I. Call to Order

Mr. J. David Benenati, President, called the monthly meeting of the Geauga County Board of Health to order at 7:00 p.m.

Board members present: Mr. J. David Benenati, Mr. Timothy Goergen, Mrs. Christina Livers, and Dr. Janet O’Hara. Ms. Melanie Eppich was not present.

Staff members present: Robert Weisdack, Health Commissioner and Jay Becker, Disease Surveillance Specialist.

Others present: No one else was present.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Benenati asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Livers moved to approve the minutes for the September 12, 2011 regular Board of Health meeting with corrections. The corrections were typographical and grammatical in nature and did not change the content of the minutes. Mr. Goergen seconded the motion. Motion carried with a roll call vote. Mr. Benenati, yes; Mr. Goergen, yes; Mrs. Livers, yes; and Dr. O’Hara, yes.

IV. Current Expenses/ Financial Report

Mrs. Livers moved to approve the Current Expenses September 6, 2011 to October 12, 2011. Mr. Goergen seconded the motion. Motion carried with a roll call vote. Mr. Benenati, yes; Mr. Goergen, yes; Mrs. Livers, yes; and Dr. O’Hara, yes.

V. Environmental Health Program Update

a. Sewage Rules Update

Mr. Weisdack stated that ODH is still in discussion about perched water tables. The decision made at ODH may greatly affect Geauga County and the ability to install on-lot trench systems.

Mr. Weisdack reviewed the number and type of sewage disposal permits issued. We have had 161 permits issued to date.

b. Ohio Department of Health Food Survey Results

We recently had our survey from the Ohio Department of Health. They reviewed the files and found only two deficits out of 41 categories that need action. The results of the survey indicate the Geauga County Health District is on the approved list.

c. General Information

We continue to receive invoices from the state auditor’s office for our recent audit. Mr. Weisdack stated that the most recent invoice was for the review of the final audit. This should be the last invoice we receive.
Mr. Weisdack received a newsletter from AOHC which reported that since 2008, nationwide data shows there were 34,400 jobs lost due to layoffs. It also stated that local health districts reported a 45% reduction in their budget this year as compared to last year and expect more cuts to come within the next year. Mr. Weisdack stated that Geauga County Health District is very fortunate. Our budget is being watched very closely and will continue to be to assure that we do not get into the same situation as other health districts.

Federal funds continue to be cut and will affect most, if not all grants. State and local health departments are not eligible to apply for the new Community Transformation Grant funds. This represents approximately $135 million in funds. Mr. Weisdack stated that they have not explained what this grant really is.

There may be changes coming to the Public Employees Retirement System. These changes would affect many people planning to retire in the near future as well as ones with many years of service left to work.

Mr. Weisdack recently received a call from the Mayor of Solon. She inquired what the Geauga County Health District might charge to provide Solon with public health services. They feel they are not getting the service from Cuyahoga County. Mr. Weisdack told the Mayor that he would talk to the prosecutor’s office and the Board. Mr. Weisdack stated that the Mayor was going to call him back once her law director came back from vacation. The Board agreed that Mr. Weisdack should pursue this if it is legally allowed and financially feasible.

Mr. Weisdack reported that there have been five rabid skunks found in Lake County. He also recently spoke to someone who was exposed to a rabid dog from Summit County. She had heard that Mr. Weisdack had written books on rabies and contacted him for more information.

VI. Personal Health Services Update

a. Nursing

Mr. Weisdack and Chris Pintchuk will be attending the Geauga County Commissioner’s meeting to inform them that due to our agreement with VaxCare, we are able to accept most Medicare supplemental insurance plans, as well as standard Medicare. Flu vaccine can be given to any county employee if they show their insurance card.

b. WIC

The September caseload was 893.

Mr. Weisdack reported that we are still awaiting a final decision on budget cuts for WIC. We have been tentatively notified of a possible 3% cut.

c. Community Health Assessments

We have been in contact with the Amish school superintendent to discuss allowing the Geauga County Health District to do the survey of the children within their schools. At first, the superintendent indicated that we would be given permission to do the survey, but has now stated that we will not be allowed. This would have been valuable data to assess the needs of the Amish community.

VII. Old Business

a. Injection Well

Mr. Weisdack has been asked to do an injection well presentation on October 27, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the meeting room. Mr. Weisdack stated he would be expressing his concern about these wells and will be providing information pertaining to public health concerns. There will be other presenters at the meeting as well.

b. Hambden/Montville Injection Well Study
The findings were distributed to the Board regarding the study. Jay Becker reviewed the findings of the study with the Board.

Letters were sent to residents within the two-mile radius offering the chemical water sampling. We did not receive a very good response. Another set of letters were sent. Responses from fifteen residents were received. These tests will provide a baseline screening of the water from the resident’s wells. The results of the chemical water sampling found nothing. If something had been found, the resident would have been advised to seek a more thorough chemical test through a certified lab. Mr. Weisdack indicated that even though these results were found to be within acceptable limits, he still does not condone the injection wells.

In addition to the chemical water sampling, a cancer review was conducted within a two-mile radius around each injection well site. Mr. Becker worked with ODH to obtain this information, which only spans from 2001 through 2005. The results of the cancer review found that there were two cases of cancer within the Montville injection well location and no cases of cancer within the Hambden injection well site. These cancer rates were compared to national, state, county, and local communities and we do not see any differences in statistical significance.

c. Ten Year Retirement Plan

Mr. Weisdack distributed some information regarding the health district employees, their ages, years of service and how many years they plan to work until retirement. Four employees are within five years of retirement. The Board discussed buy-outs of some employees. Mr. Weisdack stated that buy-outs were considered a few years ago. The state sent information on how to calculate a buy-out. It would have been a poor financial move for the health district.

Mr. Weisdack stated that one employee has indicated they cannot afford to retire and another has stated they would entertain retiring sooner if there was some sort of bonus given to retire. A few employees have indicated that their retirement date could be determined by changes in the OPERS program.

The Board stated that the workforce is stable with many years of experience. They stated that we are very fortunate not to have to reduce the staff any further. Mr. Weisdack stated that morale is very low and he has tried to do some things to increase it. The Board indicated that perhaps the staff does not understand the whole picture.

VIII. Executive Session

Mrs. Livers moved to adjourn for Executive Session at 8:55 pm to discuss pending legal cases. Mr. Goergen seconded the motion. Motion carried with a roll call vote. Mr. Benenati, yes; Mr. Goergen, yes; Mrs. Livers, yes; and Dr. O’Hara, yes. The meeting reconvened at 9:20 pm.

No action was taken as a result of Executive Session.

IX. New Business

Mrs. Livers moved 10.11-a to approve the 2012 Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste contract. Dr. O’Hara seconded the motion. Motion carried with a roll call vote. Mr. Benenati, yes; Mr. Goergen, yes; Mrs. Livers, yes; and Dr. O’Hara, yes.

Dr. O’Hara moved 10.11-b to approve the continuation of participation in the Geauga County Commissioners healthcare insurance program and continue employee contribution rates for 2012 the same as 2011. Mrs. Livers seconded the motion. Mr. Weisdack reported that there was no increase to the health care premiums for 2012. They will remain at 2011 rates. This is due to the wellness programs that the employees participate in throughout the year. Motion carried with a roll call vote. Mr. Benenati, yes; Mr. Goergen, yes; Mrs. Livers, yes; and Dr. O’Hara, yes.

Dr. O’Hara moved 10.11-c to approve the transfer in the amount of $600.00 from Travel and $3,500.00 from Salaries to Remit to State for a total of $4,100.00 within the Private Water fund. Mr.
Goergen seconded the motion. Motion carried with a roll call vote. Mr. Benenati, yes; Mr. Goergen, yes; Mrs. Livers, yes; and Dr. O’Hara, yes.

X. Other Business

Mr. Weisdack stated he had budgeted a 15% increase in healthcare for the 2012 budget, so the fact there was no increase in premiums for 2012 would help the Geauga County Health District budget even more.

XI. Meetings

The regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Monday, November 21, 2011. The Board agreed to change the meeting date to Monday, November 14, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., 470 Center St., Bldg. 8, Chardon, Ohio to accommodate Mr. Weisdack’s vacation.

XII. Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Goergen moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Livers seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert K. Weisdack, R.S., M.A., M.P.H.
Secretary of the Board