



Minutes of the Special Board of Health Meeting  
 Thursday, December 5, 2024  
 Zoom  
 4:00 pm – 4:21 pm

Present:

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

Cathy DelMei, Acting Manager and CNO	Shani Gates, Director, Corporate Services
Rebecca Ferguson, Director, Population Health and Clinical Services	Staff: Christine Karasiuk, Kim Marshall, Yves Decoste, Katie Jackson Media: Ron Zajac

**1. Call to Order**

Peter McKenna called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and welcomed staff and the media.

**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 December 5, 2024 Special Meeting be approved as circulated.  
 Motion Carried.*

**4. Conflict of Interest Declaration**

None declared.

**5. Strengthening Public Health**

Peter McKenna advised that more than a year ago, the journey began with discussions with KFLA and HPE after Minister Jones invited health units to consider voluntary mergers. The Board of Directors embraced the idea of moving forward with the process which included research, feasibility studies and regular check ins. A Tri-Board working group was formed which turned into the South East Transition Team (SETT). In the spring, a plan and feasibility study with the

cost of the merger and impacts and benefits to our populations was submitted to the province. As of Monday, letters were received from the province concerning the merger and confirming the funding we were seeking with congratulations to us and our partners. Not everything is figured out yet; that will happen when the new Board is formed on January 1, 2025.

Linna Li thanked board members who have been part of the SETT for their time and commitment. She feels privileged to have been part of such a positive and forward-looking process and thanked members for their support.

### **5.1. Funding Letter from the Ministry for Voluntary Merger**

The funding letter received from the ministry is included in the package.

Peter McKenna read the intent to merge motion advising that both KFLA and HPE have approved the same motion earlier in the week. The final step is approval of the motion by LGL.

*Motion:*

*WHEREAS:*

- *the Provincial Government has now approved the intended merger;*
- *the Provincial Government has committed to providing sufficient merger funding for all work done in connection with the merger during the period from April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025 and has also committed to providing continued merger funding for the period up to and including March 31, 2027, and the Board of Health is satisfied that this funding commitment will enable a successful merger;*
- *the Board of Health's negotiation, due diligence, consultations, and merger implementation plans have reinforced the potential benefits of a merger among these three health units;*

*NOW THEREFORE be it resolved as follows:*

- 1. the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit (LGLDHU) merge with Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Health Unit (KFL&A PH) and Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit (HPEPH) to create a new public health unit known as the South East Health Unit; AND*
- 2. the LGLDHU hereby reaffirms its intention to continue its cross-board merger engagement with KFL&A PH and HPEPH through its representation on the South East Transition Team in accordance with the previous Board of Health motion on March 28, 2024; AND*
- 3. the LGLDHU Board of Health and the Medical Officer of Health/CEO of the organization shall undertake the actions required to be ready for a legal merger by January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.*

*Motion Carried.*

The motion was unanimously passed by board members.

Jane Fullarton thanked the committee that worked so hard on this. From the LGL perspective, it is not necessarily that this merger will save money, but it will improve service and provide a network for staff to work together. She is pleased that the province has been willing to fund the full ask and make sure we enter an equal playing field and she is supportive of the merger.

Richard Kidd stated that this merger was directed from the grass roots and not from the top down and was voluntary. There will be advantages financially as well as the amount of services

we can provide. He looks forward to this because it was locally created and he thanked SETT members for making this happen.

Linna Li advised that the funding letter will be posted publicly and there is an element of that letter that she wants to provide context on. The information from the province about funding and out year funding for a total of three years talks about the intention that there would be no fiscal impacts to municipalities as a result of the merger. As we have talked about previously at Board of Health meetings and with municipalities in LGL there would be a need to harmonize the municipal levy across the three health units over time. There will be mitigation through the province and there is a plan in place for that.

Peter McKenna stated that he does believe there are efficiencies and municipalities will continue to pay their fair share and the province will help smooth that transition. At this point municipalities will remain a funded partner and will continue to do so knowing that in 2025 the province is committed to reviewing the funding model. It is our intention and the provinces to move forward with the least impact as possible on the municipalities while providing the required services.

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

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 19, 2024. This is the final meeting of the Board and will be an in-person meeting with refreshments.

**7. Adjournment**

*Motion: That the meeting adjourn at 4:21 pm.*

*Motion Carried.*

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

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Date

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Heather Bruce, Executive Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

c: Board members