



March 28, 2024
Board of Health Meeting
Open Session Minutes

A meeting of the Board of Health for Oxford Elgin St. Thomas Health Unit was held on Thursday, March 28, 2024 commencing at 1:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Ms. C. Agar	Board Member
Mr. D. Mayberry	Board Member
Mr. J. Herbert	Board Member
Mr. G. Jones	Board Member (Vice-Chair)
Ms. B. Martin	Board Member (Chair)
Mr. S. Molnar	Board Member
Mr. M. Peterson	Board Member
Mr. L. Rowden	Board Member
Mr. M. Ryan	Board Member
Mr. D. Shinedling	Board Member
Mr. D. Warden	Board Member
Ms. C. St. John	Chief Executive Officer (ex officio)
Dr. N. Tran	Medical Officer of Health (ex officio)
Ms. W. Lee	Executive Assistant

GUESTS:

Ms. M. Cornwell*	Manager, Communications
Ms. J. Gordon	Administrative Assistant
Mr. P. Heywood	Program Director
Ms. S. Maclsaac	Program Director
Mr. D. McDonald	Director, Corporate Services and Human Resources
Ms. M. Nusink	Director, Finance
Ms. C. Richards*	Manager, Foundational Standards
Mr. I. Santos	Manager, Information Technology
Mr. D. Smith	Program Director

MEDIA:

Mr. R. Perry*	Aylmer Express
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**represents virtual participation*

REGRETS:

Mr. J. Couckuyt	Board Member
Mr. J. Preston	Board Member

REMINDER OF DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF WHEN ITEM ARISES

1.1 CALL TO ORDER, RECOGNITION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 1:09 p.m.

1.2 AGENDA

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-1.2)

Moved by D. Mayberry

Seconded by D. Warden

That the agenda for the Southwestern Public Health Board of Health meeting for March 28, 2024 be approved.

Carried.

1.3 Reminder to disclose Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof when Item Arises.

1.4 Reminder that meetings are recorded for minute-taking purposes.

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-2.1)

Moved by M. Peterson

Seconded by S. Molnar

That the minutes for the Southwestern Public Health Board of Health meeting for February 22, 2024 be approved.

Carried.

3.0 CONSENT AGENDA

D. Mayberry proposed an addendum to the motion that would indicate that the issues raised by Southwestern Public Health's initial letter to the ministry remain unaddressed by the response from Minister Bethlenfalvy.

S. Molnar and G. Jones indicated their support for additional correspondence from the Board of Health, specifying that the Minister of Health be addressed directly as well.

P. Heywood noted the initial letter was directed to the Minister of Finance (MOF) as the consultation process had been assigned to the MOF portfolio, whereby communications and responses from public health were thus directed to that office.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-3.1)

Moved by D. Mayberry

Seconded by M. Peterson

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health receive consent agenda item 3.1, Minister of Finance Peter Bethlenfalvy's Alcohol Policy Reply to Southwestern Public Health, and further that SWPH respond, expressing its concern that the issues raised by public health remain unaddressed.

Carried.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR INFORMATION.DISCUSSION.DECISION

5.1 Southwestern Public Health Engagement with Local First Nations Report for March 28, 2024

C. St. John reviewed the report, noting it was prompted by D. Shinedling's question raised in October regarding the degree of SWPH's engagement with local First Nations communities and populations.

The group inquired about the use of urban indigenous to reference First Nations populations that do not live on reserves. C. St. John indicated she would provide further information regarding its use and appropriateness.

C. St. John noted the urban indigenous individuals in the SWPH region comprise of approximately 2.3% of its overall population.

M. Ryan praised the report for its openness to engage in relationships and discussions with First Nations communities. D. Shinedling noted his appreciation for the development of the report.

D. Mayberry hoped to hear more from local First Nations communities about their experiences and expectations of public health in the future.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-5.1)

Moved by M. Peterson

Seconded by D. Warden

That Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health accept the Southwestern Public Health Engagement with Local First Nations Report for March 28, 2024.

Carried.

5.2 Medical Officer of Health's Report

Dr. Tran reviewed his report.

Dr. Tran highlighted 9 measles cases reported in Ontario as of March 13, including at least one case not related to international travel.

He noted the importance of preparing for potential measles outbreaks by vaccinating and testing individuals, noting that all measles cases in Canada are born after 1970, highlighting the importance of vaccination. Currently, the greatest concern is to ensure children under 12 are vaccinated fully.

M. Peterson asked if there is sufficient herd immunity in the community to contain an outbreak. Dr. Tran responded that herd immunity target coverage of 95% works well uniformly; however, there are no uniform areas of coverage. Dr. Tran noted that pockets of lower vaccination rates in areas can be a point of vulnerability in the community, citing the pertussis outbreak in the region last year.

M. Ryan noted his frustration and concern over lower immunization rates, asking if there has been sufficient messaging from the province. He identified a growing trend to discount the effectiveness of vaccinations.

J. Herbert referenced the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) and asked how effective it is in ensuring good vaccine rates. Dr. Tran responded that there is an option for a family to not be vaccinated via vaccine exemption, thus accounting for lower vaccination rates.

D. Shinedling asked if there is a falling trend in vaccinations. Dr. Tran noted SWPH vaccination rates are stable, but that there has been a slight increase in exemptions. He noted that some health units completely suspended ISPA during Covid-19, whereas SWPH at the time offered school vaccine programs throughout the pandemic which was a positive decision. SWPH's confirmed vaccination rates were one of the highest in immunization coverage during the pandemic.

D. Warden questioned a growing reluctance to being vaccinated, citing failing rates of Covid-19 vaccine uptake with each iteration. Dr. Tran noted the level of confidence in vaccines may have decreased as indicated by number of exemptions. He notes the impact of Covid-19's vaccine efficacy may have influenced public opinion about other historically effective vaccines.

D. Shinedling noted that vaccination is an easy solution to prevent complicated health problems, and asked what else could be done to support vaccine push-out.

S. Molnar asked if there have been comparisons with other health units to assess their strategies and effectiveness of their outreach.

C. St. John indicated she would discuss with program staff.

B. Martin suggested S. MacIsaac provide an update to her vaccination presentation to the Board from last year.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-5.2)

Moved by J. Herbert

Seconded by M. Peterson

That Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health accept the Medical Officer of Health's report for March 28, 2024.

Carried.

5.3 Chief Executive Officer's Report

C. St. John reviewed her report.

S. Molnar asked if there was any comment about the provincial budget that was released on March 27, 2024. C. St. John noted that overall provincial health funding does not keep pace with population increase and inflation. She also acknowledged that the budget was just released the day prior and associations such as ALPHa have not had full opportunity to review its contents as it relates to public health.

D. Warden asked for clarity regarding the appointment of members to the board. C. St. John noted that, when required, Board members are identified and appointed through an expression of interest and skills matrix process (a requirement of SWPH's accountability framework); however, municipal appointees are set by municipal council and provincial appointments are assigned by the province. The expression of interest process that SWPH has provides support to SWPH in identifying the skills and experience that is needed on the board and that SWPH sends a letter to the Public Appointment Secretariat requesting consideration of particular individuals that have been vetted by the process described.

D. Warden suggested reviewing the appointment process for this and future boards, asking for further clarification regarding experience and qualifications.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-5.3-2.1)

Moved by M. Peterson

Seconded by J. Herbert

That the Board of Health approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Special Ad Hoc Strengthening Public Health Committee, effective March 28, 2024.

Carried.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-5.3-3.1)

Moved by D. Shinedling

Seconded by M. Ryan

That the Board of Health ratify the signing of the Annual Service Plan for 2024.

Carried.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-5.3)

Moved by S. Molnar

Seconded by L. Rowden

That Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health accept the Chief Executive Officer's report for March 28, 2024.

Carried.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

7.0 TO CLOSED SESSION

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-C7)

Moved by D. Shinedling

Seconded by M. Peterson

That the Board of Health move to closed session in order to consider one or more the following as outlined in the Ontario Municipal Act:

- (a) the security of the property of the municipality or local board;
- (b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees;
- (c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board;
- (d) labour relations or employee negotiations;
- (e) litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board;
- (f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
- (g) a matter in respect of which a council, board, committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another Act;
- (h) information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them;
- (i) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization;
- (j) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial or financial information that belongs to the municipality or local board and has monetary value or potential monetary value; or
- (k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board. 2001, c. 25, s. 239 (2); 2017, c. 10, Sched. 1, s. 26.

Other Criteria:

- (a) a request under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, if the council, board, commission or other body is the head of an institution for the purposes of that Act; or
- (b) an ongoing investigation respecting the municipality, a local board or a municipally-controlled corporation by the Ombudsman appointed under the *Ombudsman Act*, an Ombudsman referred to in subsection 223.13 (1) of this Act, or the investigator referred to in subsection 239.2 (1). 2014, c. 13, Sched. 9, s. 22.

Carried.

8.0 RISING AND REPORTING OF CLOSED SESSION

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-C8)

Moved by S. Molnar

Seconded by D. Warden

That the Board of Health rise with a report.

Carried.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-C3.1)

Moved by J. Herbert
Seconded by M. Ryan

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health approve the Special Ad Building Committee Report for March 28, 2024.

Carried.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-C3.2)

Moved by D. Warden
Seconded by M. Peterson

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health accept the Chief Executive Officer's Report for March 28, 2024.

Carried.

9.0 FUTURE MEETING & EVENTS

M. Ryan asked to set a meeting date prior to the regular April 25, 2024 Board of Health meeting. The Chair will review that suggestion and may schedule a meeting prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Resolution # (2024-BOH-0328-10)

Moved by M. Peterson
Seconded by M. Ryan

That the meeting adjourns to meet again on Thursday, April 25, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. or earlier at the call of the Chair.

Carried.

Confirmed:

