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Contest ends May 15, 2020

Richland Public Health

Look What We Did in 2019:



And a 10-year review, 2010-2019: Proud Past; Bright Future



Administration



Sarah Humphrey
Health Commissioner



Dr. Daniel Burwell
Medical Director



Kevin VanMeter
Fiscal Officer



Richard Grega
HR, Legal, IT, Facilities

Board of Health

The **Board of Health** plans or authorizes activities benefiting the department's purpose. Terms are for five years. Board meetings are normally the third Monday of the month (except January and February) at 6 p.m. at 555 Lexington Avenue. Meetings are open to the public and the agenda includes an opportunity for public comment.

2018-2019 Members: Barbara Cinadr RN, Thelda Dillon, Stuart Durbridge DVM, Robert Exten MD, John Leech DDS, Matthew Maiyer RPH, Della Phelps, Dave Remy, Jean Swartz, Ary van Haringen, Violet Wetzel.

Contacting Us

Address

Richland Public Health
555 Lexington Avenue
Mansfield, Ohio 44907

Website

www.richlandhealth.org

General Office Hours

Mon – Thu: 8a – 4:30 p
Fri: 8a – 4p

Main Phone Number

419-774-4500

Answered 24/7 for public health emergencies and reporting of communicable diseases after hours.

Toll free: 1-800-473-2335

Fax-419-774-4557

Clinic: 419-774-4700

Immunization Hotline: 419-774-8115

Sarah Humphrey named Health Commissioner

Sarah Goodwill Humphrey was named Health Commissioner at Richland Public Health by the Board of Health on January 9, 2020. Humphrey previously served as Health Commissioner at the Ashland County Health Department since 2016. She succeeds Martin Tremmel who served Richland Public Health from 2013 to 2020.

"Ms. Humphrey brings a deep personal commitment to public health and a life-long passion for prevention and community well-being," said Richland Public Health Board Member Ary van Harlingen, who chaired the search committee. "The Board looks forward to working with Sarah and is confident that her leadership, guidance, vision, and energy will assure a seamless transition as we continue our mission to improve the health our Richland County communities."

While Health Commissioner, Humphrey facilitated the collaboration of the Ashland City Council and Ashland County General Health District to reduce cost and service redundancy to create one Health Department in Ashland. She spearheaded technological advancements to more efficiently and effectively provide services to the public, as well as implemented foundational documents of the agency's accreditation journey. While at Ashland County Health Department, Sarah also directed all Budgetary and Human Resource responsibilities.

Humphrey graduated from The Ohio State University in March 1999 with a BS in Animal Science from the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences. She began her career in public health as an Environmental Health Specialist and Registered Sanitarian for Holmes County General Health District from 2001 to 2003 and again from 2009 to 2012. She became a Tier 2 Epidemiologist and Policy Administrator in Holmes County from 2012 to 2016 while completing her Masters of Public Health (MPH) from the University of South Florida in December of 2015.

She is also a Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Site Visitor. She has previous experience working in collaboration with Richland Public Health as a member of the Unified Command Response during the 2014 North Central Ohio Measles Outbreak.

In addition to her public health experience, Humphrey served as Fiscal Officer for the Western Holmes County Fire District from 2009 through 2018, managing human resources, financial affairs, and the budget for fire and EMS.

Sarah and her husband, Todd J. Humphrey, owner of Humphrey Excavating, reside near Loudonville with their four children.

For questions about the 2019 Annual Report or to request a copy, contact Reed Richmond at 419-774-4726 or email rreid@richlandhealth.org

Office of Vital Statistics - 2019

1,140 Births in Richland County

79 Births to Teens (ages 13-19)

- 3 15 years old: 4% of teen births
- 1 16-years-old: 1% of teen births
- 9 17-years-old: 11% of teen births
- 20 18-years-old: 25% of teen births
- 46 19-years-old: 59% of teen births



Behind the Numbers

- 729 "repeat" births
 - 584 births to unwed
 - 90 non-hospital births.
 - 15 teens had second babies.
- 6.9% of total births were to teens, **the lowest rate since tracking began in 1991 (29 years).**

Causes of Death for Richland County: 1,262 Total Deaths

- 522 - Heart Disease (37% of all deaths)
- 257 - Cancer - all types (18%)
 - 27% of cancer deaths are lung cancer
- 98 - Alzheimer's/Dementia
- 77 - Strokes
- 77 - Accidents
 - 58% of accidental deaths are drug OD
- 74 - Lung Diseases
- 38 - Flu & Pneumonia
- 35 - Renal/Kidney
- 9 - Suicide*
 - *1-year after an all-time high 23 suicides

Born in Ohio? Purchase birth certificates online from Richland Public Health:
<https://richlandhealth.org/personal/birth-death-certificates/>

CERTIFICATES ISSUED IN 2019	
Birth Certificates	5,191
Death Certificates	4,173
Burial Permits.....	959

Finding Richland Public Health Online

2019 Use Data*

richlandhealth.org

130,771 page views
 26,859 original visits
 Avg. time on site: 15:09
 Page views per visit: 3.35

*2019 Google Analytics



... of people reaching out to Richland Public Health online (richlandhealth.org) are doing so on mobile devices.

User Demographics

68% Female

32% Male

Age 25-34: 24%
 Age 35-44: 22%
 Age 45-54: 21%
 Age 55-64: 16%
 Age 18-24: 9%
 Age 65+: 8%



... of people reaching out to Richland Public Health online (richlandhealth.org) are doing so on desktop or laptops.

Most Visited Pages

1. Job Openings
2. Environmental Health
3. Birth Certificates
4. Contact Us
5. Vital Statistics
6. Food Services
7. Child/Adult Immunizations
8. Personal Health
9. Plumbing Services
10. Public Health Clinic



... of people reaching out to Richland Public Health online (richlandhealth.org) are doing so on tablets.

Join Us on Social Media



Facebook:
 "Richland Public Health" 2,194 "likes"



Twitter:
 "@richlandhealth1" 671 "followers"



Instagram: "richlandhealth"
 YouTube: "Richland Public Health"
 LinkedIn: "Richland Public Health"

Seen us around?: All of our advertising venues combined gathered more than 3.5 million impressions in 2019!

Community Health and Prevention Sciences



Community Health and Prevention Sciences (CHPS) is the art and science of studying and assessing community health needs. This involves organizing and provisioning comprehensive community health services, and doing the work of educating and developing health care programs. The objective of that work is promoting health and preventing diseases. We are committed to reducing the leading preventable causes of illness, disability, and death – and promoting community health – in Richland County.

Julie Chaya, Director. Contact Information: 419-774-0806; office email: jchaya@richlandhealth.org
Reed Richmond, Health Education & Communications Specialist: 419-774-4726; rreid@richlandhealth.org
Anyun Chatterjee, Health Educator/Accreditation: 419-774-3542; achatterjee@richlandhealth.org
Gurpinder Deol, Health Educator/DFC Grant: 419-774-4754; gdeol@richlandhealth.org
Shannon Nelson, CHPS Coordinator: 419-774-4761 (main office number); snelson@richlandhealth.org

Our Programs & Grant-funded Projects



For 15 years, Richland Public Health has been upgrading the driving skills of our most experienced drivers by teaching the **AARP Driver Refresher Class**. Close to 1,000 individuals have taken the course over that time. Find out more at richlandhealth.org and call 419-774-4726 for class information.

In 2019, Richland Public Health's **Child Passenger Safety (CPS)** Technicians supervised 71 new seat installs through the Ohio Buckles Buckeyes (OBB) program and assisted families with 32 CPS checks. For more information or if you'd like to have your car seat install checked, call 419-774-4726.

With a grant from OAAP, **free bike helmets** were fitted for children at the Minority Health Fair. More than 60 helmets were distributed.



Richland Public Health was one of 150 grant recipients of a **Drug-Free Communities (DFC)** Support Program from the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

The DFC Program provides grants to community coalitions to strengthen the infrastructure among local partners to create and sustain a reduction in local youth substance use. Recognizing that local problems need local solutions, DFC-funded coalitions engage multiple sectors of the community and employ a variety of environmental strategies to address local substance use problems.

Another new grant announced in 2019 is the **Personal Responsibility Education Program** which includes "Making Proud Choices!" a safer sex approach to STDs, Teen Pregnancy, and HIV prevention program which aims to provide young adolescents with the knowledge, confidence and skills necessary to reduce their risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV and pregnancy.



Last year, Richland Public Health's Community Health and Prevention Science team participated in the launch and publicity of **Richland County's Dolly Parton Imagination Library**. DPIL is a national program founded by country singer/celebrity Dolly Parton to provide books once a month for every child starting at birth. The Richland County program is spearheaded by Dr. Celia Flinn, Pediatrician. Richland Public Health is providing meeting space and clerical staff to help start the program here.

Environmental Health Division



Environmental Health is the branch of public health that focuses on the relationships between people and their environment; promotes human health and well-being; and fosters healthy and safe communities.

Environmental Health is a key part of any public health system. The field works to advance policies and programs to reduce chemical and other environmental exposures in air, water, soil, and food in order to protect people and provide communities with healthier environments.

Joe Harrod, Director. Contact Information: 419-774-4520; office email: env@richlandhealth.org

Heather Decker, Sanitarian Supervisor. 419-774-4533; hdecker@richlandhealth.org

Wes Engelbach, Sanitarian Supervisor. 419-774-5165; wengelbach@richlandhealth.org

Frank Brykalski, Chief Plumbing Inspector. 419-774-4536; fbrykalski@richlandhealth.org

Highlighting A Few of Our Programs

The Food Safety Division at Richland Public Health licenses and inspects food service operations (FSO), retail food establishments (RFE), temporary and mobile FSO/RFE, and vending facilities to ensure public health and safety. Richland Public Health's Sanitarians ensure our community is better protected against food-borne illnesses that may result from unsanitary working conditions, improper food handling, preparation or storage, unsafe sources and improper cooking, holding or cooling temperatures.

Right: Mobile food vendor inspection

Our State-Certified Plumbing Inspectors work with registered plumbers and homeowners to ensure all plumbing installations are in compliance with the Ohio Plumbing Code. Our Chief Plumbing Inspector instructs Plumbing Code CEU Classes for a six-county area. Richland Public Health has residential and commercial jurisdiction in Richland County and Commercial Jurisdiction in Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Knox, and Morrow Counties.



Mosquito Control's priority is preventing the spread of mosquito-borne diseases. During the 2019 season, 4,805 acres were treated by our truck-mounted spray equipment targeting for adult mosquitoes. In 2019, RPH was notified of one positive West Nile virus mosquito results in Richland County. Richland Public Health strives to educate the public to protect themselves from mosquito bites by eliminating mosquito habitats found on their property and reducing sources of standing water.

Sewage Treatment Systems: Richland Public Health conducts site reviews, validates designs and issues permits for installing new private household sewage treatment systems or altering an existing sewage system. A sanitarian will go onsite to do a final inspection of the system for compliance with the code. The sewage treatment system division also investigates complaints and provides consultation on failing or malfunctioning systems to identify the problem and provide a safe solution.

Tire Amnesty (above): Richland Public Health partnered with Richland County Solid Waste Authority for a Tire Amnesty Day. Disposing of tires from your property is important for mosquito control. Water that collects inside scrap tires can become a breeding ground for disease-carrying mosquitoes and other pests. The Tire Amnesty event disposed of 2,614 scrap tires.

10-year Overview, 2010-2019

2010

- H1N1 flu wrap-up from previous year
- The Health Department has 100th birthday
- 3 confirmed cases of mosquito-spread California La Crosse encephalitis/meningitis
- First reports of West Nile Virus in Ohio
- Hike for Health celebrates its 10th year
- Health Department purchases two trailers for hauling supplies in a public health emergency

2011

- WIC hires its first breastfeeding peer helper
- Richland County Community Health Assessment conducted

2012

- Community Health Assessment released
- Public Health response to H3N2 variant flu (swine flu) – one case in Richland County
- Clinic transitions to electronic medical records
- Seminar held for businesses and how to handle bedbug nuisance
- December increase in number of flu cases
- Minority Health Fair celebrates 15th year

2013

- Community Health Improvement Plan released
- Participate in a radiological disaster drill with the Ohio Air National Guard
- Levy Passes

2014

- Richland Public Health adopts new name and logo, introduced on Public Health Day.
- Creation of first four-year Strategic Plan
- Outbreak of Measles (summer) 377 cases; 10,000 doses of MMR Vaccine
- Richland Public Health is part of the six county North Central Ohio Unified Command awarded "Champions of Public Health" by Ohio State Nursing for its response to the measles outbreak

2015

- First of several "Bike to Work" days
- Community Collaborative on Safe Sleep
- November 2015 – Levy renewal passes

2016

- Primary care clinic repurposed to immunizations and infectious diseases only
- Ebola & Zika elicit emergency health plans
- Blood pressure kits for checkout at local libraries
- Purchase of birth certificates online
- Mercury clean-up in a Mansfield home
- Richland Walks (mall walking) and Just Walk Richland programs start
- ABC (Alone, Back, Crib) of Safe Sleep campaign starts to reduce infant mortality

2017

- Crystal Bowersox concert for childhood Type 1 diabetes sponsored by Richland Public Health
- Public Health Nursing offers free cribs with newborn home visits
- WIC Offices join Public Health Clinic on first floor to combine services
- Birth Certificates offered online for first time
- Opioid deaths become a serious County (and National) crisis

2018

- Health Information Kiosks at local libraries
- Richland Public Health partners with 10 agencies to distribute FREE cribs with funds provided by Richland County Youth and Family Council
- Suicides, sadly, hit an all-time high mark for Richland County

2019

- see next page

10-year Overview, 2010-2019

August 27, 2019:

Richland Public Health Awarded PHAB Accreditation

2019



Advancing
public health
performance

Richland Public Health received news on August 27, 2019, that its three year journey to achieve public health accreditation was approved by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

To receive accreditation, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of quality standards and measures.

"Whenever you see our seal of accreditation, you

will know that Richland Public Health has been thoroughly examined and meets or exceeds national standards that promote continuous quality improvement for public health," then Health Commissioner Martin Tremmel said. "By continuing to improve our services and performance, we can be sure we are meeting the public health needs of those we serve as effectively as possible."

Richland Public Health became one of fewer than 300 health departments that have thus far achieved accreditation through PHAB since the organization launched in 2011.

"Richland Public Health joins the growing ranks of accredited health departments in a strong commitment to their public health mission," said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD.

Achieving PHAB accreditation also means Richland Public Health immediately started work on re-accreditation, a three-year process toward continued excellence.



Richland Public Health staff celebrate the PHAB announcement while pinning the last "leaf" in place on our big accreditation process board in the East Wing hallway.



"Inkcarceration" at the historic Ohio State Reformatory becomes one of the biggest tattoo and heavy metal events in the nation. Environmental Health sanitarians inspect food vendors as well as inspect and register tattoo artists who come from around the world.



Richland Public Health was one of the sponsors of the "Shawshank Hustle," a massive 7K run/fun event that starts at the historic Ohio State Reformatory, runs through downtown Mansfield, and makes its way back to the starting gate. The husband/wife team of Greg and Lindsey Pittak (one of our sanitarians) finished among the top three in their male and female age group running for Team Richland Public Health.

- On the last day of 2019: Coronavirus detected in China. Richland Public Health prepares.

Public Health Nursing and Clinic



Public Health Nursing is defined as the practice of promoting and protecting the health of populations using knowledge from nursing, social, and public health sciences. By working with whole communities, public health nurses are able to educate people about health issues, improve community health and safety and increase access to care. Richland Public Health has two distinct areas of Public Health Nursing Services: the Public Health Clinic and Public Health Nursing.

Amy Schmidt, Director. Public Health Nursing 419-774-4540; Clinic 419-774-4700; aschmidt@richlandhealth.org
 Courtney Dill, Public Health Nursing Supervisor, 419-774-4758, cdill@richlandhealth.org

Program Numbers

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING		2019		Communicable Disease Surveillance	
CMH (client visits).....	313	Richland Public Health public health nurses coordinate communicable disease surveillance and reporting per the Ohio Department of Health Guide for Reportable Infectious Diseases in Ohio (OAC 3701-3).			
Community Health Screenings.....	582	Electronic surveillance systems are used to monitor disease prevalence in Richland County.			
Influenza Vaccines.....	2,004	We work closely with Environmental Health to investigate foodborne illness and other environmental-related diseases and collaborate locally with both OhioHealth (Mansfield and Shelby) and Avita hospitals.			
Newborn/Prenatal Home Visits.....	253	Communicable Diseases - 2019			
Referrals to Community Agencies.....	538	Infectious Diseases (other than Flu/STI) 348			
Cribettes Distributed.....	74	Influenza (A&B)..... 708			
School Nurses (hours/student care).....	3,562	Hospitalizations due to flu 126			
PUBLIC HEALTH CLINIC		2019		Sexually Transmitted Infections	
General Health (new, revisits, sick)	418	STI Positive Results..... 865			
Immunization Visits	3,401	Chlamydia.....647			
International Travel (visits/consults)	198	Gonorrhea 214			
Nurse Appointments	59	Syphilis2			
Reproductive Health (STI/HIV tests)	59	AIDS/HIV2			
Total Visits	4,135				

Highlighting A Few of Our Programs



Cribs (called cribettes) are given to qualifying new mothers in Richland County through our **Newborn/Prenatal Home Visit Program**. Cribettes are compact cribs that easily fold out to full-size cribs to make a safe sleep environment for children from newborn up to 30 pounds. Using a crib for sleep has been shown to reduce infant mortality from sudden infant death (SIDS) and co-sleeping fatalities. The ABCs of safe sleep emphasize putting a child to sleep Alone, on their Back, and in a Crib.

In 2019, there were no infant deaths attributed to co-sleeping. 74 cribettes were distributed through our program. A portion of those were provided by funds from the Richland County Youth and Family Council.

PRENATAL HOME VISIT

- Pregnancy assessment, education and referral
- Linkage to community resources
- Screening for at-risk and follow-up
- Visits tailored to client needs
- May qualify for a FREE cribette.
- Call 419-774-4540 for Appointment

NEWBORN HOME VISIT

- Postpartum assessment and education for mom
 - Newborn assessment and education
 - Newborn weight checks
 - May qualify for a FREE cribette.
 - Call 419-774-4540 for Appointment
- 253** prenatal/newborn home visits in 2019



Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) is a program administered by the Ohio Department of Health that links families of children under the age of 21 with special health care needs to a network of medical providers to help families pay for medical services a child needs. Our public health nurses assist with completion of CMH applications, connect families with medical specialists and community services, and serve as advocates to ensure medical needs are met. In addition, our nurses perform home visits to evaluate growth and development, assess needs, and provide education.

Through our **International Travel Service**, a public health nurse in our Clinic can provide immunizations for travel needs and travel advice to help our residents avoid discomfort and disease.

If you are going to be traveling, you need to know about serious health risks — especially where there is a risk of exposure.

Call 419-774-4700 and ask for the International Travel Services program. In 2019, our International Travel Services assisted 198 travelers.



Richland Public Health Nurses used one of the Flu Shot Clinics as a test of Emergency Preparedness.

Richland Public Health is always planning for the next public health threat. Through our **Emergency Planning and Preparedness**, Richland Public Health has created an experienced staff that is capable of planning, training, exercising, and leading a response within the community and coordinating the efforts with local, regional, and state partners. We plan for all hazards, including disease outbreaks.

Capabilities are driven in four Domains:

- Biosurveillance
- Community Resilience (Preparedness & Recovery)
- Countermeasures & Mitigation
- and Incident Management

All children with an elevated blood lead level are eligible for case management with a Richland Public Health Nurse through our **Lead Case Management Program**.

The goal is to lower the child's lead level as quickly as possible. To do that a public health nurse will make contact with the family to share information and offer a home visit. The home visit includes education which focuses on medical, nutritional, and environmental concerns explaining lead poisoning and what to do.



Call 419-774-4540 to learn about the Lead Case Management Program.

Building Renovation Project



Richland Public Health Board Members broke ground on November 26, 2019 to start a building renovation which will improve building access to services.

The \$500,000 investment to the front entrance of Richland Public Health was hailed as part of the continued commitment to the Richland County community to provide easily accessible and high quality customer service to our community members.

Entry into the building will provide immediate access to central intake and the improvements will provide easy access to the Vital Statistics Department (birth and death certificates) as well as Environmental Health services.

The project completion date has a target date of May 2020.

WIC Services (Women, Infants, Children)



The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for **Women, Infants, and Children** (WIC) is federally funded through the USDA. WIC's mission is to provide supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutritional information to income-eligible pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk. WIC is the nation's premier and most cost effective public health nutrition program. Currently, WIC serves 53 percent of all infants born in the U.S.

Tina Picman, Director, Mansfield 419-774-4560; Ashland 419-289-3359; tpicman@richlandhealth.org
 Bethany Haring, WIC Supervisor/Dietitian, 419-774-4574, bharing@richlandhealth.org

WIC Services 2019

New Participants (1st time signing up)..... **1,812**
Recertifications**3,814**
Other Contacts**4,801**
Total Contacts (Ashland & Richland) **10,427**

Are you expecting and thinking about breastfeeding? Are you a new breastfeeding mom? Congratulations! Breastfeeding is the natural and best way to feed your baby. WIC can provide support through trained health professionals to help you to have a successful breastfeeding experience.



WIC New Mothers-To-Be Baby Shower featured WIC Dietitians and Public Health Nurses as speakers. WIC classes for clients and their children take place throughout the year.



Like our WIC Facebook page. Learn the latest about WIC, watch videos, get new recipes, and view the WIC Class schedule.

Find us at wic richland-ashland

WIC Income Guidelines Gross income (before taxes) cannot exceed the following amounts:

Family Size	Annual Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income
1	\$23,107.00	\$1,926.00	\$445.00
2	\$31,284.00	\$2,607.00	\$602.00
3	\$39,461.00	\$3,289.00	\$759.00
4	\$47,638.00	\$3,970.00	\$917.00

Check out the foods you can get through WIC at no charge. Just scan the WIC QR Code (right) that shows all the WIC foods.



WIC Shopping App
 Download the app! See WIC food list, recipes, tips for good health. Scan foods at grocery store to see if WIC approved.

*Effective 7/1/2019. If you have more than 4 people in your family, please contact us at 419-774-4560.

Richland Public Health is an equal opportunity provider.



Women, Infants, and Children Program

New WIC foods are available! During 2019, chocolate milk and whole wheat pasta were added to the WIC food list. Coming soon: cheese and yogurt! WIC foods keep you healthy.

Applying for WIC is easy. Go to richlandhealth.org. Click on "Departments" and chose WIC. Follow the prompts to print WIC forms. Fill out the forms and call 419-774-4560 (419-289-3359 in Ashland) for an appointment.

Financial Report

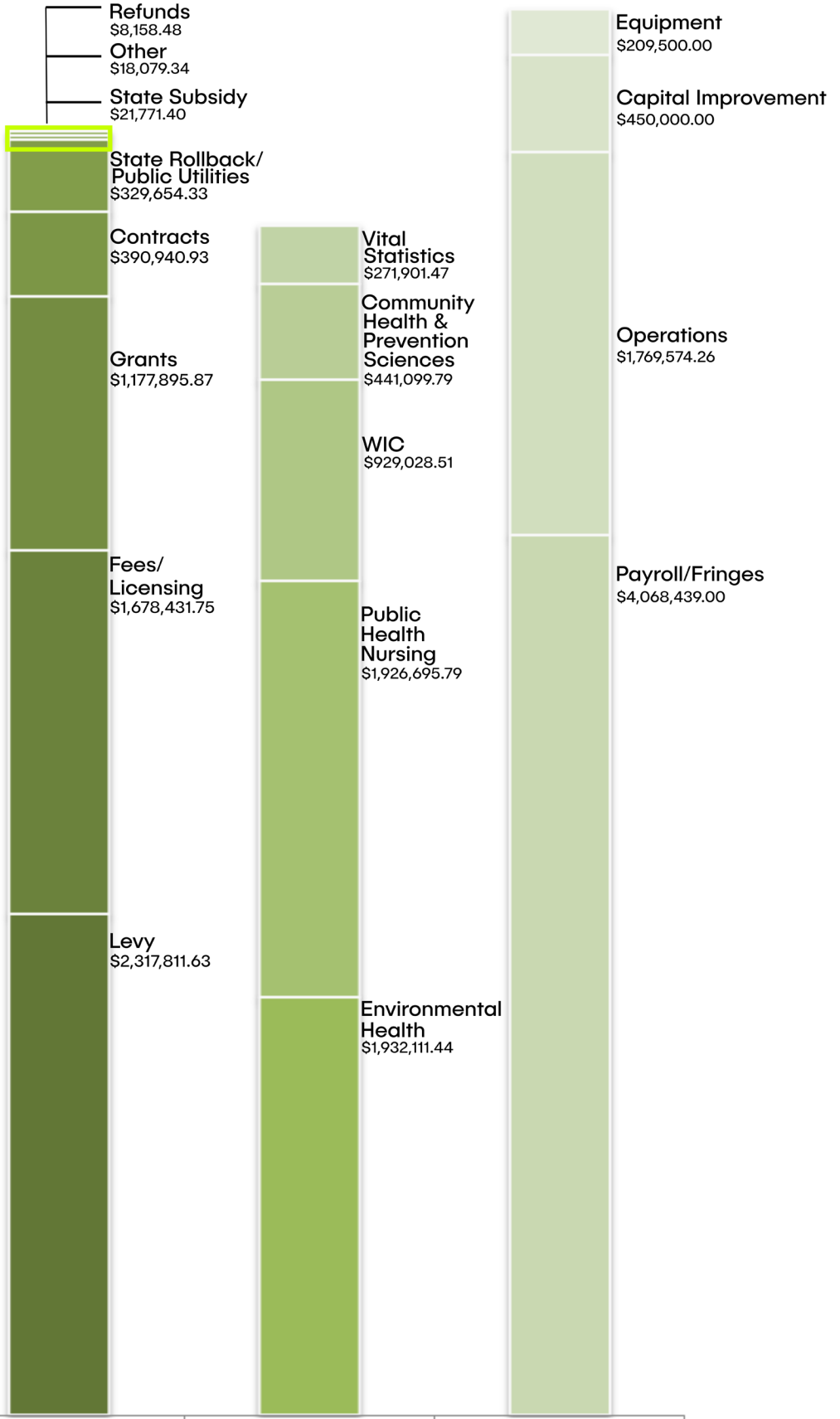
\$6,000,000.00

\$0.00

2019 Revenues
\$5,942,743.73

2019 Expenses
\$5,500,837.00

2020 Budget
\$6,497,513.26



Hope in Hard Times



Note: Sarah Humphrey officially started work as Richland Public Health's newest Health Commissioner just as COVID-19 (coronavirus) began to spread in the United States. Since she was understandably busy with other duties, she asked me if I could write something for the back page of the Annual Report, the usual space for comments from the Health Commissioner.

When I began working on the 2019 Annual Report for Richland Public Health, I thought it would be interesting to look back on the past 10 years of our accomplishments. At the time, I had no idea that in April everyone would be wondering what our collective future would look like.

Working as a Public Information Officer during past outbreaks of flu, MERS, SARS, measles, H1N1 and other public health threats, I know that COVID-19 is unlike anything we have seen since the Spanish Flu wreaked pandemic havoc following World War I. When reporting the number of active cases and deaths from COVID-19, we reach a point where those numbers are unimaginable. As then New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani said when asked about how high the death count would be following the terrorist attack on 9/11/2001, *"The number of casualties will be more than any of us can bear, ultimately."*

Two things I know will give us hope during this ongoing health crisis. First, the trust we have in our health system and our emergency services to do the heavy lifting required. Every year the individuals working in those capacities practice emergency preparedness drills for this type of scenario. Second, we know that individuals in communities across America, and right here in Richland County, will rise up and come together to keep us strong and pointed toward a brighter future.

J.R.R. Tolkien wrote *Lord of the Rings* as he was reflecting about his experience as a British soldier during the dark days of The Great War. His view about those days of despair and hope is best captured in the second book of the trilogy when Samwise Gamgee recounts how we can face the darkest of times to Frodo Baggins, the story's protagonist. It was paraphrased in the movie The Two Towers this way:

***Samwise Gamgee:** "It's like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo. The ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger, they were. And sometimes you did not want to know the end. Because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was after so much bad had happened? But in the end, it's only a passing thing, this shadow. Even darkness must pass. A new day will come. And when the sun shines it will shine out the clearer. Those were the stories that stayed with you. That meant something, even if you were too small to understand why. But I think, Mr. Frodo, I do understand. I know now. Folk in those stories had lots of chances of turning back, only they did not. They kept going. Because they were holding on to something."*

***Frodo Baggins:** "What are we holding on to, Sam?"*

***Samwise Gamgee:** "That there's some good in this world, Mr. Frodo ... and it's worth fighting for."*

To Brighter Days Worth Fighting For,
Reed Richmond
Health Education and Communications Specialist
Richland Public Health (April, 2020)