



Minutes of the Board of Health Regular Meeting  
 Thursday, June 20, 2024  
 Zoom  
 4:00 pm – 6:02 pm

Present:

Peter McKenna, Chair	Ruth Lockett
Toni Surko, 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chair	Regrets: Tory Deschamps
Robin Jones, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair	Absent: Richard Kidd
Stephen Bird	
Jane Fullarton	Linna Li, Medical Officer of Health
Anne-Marie Koiner	Heather Bruce, Executive Assistant
Shani Gates, Director, Corporate Services	

**1. Call to Order**

Peter McKenna called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Regrets were received from Tory Deschamps and Robin Jones will be joining momentarily.

**2. Traditional Land Acknowledgement Statement**

Peter McKenna read the land acknowledgement statement.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda items were reviewed.

*Motion: That the agenda of the June 20, 2024 Regular Meeting be approved as circulated.*

*Motion Carried.*

**4. Conflict of Interest Declaration**

None declared.

**5. Consent Agenda**

*Motion: That the following items on the consent agenda be approved as circulated:*

*5.1. Approval of the Minutes from the Board of Health Regular Meeting held on May 23, 2024*

*5.2. General Correspondence*

*5.3. Duty of Care Report Summary*

*5.4. Board of Health Glossary of Terms*

*Motion Carried.*

*ACTION: Executive Assistant (EA) will be added to the list of acronyms.*

## 6. Business Arising:

### 6.1. Follow-up regarding Private Well Water Testing

Linna Li advised that a briefing note was circulated as a follow up from the discussion at the last Board of Health meeting regarding the Auditor General's Report and PHO's potential discontinuation of private drinking water testing that is provided free of charge in Ontario for those that have a well in their private homes. This relates specifically to bacterial testing to reduce the risk of gastrointestinal infections and the program is administered through PHO with health units typically being distribution depots for drop off and pick up of sample water bottles.

One of the Auditor General Report findings was that PHO proposed a joint modernization plan to collaborate with the Ministry of Health at the request of the Deputy Minister of Health to gradually discontinue free private well water testing.

At last month's Board of Health meeting questions were raised about drinking water systems in our area. We do know that 43,500 wells have been drilled since 1899, however we don't know how many are in use. There were 8,750 water samples submitted to PHO last year and about 7.6% had evidence of bacterial contamination and about 2% had E.coli contamination. There tends to be more testing done in the spring and summer and provincial estimates are that 25% of households test once a year.

Estimates of gastrointestinal (GI) disease in Ontario due to contaminated well water are almost 5,000 for Acute GI per year. Based on this information Linna Li has proposed some draft language if the Board would like to send a letter to the province about private well water testing. There is a burden of illness in our region and residents in our area value and rely on this testing.

Members thanked Dr. Li for the research and evidence presented commenting that if the service is not free many of our residents won't get their water tested which makes young children particularly vulnerable. A question was raised regarding how much the fee would be for testing of private well water?

*ACTION: Linna Li will inquire about fees for private well water testing and advise board members.*

Board members agreed to send a letter to the province.

*Motion: That the Board of Health for the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit request that the Province of Ontario continue to offer free bacterial testing for private drinking water, whether through Public Health Ontario or some other means;*

*And That: This resolution be sent to Dr. Michael Sherar, President and CEO of Public Health Ontario and the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and copied to the Honourable Andrea Khanjin, Minister of Environment Conservation and Parks, MPP Steve Clark Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and MPP John Jordan Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston.*

*Motion Carried.*

## **7. New Business:**

### **7.1. Update from alpha Conference**

Peter McKenna advised that Premier Ford and Minister Jones attended the conference in person. The Premier is supportive of public health units and both he and Minister Jones acknowledged health units that have embarked on a journey toward mergers. Everyone was thanked for their work during COVID and the Premier advised that the ministry will be picking back up some of the improvements for public health that were discussed in 2019. They will do everything they can to support health units in a merger. Dr. Kieran Moore also spoke and the ministry had a panel discussion on health unit mergers that included Wess Garrod KFL&A Chair. There was some good discussion regarding AI and how it will impact the world and there is a group being formed to look at this issue.

There was a lot of discussion on the climate crisis and water quality and municipalities have a key role and are partners along with our public institutions. One of the tools that public health could explore that already exists to deal with the opioid crisis, climate crisis and racism which are very complex issues, are the community safety plans that municipalities have to develop. In our region this is done by the Upper Tier in Lanark and at some point we may want to have more in-depth discussion on that tool and see how we can tackle these complex issues. Solutions can be found by our own public institutions. People stepping forward and participating is important.

The resolution regarding more regulation around shelters and a broad application was discussed and Peter McKenna brought forward the LGL Board's concern regarding faith based shelters and they were sympathetic to that comment and advised that was not their intent. Going forward they would take that into consideration and the comment was well received. On the second day Boards of Health met on their own (without the public health physician section).

Linna Li advised that the province provided a slide deck and some in-depth explanation of some of the changes in the draft Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) document. The province undertook the strengthening public health initiative and OPHS is the second prong. The funding review is the third prong which they did not speak to but is in their work plans to start next year and the year after.

The OPHS lays out the mandate of local public health units and are the general framework that the province expects health units to follow. These standards are under review for refining, refocusing and re-leveling roles and responsibilities for health units. The goal includes updating the work of health units and looking at whether some of the work would be better done by other entities or in other ways. The province sent draft documents for comment and gave health units a deadline of June 20 to submit their feedback. That survey has been submitted with feedback from staff across LGL. The province will do an analysis of the feedback provided and do further consultation at a provincial level before unveiling the new document in time for the New Year.

Peter McKenna also advised that a Medicine Bag workshop was held at the conference and an Indigenous leader spoke about the difference between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation. Joint ventures with AMO were also discussed.

## **7.2. Update from the South East Transition Team Meeting**

Peter McKenna advised that a number of meetings have taken place and that a Memorandum of Understanding and Terms of Reference for the SETT are being adopted. The sessions are both open and in-camera and included in the package today are some high level open session minutes. We have also talked to the ministry team around our budgets and are making good headway. A draft by-law for the new entity is being prepared for the group to review and comment on.

Linna Li advised that the MOHs and Executive Team continue to meet and work very well together and some of that work has to do with preparing how to handle the transition, along with integration and operational elements for the new organization.

### **7.2.1. April 12 Minutes**

No discussion.

### **7.2.2. May 9 Minutes**

No discussion.

## **7.3. MOH Verbal Report**

See Appendix #1.

A question was raised about hospital infections and if the health unit tracks or monitors this? Linna Li advised that most hospital or healthcare acquired infections are not tracked by the health unit, but PHO does quite a bit of work on this.

Peter McKenna requested more detail on how the strategic plan has been operationalized in the future.

## **8. In-camera:**

### **8.1. Strengthening Public Health:**

The motion to move in-camera was read at 5:02 pm.

*Motion: That this Board move into a closed session of the Board of Health due to the following:*

- *Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees;*
- *Labour relations or employee negotiations;*
- *Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;*

*Motion Carried.*

*Motion: That this closed session adjourn and that the open meeting resume at 5:56 pm.*

*Motion Carried.*

### **8.2. Report from In-camera:**

*Motion: That the Board of Health ratify the proposed ONA Memorandum of Settlement, which was negotiated and agreed to on June 12, 2024 and ratified by ONA on June 13, 2024.*

*Motion Carried.*

*Motion: That the Board of Health approve:*

- *The Preschool Speech and Language 2024/2025 budget of \$1,678,041.88*
- *The Healthy Babies Healthy Children 2024/2025 budget of \$1,060,739.00*

*Motion Carried.*

**9. Time, Date and Location of Next Meeting:**

The next two BOH meetings have been tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 25, 2024 and Thursday, August 22, 2024. Members agreed to cancel the July 25 meeting and hold the meeting date of August 22, 2024.

*ACTION: Cancel July 25, 2024 BOH meeting invitation.*

**10. Adjournment**

*Motion: That the meeting adjourn at 6:02 pm.*

*Motion Carried.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter McKenna, Chair

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Date

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Heather Bruce, Executive Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

c: Board members