

Board of Health Work Session
October 15, 2025
MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order and Roll Call

Ms. Kimberly Kingsbury called to order the 2025 fourth quarter work session of the Board of Health of Canton City Public Health on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at 3:30 PM. Ms. Kingsbury presiding. The meeting location was Canton City Public Health, second floor Board room, 420 Market Ave. N., Canton, OH.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Ms. Kimberly Kingsbury, Mrs. Cleo Lucas, Mr. Patrick Wyatt, Dr. James Johns, and Mr. Steve Ritschard

Members Absent: None

Members Excused: None

Staff Present: Health Commissioner Amanda Archer, Dawn Miller, Danielle Grimm, Cade Harmon, Maggie Bradford, Christi Allen, and Sean Green

Others Present: None

Finance Report Overview

1. Board of Health monthly Finance Report overview by C. Allen.

Christi Allen provided an in-depth overview of the monthly Finance Report which is provided to the Board of Health at each regular meeting. She included a breakdown of revenues, expenditures, cash balances, and fund activity as outlined in the handout distributed to the Board members. Ms. Allen asked the Board if there were any additional details they would like included in future reports. The Board agreed that no changes to the report were necessary at the time.

THRIVE Infant Vitality Program Update

2. THRIVE Infant Vitality Program update by D. Miller.

Dawn Miller introduced THRIVE staff members Danielle Grimm, Maggie Bradford, and Cade Harmon to the Board and presented an overview of the THRIVE Ohio Equity Initiative (OEI) 2024 Annual Report. She began by acknowledging the sensitivity of the topics discussed and outlined THRIVE's dual-focus strategy and data-driven approach, which combine individual-level outreach with systemic policy and practice changes. She highlighted that the program's Priority Service Area (PSA) includes eleven Stark County ZIP codes targeted for focused outreach, education, and engagement efforts.

Cade Harmon presented countywide infant mortality data, noting that 23 infants died in Stark County in 2024, down from 2023, with a corresponding infant mortality rate (IMR) of 6.1 deaths per 1,000 live births,

below the state average of 6.6. He also reviewed the leading causes of infant death, including suffocation, low birth weight, prematurity, and perinatal complications, and reported a decline in the non-Hispanic Black IMR from 21.7 to 11.1, indicating progress toward narrowing racial disparities in birth outcomes.

Maggie Bradford discussed Community Resource Connector (CRC) services, successes, and client outcomes. She reported that 75% of pregnant participants served in 2024 identified as non-Hispanic Black, emphasizing THRIVE's continued focus on populations disproportionately affected by poor maternal and infant health outcomes. She also shared a client success story illustrating the program's impact.

Dawn Miller concluded the presentation with an overview of community partnerships, social determinants of health priorities (adolescent health/family planning and housing), and ongoing collaboration with agencies to address root causes of infant mortality. She noted that THRIVE's work continues to be guided by data, community engagement, and a commitment to health equity.

During discussion, Dr. Johns noted that the data visualization software used to track infant mortality metrics can be confusing, as it seems to show an increase in racial disparity despite a measurable decrease. Dawn Miller acknowledged the software's limitations but explained that it is provided by the Ohio Department of Health and is utilized by all CCPH divisions, which limits flexibility in selecting alternative platforms.

Mrs. Miller then encouraged the Board to read *Infant Mortality and Other Wicked Problems: A Community-Driven Approach to Creating Change* by Jill Haubner Miller and Dr. Meredith C. Smith, which explores community-based strategies for addressing complex public health challenges.

Commissioner Archer concluded the discussion by noting that Stark County's infant mortality disparity is lower than it has ever been and remains below the state average, emphasizing that these results represent important progress as the program moves into the next grant cycle.

Adjourn

Mr. Ritschard moved, and Dr. Johns seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:57 PM.

APPROVED:



President of the Board of Health

Date Signed



Secretary to the Board of Health

11/4/25

Date Signed

October 28, 2025

Date of Approval