? Joyce responds the same funding as last year's budget. Mayor Hardman states the budget Margaret presented was fully funded. Does Joyce think the Board of Health should hire a full-time health commissioner, fund a part-time sanitarian, a full-time sanitarian, a full-time nurse and a part-time nurse? That would be \$143,905 more than the approved health department budget for 2015.

Vicki Hoppe shares the discussion from last night's finance committee meeting. They determined that if, after this meeting, council is forced to come up with more money to finance the health department because of the referendum, that can be done without hurting other department budgets. That's not a guarantee that council votes will be there to save the department. Tim asks if others can speak at committee meetings. The Board of Health was not allowed to speak during the health committee meeting. Through this whole process the Board of Health has been ignored. Mayor Hardman disagrees. The appropriate way for the Board of Health to express its collective opinion about an issue is to present it to council. Tim has shared his thoughts about the proposal at all the council meetings. It is inaccurate to say city council has not listened. Clearly council does not agree with Tim's opinion. Services can be provided by Hamilton County Public Health \$250,000 cheaper every year. It is the right thing to do. Joyce says Sharonville is a small city and the personal service will be lost. The circumstances in Sharonville are very different than what existed in Reading and St. Bernard. Mayor Hardman says Reading and St. Bernard are pleased with Hamilton County Public Health services. They would not go back. Money is not the issue. Tim and Joyce both reiterate that it's all about local access and the level of personal service. Mayor Hardman states that Sharonville is not the same as it was 25 years ago. The health department run by RC Banks is not the same as it is today. This is no longer a hometown health department. Sharonville no longer has the homey atmosphere it had in the 70's and 80's. The health commissioner's office has been a revolving door the last 14 years. Vicki Hoppe explains that Mike Brune had family issues, Glenda Gajus chose to move on for many reasons, and Dennis Propes saw the writing on the wall. Dennis was part of the body that recommended the consolidation of local health departments. *(Note: Dennis did not agree with this recommendation.)* Kevin Kellner states he works for a multi county health department (NKY) and is confident services will not decrease. He wouldn't be surprised if down the road larger health districts were to combine.

Mayor Hardman insists that Sharonville can afford the health department, but voted not to budget the funds for 2015. More money in the operating budget means, in particular, more and better police service for the community. Tim notes the city will receive \$1.5 million extra from debt relief in the next year. Mayor Hardman assumes there will be new debt. Within the past three years a study was taken of the city's capital investments and the cost of maintaining those investments. Upkeep and new capital investments assumes more debt. From the city's budget standpoint, a percentage of the general fund is allocated to debt and capital expenses and a percentage to operating-type expenses. The debt capital number needs to be about 25% to function well as a city. Street maintenance, personnel expenses, everyday expenses for police, fire, building and planning, and public works are everyday expenses separate and apart from debt and capital. Spending less here is a trade-off. A plan has been presented that reduces costs and maintains quality.

Tim insists the service to residents is essential and the money is there. All agree public health services must be provided, how we provide them is the disagreement. Sharonville pays for trash collection through contract and this is no different. Joyce comments about local interest, personal concern and familiarity with the local residents. Mayor Hardman may not need the services, but some people really do. Neither Hamilton County Public Health nor a part-time nurse can do it all. Mayor Hardman looked at the hourly breakdown for the part-time nurse. If one part-time nurse is not sufficient another part-time nurse can be added after June. With no immunizations to give a part-time nurse can cover all the duties. Hamilton County Public Health studied the numbers as well and they agree. The difference is between \$30,000 and \$230,000. Joyce asks again -- why can't this wait until the vote in November. It would be better to fund the department through the end of the year and find out what the people want. Mayor Hardman states the November vote is not affected by a Board of Health vote today. He has no intention of funding the department in 2016 or later. If the Board of Health chooses to operate a health department until November a full-time health commissioner would have to be hired as well as either a contract clerk or a part-time sanitarian. The administrative duties would have to be handled by the staff. The Board of Health can ask for more funds from city council. Mayor Hardman assumes the referendum will not pass. Many just want to vote. In November Mayor Hardman will execute a contract with Hamilton County Public Health, then Margaret, Jane and Jean will be out of work. Vote for the contract now and they can help with the transition while looking for new jobs. Mayor Hardman is trying to be as humane as possible.

Tim thinks the contract is unclear. For the first year it lists two payments of \$14,000 in February and July. After the first year a tax settlement clause is introduced. Mayor Hardman explains that the city receives money from Hamilton County every year. The city will not add a tax on the people of Sharonville. Tim objects to signing a contract that has errors or unclear statements. Mayor Hardman responds this contract is worded the same as the contracts for all the other cities in Hamilton County that contract for services from Hamilton County Public Health. The contract is clear.

Margaret Sheldon asks about the impact of the referendum. Assuming enough signatures are valid, closing the health department will be on hold until November. How can the department operate without an administrative clerk? Mayor Hardman responds to use the funds set aside for the part-time sanitarian or hire a part-time contract clerk. He will not hire a new clerk for administration just to have to fire her come November. Margaret says by law the city must provide public health services. How can they do that with a decimated staff? Mayor Hardman suggests contracting with Hamilton County Public Health. Margaret responds that cannot be done because of the referendum. Mayor Hardman responds that the Board of Health can contract with Hamilton County Public Health.

Peggy Locasto comments that no one has asked the staff if they are willing to stick it out until November no matter the results of the referendum. There has been no conversation with Jim Lukas about the matter. The Health Department staff just wants to follow the will of the public. The whole situation was handled poorly. Mayor Hardman responds it was always city council's decision. Now it is the decision of the Board of Health. Mayor Hardman says conversations are a 2-way street. Peggy has his cell phone number and never called or emailed him. Peggy has been provided an opportunity for employment if she chooses to accept it and Jean can still choose *not* to accept the job in administration. Peggy objects to the 5 days' notice that Jean was given -- move to administration or effectively resign from city employment. Mayor Hardman states this has been discussed for a while. Jean objects. This was the first time she's been told to switch jobs or resign. There have been no discussions with Jean about removing her from the health department before the department is closed. To remove her from the department just before the start of food license billing is cruel and would be an impossible burden on the other staff members. Jane confirms that public health services would be negatively affected and that would be the fault of the city. Mayor Hardman reiterates the Board of Health can make all this go away by contracting with Hamilton County Public Health. In his opinion it is the best option. Jean is being treated well by the city by giving her another job. Civil service has confirmed that Jean, classification Sr. Administrative Clerk Secretary, can be moved at will. It is not his fault that the staff and some members of the Board of Health are assuming the referendum will be successful. From his standpoint, a decision must be made. The position in administration must be filled. In his opinion, Jean would not have a job in November if she chose not to fill that opening. Tim believes this is a ploy to force the issue. Joyce believes the referendum has changed things. The people want a say. How can this plan stay in place? Mayor Hardman believes we should be operating under the notion that the referendum does not exist. Joyce states we should be operating as if the referendum may happen. Mayor Hardman states that moving Jean does not mean stopping public health services. Hamilton County Public Health is the best option. Joyce comments on the growing number of residents who have attended city council meetings in support of the Sharonville Health Department since this whole thing started.

Rob Tankersley states he is a member of the finance committee and the committee found money to appropriate for the funding of the Health Department through November that is structurally balanced. Vicki confirms this statement. Rob suggests keeping the current staff together until the referendum in November, including Margaret as interim health commissioner. Also discussed is the possibility of adding a levy, right underneath the referendum, explaining that this is how the Health Department will be funded. It would be a property tax levy. A 3% levy can be imposed without going to the voters, but the committee thought this was the better way to go. Vicki states there is the potential to lose \$12 million from the state if the tax structure changes with HB5. Mayor Hardman states this is a perfect example of changes over the last decade. The state is tired of making emotional choices. It doesn't matter that the Health Department costs less than 1% of the total city budget. City council is responsible for the money entrusted to them.

Greg Pugh states that Sharonville is one of only a few communities that provides free trash pick up to residents. The contract with Rumpke is \$600,000 a year. It would be reasonable to give the residents the choice of raising taxes or paying for their own trash pick-up. The latter is a negligible expense to the residents and Rumpke costs can be mitigated. Could free trash pick-up be sacrificed for more funds to spread around the city? Vicki explains that any additional funds provided to the Health Department by the finance committee would be one-time only and not enough to sustain the department over time. However if the referendum goes through, the finance committee wants to discuss this with council. As a group, Vicki doesn't know if council would consider a levy, even though there hasn't been a levy on the ballot in 30 years.

(First audio recording ends at 1 hour, 27 minutes and 6 seconds)

Mayor Hardman states that this is not a concern for this Board of Health.

Kerry Rabe states he has talked with many friends and businesses and all agree with the savings. The health department is warm and fuzzy, but not worth the expense. He is critical of the referendum. Vicki Hoppe asks if the health department is kept as-is until November, can the city fulfill its obligations with the existing staff? Jane needs back-up for sanitarian duties. Mayor Hardman states Hamilton County Public Health is the only viable option. Tim Schmidt asks if it's possible to put things on hold until the referendum is confirmed or not? He is very bothered by the rush to close the department. Mayor Hardman explains that state food licensing begins now. If license fees are paid to Sharonville, the contract with Hamilton County Public Health will be affected. Can Jane do all the inspections by herself? Jane responds she would have the help and support of the Norwood and Springdale health departments.

Rob Tankersley states his constituents want to vote on the issue and feel the decision is being rushed. He does not agree with the scenario, but has nothing against Kevin Hardman.

Mayor Hardman wonders why the city should go to the residents and ask them to pay for trash pick-up when the city can provide all they need.

Mayor Harman requests a motion to enter the Sharonville Board of Health into contract for public health services with Hamilton County Public Health as of January 15, 2015.

Motion by Kevin Keller; second by Eric Head.

Tim Schmidt questions the wording of the contract. Mayor Hardman states the wording is the same, other than that the contract is between the Sharonville Board of Health, not the city, and Hamilton County Public Health. Mayor Hardman states he will vote on the motion because historically and traditionally the mayor/president of the board has had a vote on all motions. Tim Schmidt states that the city law director, Tom Keating, objects to this opinion. Mayor Hardman responds that he has a different opinion provided by the legal counsel for the Ohio Dept. of Health and believes his is the correct opinion. Mayor Hardman requests a roll call vote, with his name called last.

Roll Call Vote:

Joyce Banks	No
Eric Head	Yes
Kevin Kellner	Yes
Tim Schmidt	No
Mayor Hardman	Yes

The motion passes.

Mayor Hardman calls for an Executive Session to discuss employment issues.
Motion by Kevin Kellner. Second by Eric Head.

Roll Call Vote:

Joyce Banks	Yes
Eric Head	Here
Kevin Kellner	Yes
Tim Schmidt	Yes
Mayor Hardman	Yes

Executive Session begins at 8:25 pm

(Second audio recording begins here)

Motion to adjourn from Executive Session by Tim Schmidt. Second by Eric Head.
Voice vote. All are in favor. Executive Session adjourns at 8:42 pm.

Mayor Hardman requests a motion effective January 15th to terminate the relationship between the Sharonville Board of Health and the remaining employees of the board pending their acceptance into employment with the city of Sharonville.

Motion by Kevin Kellner, second by Eric Head. There is no discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Joyce Banks	No
Eric Head	Here
Kevin Kellner	Here
Tim Schmidt	No
Mayor Hardman	Yes

ADJOURNMENT:

The next meeting of the Sharonville Board of Health is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at 6:30 pm. Tim Ingram will be in attendance representing the Hamilton County Board of Health to discuss the progress of the transition.

Motion to adjourn by Tim Schmidt, second by Eric Head, voice vote, all are in favor, motion passes.
Meeting adjourns at 8:45 pm.

Jean Nelson
Sharonville City Health Department
Sr. Administrative Clerk Secretary