

Board of Health

Minutes

February 15, 2023

9:15 am - 12:00 pm

Teleconference

Board Members Present: S. Cairns, R. Cipolla, P. Koetsier, S. Warnock, L. Oehm, S. Kinsella,
A. Kungl, N. Nigussie, B. Gordon, B. Norris, T. Walker

Regrets: P. Willmott, J. Leduc

Staff Present: C. Gardner, K. Ellis-Scharfenberg

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:15am.

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

The Board Chair proposed that Board members rotate turns reading the land acknowledgement at each Board meeting.

Board members discussed and supported the rotation of members reading the land acknowledgement, and requested that the land acknowledgement document be displayed on the monitor during the reading.

B. Gordon volunteered to read the land acknowledgement and S. Warnock requested to read the land acknowledgement at the March 15 Board meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The Board Chair informed Board members of the changes to the structure of the Board agenda. Changes involve the Consent Agenda item, which now includes the previous meeting minutes as well as any relevant items, and it has been moved to earlier in the agenda after the Declaration of Conflict of Interest. Additionally, Announcements, have been moved to just before the Date of the Next Meetings.

Board members discussed and supported the changes and confirmed that Consent Agenda could be pulled for discussion at the request of individual Board members.

Motion 2.0

MOVED BY S. Cairns

SECONDED BY R. Cipolla

THAT the Board of Health approve the agenda as presented.

CARRIED

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

4. Consent Agenda

Motion 4.0

MOVED BY P. Koetsier

SECONDED BY S. Kinsella

THAT the Board of Health approve the following consent agenda items:

4.1 Minutes from February 1, 2023.

4.2 2021 Annual Report and Attestation.

CARRIED

4.1 Approval of Minutes from February 1, 2023

4.2 2021 Annual Report and Attestation. Briefing Note. Dr. Charles Gardner and Karen Ellis-Scharfenberg.

5. Business Arising

5.1 Proposed 2023 Cost-Shared Budget and Schedules for COVID-19. Dr. Charles Gardner, Karen Ellis-Scharfenberg and Jon Van Donkelaar presenting.

K. Ellis-Scharfenberg provided an update on the proposed 2023 Cost-Shared budget and COVID-19 schedules highlighting that the proposed budget due date is usually March 1 but the expectation is that it will be moved to April 1.

Funding for the Cost-Shared budget is determined by the Board of Health and the Ministry of Health. The draft budget includes a salary increase and there is no expectation of a vacation payout in 2023. Operational costs have increased by approximately 5%, compared to the 2022 revised budget based on the projected inflation rates. Some costs have increased more than 5% due to external factors in insurance, technology and new staff member professional development. Occupancy costs are lower in 2023 due to rent agreements and the health and safety budget line has increased due to a Workplace Wellness program for staff designed to help recover from COVID-19 workloads. A draw of \$397K from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) Contingency Reserve is required to maintain public health services. If either of the largest financial assumptions within the budget of a 1% ministry grant are not realized or an unanticipated salary increase is implemented, alternatives will have to be considered. The health unit has not been informed of the ministry grant amount yet.

The COVID-19 schedules compare draft 2023 to 2022 schedules. The Ministry of Health uses a reimbursement model for COVID-19 expenses that cannot be covered by base-funding. The 2023 COVID-19 schedules only include temporary positions and management has estimated costs that will be incurred in 2023 based on activities over the past 3 years and following ministry requirements for health units to provide a COVID-19 immunization program and manage the public health component of COVID-19 outbreaks in long term care, acute care and congregate settings. The COVID-19 General Schedule establishes a reimbursement of \$3.1M in 2023 for roles in COVID-19 related activity and the COVID-19 Immunization Schedule plans for reimbursement of \$4M to provide vaccine to various groups.

The Ontario Seniors Dental Program (OSDCP) budget is 100% provincially funded.

One-time funding requests will be presented to the Board at the March 2023 meeting. These requests will be submitted with the Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission template to the Ministry of Health.

Board members discussed Board meeting, stipend and training expenses.

Motion 5.1

MOVED BY B. Gordon
SECONDED BY N. Nigussie

THAT the Board of Health approve the 2023 base budget for Cost-Shared Mandatory at \$38,135,421 reflecting a 2023 municipal levy of \$9,991,703;

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health approve the following for 2023:

- COVID-19 General Schedule
- COVID-19 Immunization Schedule
- OSDCP Budget;

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health approve the draw of up to \$396,598 of the Public Health Contingency Reserve to maintain public health services;

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health authorize the submission of the 2023 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission reflecting the 2023 budget for Cost-Shared Mandatory Programs and the COVID-19 General and COVID-19 Immunization templates.

CARRIED

6. New Business

6.1 Discontinuation of SMDHU COVID-19 Line of Credit. Briefing Note. Dr. Charles Gardner, Karen Ellis-Scharfenberg and Jon Van Donkelaar presenting.

C. Gardner and K. Ellis-Scharfenberg provided an update noting that, with the Boards support, the four obligated municipalities approved securing a \$5M line of credit to help manage large COVID-19 expenses in July 2021. Since the time when the \$5M line of credit was sought, the ministry has provided funding and COVID-19 expenses have reduced the past year, allowing discontinuation of the \$5M line of credit.

Motion 6.1

MOVED BY B. Norris
SECONDED BY L. Oehm

THAT the Board of Health enable discussion with TD Commercial Bank to discontinue the COVID-19 line of credit (\$5M);

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health write to the four obligated municipalities informing them of such.

CARRIED

6.2 Public Health and School Board Partnerships in Simcoe Muskoka. Briefing Note. Dr. Lisa Simon and Stephanie Ross presenting.

S. Ross presented information to the Board outlining the longstanding past and present relationship with the seven school boards within the Simcoe Muskoka area. The relationship with the school boards focused largely on COVID-19 activity and matters in 2020 and 2021. 2022 saw a focus on COVID-19 recovery, and the School Services Collaboration Committee has been reestablished and a Return to School Plan for the 2022-2023 School Year was developed in August 2022 to determine the health unit services to be brought back to schools. Schools program requests have included immunization, oral health, and vaping prevention services.

The partnership between Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) and the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) made the unanimous recommendation for written partnership agreements to support mutually beneficial working relationships between local school boards and health units. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) has been successful in signing agreements with two publicly funded school boards. Pre-pandemic the health unit was in the process to sign an agreement with the Trillium Lakelands District School Board, and this process has been reinitiated, with an agreement close at hand. As well, plans are underway for a three-way collaboration with the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (SMCDSB). Agreements are yet to be developed with the two French school boards, le Conseil scolaire Viamonde and le Conseil scolaire catholique Mon Avenir, and Protestant Separate School Board as well as the Near North District School Board.

Board members discussed the opioid crisis and the actions with schools which involve invitation to meetings, curriculum supports through the Substance Use and Injury Prevention (SUIP) Program and mental health supports. As well, the team is exploring a range of initiatives through Public Health Ontario (PHO) to gather information on substance use prevention.

R. Cipolla will forward a motion to C. Gardner regarding the Orillia Mayor's Task Force. Once received the Board Chair requested it be included as an information item for the Board.

The Board also discussed the partnership agreements and relationship building and the challenges regarding continuity with changing leadership at the school boards. The strong long-lasting partnerships with the school boards help the relationship building, although there is awareness raising to be done.

Motion 6.2

MOVED BY T. Walker

SECONDED BY S. Warnock

THAT the Board of Health receive this briefing note as information.

CARRIED

- 6.3 2022 Nutritious Food Basket Survey Update. Briefing Note. Dr. Lisa Simon, Christine Bushey, and Vanessa Hurley presenting.

L. Simon presented the item providing an update. V. Hurley provided information on the 2022 Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) Survey. The NFB is a survey tool that measures the cost of basic healthy eating based on national nutrition recommendations and average food purchasing patterns. In 2022 27 Ontario public health units, including the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU), participated in pilot testing the new costing tool using a hybrid model of in-store and online data collection. The information collected from the NFB survey is used to monitor food affordability (the cost of basic healthy food), assess whether individual or family income is enough to cover the cost of basic healthy food and housing, raise awareness that household food insecurity is an issue, and support advocacy efforts to address the problem of inadequate incomes causing household food insecurity. The results of the 2022 pilot test survey show that among low income earners, they are not able to cover the costs of healthy food and rent, and food prices are increasing.

Two members from the Board are invited to provide input into the new revised income solution options to address household food insecurity, after which SMDHU staff would present the new revised policy options and revisions to the Board in 2023 spring.

Board members discussed and S. Warnock, S. Cairns and A. M. Kungl volunteered as Board members to provide input into the new revised income solution options to address household food insecurity as requested. The three members are to meet with SMDHU staff in March at a date to be determined.

Motion 6.3

MOVED BY S. Warnock

SECONDED BY S. Cairns

THAT the Board of Health receive this briefing note as information.

CARRIED

- 6.4 2023-2025 Immunization Catch-up. Briefing Note. Collen Nisbet, Mary Ann Holmes, and Deanna Thompson presenting.

C. Gardner provided an update on immunizations during the pandemic, when the health unit was not able to keep up with routine immunizations. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) is now working hard to catch up with immunizations.

D. Thompson presented background information on the health unit foundational Immunization Program and outlined the importance of vaccines. Compared to the province, SMDHU has low vaccination rates, this is due to the redeployment of most staff to the COVID-19 response. While other health units were able to keep staff in the base Immunization program, keeping up with routine immunizations, SMDHU's Immunization program operated on very minimal phone line staff. She also described the current impact of the pandemic and grade 2, 8 and 12 student immunization rates, and the health unit plans to bring the immunization rates of these student cohorts up. Plans include collecting and assessing records for all students who are not up to date with their immunizations, providing additional health unit office clinics at least three times per week in Barrie and at least one to two clinics per week in all other health unit offices, attend high schools for vaccine catch-up and return to elementary schools in April for grade 7/8 vaccinations for hepatitis B, Meningococcal ACYW and Human Papillomavirus (HPV), as well as distribute a communication plan developed to help support families to report vaccinations to public health including information on how to access vaccinations for children aged 0-18 years. Students are expected to be caught up to date with immunizations in 2025. Work with the school

boards is critical for the vaccine catch-ups. Families are also encouraged to seek vaccination through primary health care providers.

Board members discussed childhood and adult vaccinations and plans for promotion of tetanus, shingles and other adult vaccinations in April 2023.

Motion 6.4

MOVED BY S. Cairns

SECONDED BY L. Oehm

THAT the Board of Health receive this briefing note as information.

CARRIED

- 6.5 2023 Board of Health Meeting Schedule. Briefing Note. Dr. Gardner presenting.

C. Gardner presented information on the 2023 Board meeting schedule which only includes the standard meetings throughout the year. The schedule does not include the new board orientation, Indigenous Cultural Safety Training, nor Staff Education Days or Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aPHa) conferences.

Motion 6.5

MOVED BY B. Norris

SECONDED BY T. Walker

THAT the Board of Health receive this briefing note as information.

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health approve the meeting schedule as outlined in Appendix A.

CARRIED

7. Items of Education

- 7.1 aPHa Winter Symposium and Section Meetings.

8. Items of Information

- 8.1 Letter from John Daly, County Clerk and Director of Statutory Services for the County of Simcoe to Dr. Charles Gardner, Medical Officer of Health, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

re Appointment to the SMDHU – Board of Health.

- 8.2 aPHa Workplace Health and Wellness Promotion Survey.
- 8.3 Letter from Stacy Wright, Board of Health Chair for the Timiskaming Health Unit to the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
re Alcohol Health Warning Labels
- 8.4 Letter from Trudy Sachowski, President for the Association of Local Public Health Agencies to the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance
re 2023 Pre-Budget Submission: Public Health Programs and Services.

A.M. Kungl provided info on the pre-budget submission informing Board members that C. Gardner, as the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aPHa) Vice President, was involved in the budget submission to the province. The letter positions a previous study led by N. Riewe, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's (SMDHU) Chief Nursing Officer, which highlighted the shortfall in program delivery a few years ago. The timely letter submitted to the Minister of Finance, Peter Bethlenfalvy, outlines the financial needs of health units in 2023. The information from the health units was collected via survey in June 2022, where they characterized their financial requests and outlined their projected needs in 2023 to recover. Although one-time funding grants and mitigation funding has been helpful, base budgets have been frozen for many years with 0% increases. Health units would require 11.8% for base budgets and 13.8% from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS). As well, it must be noted that COVID-19 continues and will create on-going costs; at SMDHU, 60 staff continue to be devoted to COVID-19 work.

Board members discussed the letter and its implications.

9. Announcements

No announcement were made. Board members discussed in-person meetings and the possibility to accommodate more meeting participants in the Simcoe and Muskoka meeting rooms if needed on the 1st floor at 15 Sperling Drive.

10. Date of Next Meetings

- March 15, 2023
- April 19, 2023

11. Adjournment

Motion 11.0

MOVED BY N. Nigussie
SECONDED BY B. Gordon

THAT the Board of Health meeting be adjourned at 11:16pm.

CARRIED

Original Signed By:

Ann-Marie Kungl

Chair, Board of Health

Original Signed By:

Dr. Charles Gardner

Medical Officer of Health