



**Northwestern  
Health Unit**

www.nwhu.on.ca

**BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THE  
NORTHWESTERN HEALTH UNIT**

MINUTES of the Regular Board of Health Meeting  
March 1, 2024  
Virtual

**PRESENT:** Doug Lawrance, Janelle Zacharias, Wendy Brunetta, Lucille MacDonald  
Bob Bernie, Trudy Sachowski, Nicole Brown, Bekkie Vineberg

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Marilyn Herbacz, CEO  
Kit Young Hoon, MOH  
Lindsay Koch

**GUESTS:**

Alexie Schussler, Director of Corporate Service (item 7.1)

**REGRETS:** Jamie Kristoff

**ABSENT:**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Doug Lawrance called the meeting to order at 8:30am

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 11-2024 CARRIED</b>	<b>W. Brunetta L. MacDonald</b>
THAT the Agenda for the Board of Health meeting dated March 1, 2024 be approved.	

**3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST & GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

None declared.

**4. CHAIR'S ACTIVITY REPORT**

- a. As a member of the NWHU-TBDHU Voluntary Merger Assessment Committee, Doug provided an update on the work of the committee, timelines, progress to date, and criteria for assessment, noting that project completion and report back to Boards of Health is to occur by the end of March.

The Board agreed to move its March meeting to a later date to accommodate the VMAC report timeline.

**5. MINUTES OF BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING, JANUARY 19, 2024,**

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 12-2024 CARRIED</b>	<b>J. Zacharias L. MacDonald</b>
THAT the Minutes of the Northwestern Health Unit Board of Health meeting held January 19, 2024 be approved as written.	

**6. PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS**

No presentations.

**7. IN CAMERA**

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 13-2024 CARRIED</b>	<b>W. Brunetta B. Vineberg</b>
<p>THAT pursuant to section 239 of the <i>Municipal Act</i>, the Board of Health move to an in camera session at 8:57am to discuss:</p> <p>A trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial or financial information that belongs to the Board and has monetary value or potential monetary value (1 item: 2024 Budget Amendment)</p>	

*Alexie Schussler left the meeting at 9:15am*

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 14-2024 CARRIED</b>	<b>N. Brown W. Brunetta</b>
THAT the Board of Health move out of its closed session and resume the regular meeting at 9:15am	

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 15-2024 CARRIED</b>	<b>N. Brown L. MacDonald</b>
THAT the Board of Health approve the 2024 Ministry of Health cost-shared budget in the amount of \$21,375,974.	

**8. aPHa UPDATES**

Trudy Sachowski, aPHa Representative shared a verbal report about the 2024 aPHa Winter Symposium, which was held virtually February 14-16, 2024. In attendance were Trudy Sachowski, Wendy Brunetta, Lucille MacDonald, Marilyn Herbacz, and Dr. Young Hoon. Content included presentations related to mergers of public health units which have already taken place, the regular COMOH and Boards of Health section meetings, Building Climate Resilient Health Systems, and Building Resilience in Turbulent Times.

aPHa’s June AGM and Conference will be held in Toronto June 5-7. Information on this is forthcoming and attendance will be determined at the next BOH meeting.

*Janelle Zacharias left the meeting at 9:32am*

**9. CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION**

**9.1 CEO & Finance Report** *Marilyn Herbacz, CEO. Reference #2024.03.01-9.1 the report will be kept on file.*

Marilyn shared a verbal update on the Management Structure Project. As previously reported, the Directors have all been hired effective January 1, 2024. MNP continues to support the project through implementation. Meetings continue to be facilitated with Managers, Directors, and Senior Leadership to determine the scope of each role.

We are awaiting contact from the auditor to begin our audit. BDO has been awarded the contract by the City of Kenora, and we are required to use the same auditor as that of our largest obligated municipality.

Will be looking to meet with the bank in the summer to discuss moving funds into a GIC.

We are looking at an increase to our benefits program through SunLife. NWHU's Business Administrator successfully negotiated with SunLife to reduce the projected increase from more than 20% to 14%. It was noted that NWHU does monitor consumption of benefits and the impact this may have on the program for our staff and our budget.

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout invited NWHU to join a meeting with the Honourable Eric Melillo, MP for the Kenora Riding, to speak about food insecurity and school lunch programs, and related funding.

<b>Motion / Resolution: #16-2024 CARRIED</b>	<b>T. Sachowski B. Vineberg</b>
THAT the following Corporate Administration Reports be received:  - 2024.03.01-9.1 CEO & Finance Report	

**10. PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS**

**10.1 Medical Officer of Health Update** *Dr. Kit Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health. Reference #2024.03.01-10.1; the Report will be kept on file.*

Dr. Young Hoon spoke to her written report, and highlighted the increased rates of Group A Strep in the area and responded to questions related to testing for this.

There is an increase in measles in Canada, including southern Ontario and Minnesota. Many cases are travel-related, but there are now locally-acquired cases in southern Ontario. Measles is highly transmissible, and proactive vaccination coverage is being worked on by VPD teams in addition to increased enforcement of the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) which regulates vaccinations in schools with exemption and suspension options under the Act. We are seeing higher than normal suspension numbers under the Act locally and across the Province. Families are provided notice on more than one occasion in advance of a suspension order, and consideration is given to individual circumstances to avoid suspension.

Of note, because of the highly transmissible nature of measles, where there is a case of measles in a school, students who are not fully vaccinated will be excluded from school for a period of time as defined in the Act.

**10.2 Sexual Health and Harm Reduction Annual Report** *Dr. Kit Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health. Reference #2024.03.01-10.2; the Report will be kept on file.*

We are seeing some improvement in some of the STBBI activity in the area, but it does require ongoing attention. We have shifted some of the related health promotion work to another team to bolster the work for increased positive results.

**10.3 Alcohol Availability in Ontario** *Dr. Kit Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health.*  
*Reference #2024.03.01-10.3; the Report will be kept on file.*

Municipal Alcohol Policies have been implemented with all municipalities. We will look to work with municipalities to ensure these are updated.

The report includes a draft letter to municipalities and members of provincial parliament. It was noted that a report from the Chief Medical Officer of Health on tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, and opioids is forthcoming and may speak to some of the same information as the content of the NWHU report. It was agreed that the letter will be updated to include some economic impact content, and that it will be sent by March 7<sup>th</sup> if Dr. Moore’s report is not yet received. In the event the CMOH report is received, the letter will be amended to make reference to the report.

*Bob Bernie left the meeting at 11:03am*  
*Nicole Brown left the meeting at 11:07am*

**10.4 Epidemiological Reports** *Dr. Kit Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health.*  
*Reference #2024.03.01-10.4; the Report will be kept on file.*

Epidemiological reports are available at [www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca) under *Reports and Publications* with additional reports and information available for [health care professionals](#).

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 11-2024</b> <b>CARRIED</b>	<b>W. Brunetta</b> <b>B. Vineberg</b>
THAT the following Public Health Program Reports be received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2024.03.01-10.1 Medical Officer of Health Update</li> <li>• 2024.03.01-10.2 Sexual Health &amp; Harm Reduction Report</li> <li>• 2024.03.01-10.3 Alcohol Availability in Ontario Report</li> <li>• 2024.03.01-10.4 Epidemiological Reports</li> </ul>	

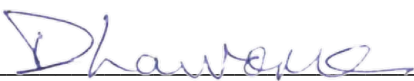
**11. NEXT MEETING DATE**  
 To be determined. Last week of March, 2024.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**  
 The Chair accepted a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:15am

**BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THE NORTHWESTERN HEALTH UNIT:**

**CONFIRMED AS WRITTEN**

**THIS .....28..... DAY OF ....MARCH.....2024**

  
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**MEETING CHAIR, BOARD OF HEALTH**

  
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**RECORDER**