

Importance of agency education initiatives discussed

HEALTH BOARD

Health commissioner extended 1-year contract

County board of health members approved a oneyear contract for Health Commissioner Dr. Boyd Hoddinott at their Wednesday afternoon meeting, and also learned about possible plans for education initiatives at the Logan County Health District.

The health commissioner's salary will remain at \$52,000 for the new contract, which members said reflected the agency's financial situation, and not Dr. Hoddinott's performance.

"We felt that because of the tough times, there would be no raise this time around," member Robin Price said following an approximately 10-minute executive session to discuss the health commissioner's contract.

"We heard nothing but positive comments from the board about the work that he's doing," President Don Spath said.

Dr. J. Christopher O'Connor also was approved as a back-up health commissioner, at the rate of \$1 per year, or \$75 per hour for services performed.

In other matters, the health commissioner noted that as the LCHD is working on formulating its strategic plan, one of its goals will be to build an education division within the agency.

Prior to budget reductions last year, the health district employed six to seven public health nurses and also an educator position. These individuals worked in the community and in area schools to provide education

about various health behaviors, such as tobacco and alcohol use, diet and exercise, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, safe sex and suicide. Continuing this work is difficult because the agency now employs just two public health nurses. Consequently, Dr. Hoddinott talked about the possibility of hiring a part-time nurse to work on education initiatives in the area schools, and then to gradually build up education personnel from there.

“This is a critical piece — I don’t know of anyone who would disagree,” he said. “We very badly need to get back into the schools.”

Members approved the 2011 anticipated budget for the agency, with general fund revenues estimated at \$761,350 and general fund expenses at \$907,920. Total expenses for all health district funds are anticipated to be \$2,099,227, and revenues are estimated at \$1,960,488.

According to the preliminary budget, no raises will be given in 2011.

“This is our best guess at this time for what we expect for next year,” Administrator Lisa Downing said. “We’ll be looking at our finalized budget in October, and will have a better picture of the budget with our actual grant figures in place.”

In environmental health matters, the board rescinded its approval of a variance for a swimming pool at Anchor Lodge Condominiums, 9539 State Route 368, Huntsville, as a result of an Ohio Department of Health inspection. The ODH determined that a 60-inch sea wall cannot function in lieu of a fence, and the fence surrounding the pool facility must have a self-latching gate.

Anchor Lodge owners must comply with the law cited by ODH prior to reopening the pool.

In other action, the board:

- approved an annual evaluation for John Clary, plumbing inspector and manufactured homes inspector;
 - approved a renewal contract with human resources consulting firm Clemans Nelson & Associates, with a retainer rate of \$87.50 per month, and an hourly rate of \$115 for services performed;
 - approved Mary Rutan Hospital's maternity licensure application, after a review of the facility found no violation of local codes; and
 - ordered Todd Tickle to remove solid waste from his property at 9831 E. Foundry St., East Liberty, within seven days.
- The next meeting is 1 p.m. April 7 at the health district.