

**Board of Health  
Minutes**

**April 20, 2022  
9:15 am - 12:00 pm  
Zoom Meeting**

Board Members Present: S. Cairns, R. Cipolla, L. Dollin, A. Dubeau, P. Koetsier, R. Milne, F. Pinto, S. Warnock, P. Willmott, L. Oehm, S. Kinsella, A. Kungl

Regrets: G. Harvey

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

**1. Call To Order**

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

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

**Motion 2.0**

**MOVED BY** R. Cipolla

**SECONDED BY** S. Cairns

THAT the Board of Health approve the agenda as presented.

**CARRIED**

**3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

4.1 Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2022.

**Motion 4.1**

**MOVED BY** A. Kungl

**SECONDED BY** S. Kinsella

THAT the Board of Health approve the minutes from the March 16, 2022 Board of Health meeting.

**CARRIED**

## 5. Business Arising

- 5.1 Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 and Agency Recovery Update. Presentation. Dr. Charles Gardner and Natalie Riewe presenting.

C. Gardner provided an update of the pandemic noting that nationally there has been another 50 million cases since the March Board of Health meeting. Provincially, we are well into wave 6, driven by the new, more transmissible BA.2 subvariant, waning immunity, and lifting of public health measures, however, the trajectory of cases is declining as well as mortality rates.

Hospitalizations are continuing to increase, however the peak will likely be lower than in wave 5. The peak of wave 6 is predicted to be the first week of May according to the Science Advisory Table.

It was discussed that COVID-19 infections in healthcare workers are as high as in the last Omicron wave. High infection rates combined with potentially high hospitalization rates will reduce Ontario's ability to provide care for non-COVID-19 patients.

C. Gardner discussed wastewater surveillance in Ontario which suggests that community transmission may have now peaked. It is uncertain if the current plateau will remain or be followed by an increase following the Easter holiday.

N. Riewe provided an update on recovery and program resumption that is occurring within the agency. It was noted that all programs are now working on resumption of a portion of their services or activities, however some programs are still very focused on the COVID-19 response or have a smaller portion of staff working in them.

Board members discussed the current public health measures and the potential for increased messaging regarding isolation requirements and encouraging continued mask use.

### **Motion 5.1**

**MOVED BY** L. Dollin

**SECONDED BY** L. Oehm

THAT the Board of Health receive this update as information.

**CARRIED**

- 5.2 Organizational Structure Revision. Briefing Note. Dr. Charles Gardner and Colleen Nisbet presenting.

C. Gardner provided an update of the agency structure noting that throughout most of the pandemic, SMDHU has operated under a modified structure to better enable outbreak response and immunization. There is currently greater stability with vaccination and the need to stabilize management support at this time.

Board members reviewed the proposed changes to the structure which will still provide some focus on immunization and will also allow the agency to move forward with recovery.

**Motion 5.2**

**MOVED BY** S. Warnock

**SECONDED BY** P. Willmott

THAT the Board of Health support the updated Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Organizational Structure (see Appendix A).

**CARRIED**

5.3 Appointment of Legal Advisors. Briefing Note. Dr. Charles Gardner and Karen Ellis-Scharfenberg presenting.

At the February 17, 2022 Board of Health meeting, members discussed SMDHU's current legal costs and directed management to consider a legal review with local comparisons of legal counsel and report back to the Board. K. Ellis-Scharfenberg provided an update of the legal advisors currently utilized by the agency.

Board members discussed the review process including the option to go through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. It was noted that a more fulsome review with legal costs could be completed in the future and return to the Board at a later date.

C. Gardner noted that given the diverse legal situations faced by SMDHU in the course of business, and particularly during COVID-19, it has been prudent to engage more than one firm for legal counsel for the organization.

**Motion 5.3**

**MOVED BY** R. Cipolla

**SECONDED BY** L. Dollin

THAT the Board of Health approve the appointment of the following legal advisors:

- Ellen's Estates Advocacy; Ellen Brohm Lawyer and Owner
- HGR Graham Partners LLP
- Norton Rose Fullbright
- Gunn and Associates
- Stieber Berlach LLP
- City of Barrie Prosecution Services
- Paul Dray Legal Services; Muskoka

**CARRIED**

5.4 Indigenous Engagement Update. Briefing Note. Dr. Lisa Simon, Karen Ellis-Scharfenberg and Megan Williams presenting.

M. Williams provided an update on the Indigenous Engagement (IE) journey which began in 2018 with the goal to work towards meaningful, respectful and reciprocal relationships, contacts and connections with Indigenous communities, organizations and peoples in Simcoe Muskoka. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, work on this initiative was largely put on hold throughout 2020-2021, however despite this interruption, some activities were accomplished, including progress on and/or completion of two components of the IE situational assessment, and the creation of agency guidelines on the giving of a land acknowledgment.

It was noted that all reports have or will be shared with SMDHU Executive, Management and Staff and will also be shared with the Indigenous Health Circle as information.

L. Simon presented the proposed land acknowledgement (LA) noting that at this time there is no formal agency policy, and at such time, managers and supervisors, in discussion with their staff, have the discretion to use/deliver an LA within their own program functions as they determine best suits their needs and is most appropriate for their program practice. Board members noted that an LA can change based on geography of where the meeting is being held. L Simon confirmed that this LA is based on Simcoe Muskoka as a whole.

Board members were provided an update of the Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) training which began in 2019 with the previous goal for all SMDHU staff to complete this in 2020-2021, however was stalled due to the pandemic. Additional options for training was discussed such as a local facilitator providing training in group sessions or through the LHIN (which is now Ontario Health). It was noted that if the Board is interested in this training, further details can be provided for their consideration.

**Motion 5.4**

**MOVED BY** A. Kungl

**SECONDED BY** P. Willmott

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

AND FURTHER THAT the Board of Health consider giving a land acknowledgement at the start of each Board meeting and on other occasions as appropriate;

AND FURTHER THAT the Board of Health require Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) training as a Board development standard for all current and future Board members, and direct management to coordinate Board ICS training sessions in early 2023.

**CARRIED**

## 6. New Business

- 6.1 Vendor Selection; Gas Generator. Briefing Note. Karen Ellis-Scharfenberg, Bruce Parker and Kevin Thomas presenting.

B. Parker provided an update on the gas generator which was to be purchased from one-time capital funding of \$150,000 from the Ministry of Health. This generator was to be installed as a replacement for the existing generator at the 15 Sperling Drive office. Unfortunately, due to the delay in funding approval, poor vendor response to the RFP processes and supply chain shortages, SMDHU was unable to have a new generator purchased/installed by March 31, 2022. The Ministry has now extended the capital one-time funding for the generator to be utilized by December 31, 2022.

### **Motion 6.1**

**MOVED BY** S. Kinsella

**SECONDED BY** S. Warnock

THAT the Board of Health approve the awarding of the natural gas generator contract to Total Power who will purchase, install and maintain a new generator at the 15 Sperling Drive office;

AND FURTHER THAT the Board of Health approve management accessing up to \$75,000 from the capital reserve to off-set costs for the generator beyond the \$150,000 Ministry grant.

**CARRIED**

- 6.2 Long-Term Financial Support for Public Health. Briefing Note. Dr. Charles Gardner and Karen Ellis-Scharfenberg presenting.

C. Gardner provided an update on the motion previously passed by the Board at the February 2022 meeting to support the submission of an ALPHA resolution for the June AGM related to renewed advocacy for sustained sufficient provincial base-funding for the full recovery of local public health.

SMDHU Management has learned that ALPHA has very recently established a working group for identifying the funding needs for public health units in 2023, and to support the engagement of the ALPHA Board with the province for sustained and sufficient base funding for local public health units.

Board members discussed the potential for engagement with local MPPs to be educated on health unit activities and funding. C. Gardner noted that there may be availability issues at this time due to the upcoming election. It was also noted that A. Dubeau and C. Gardner have been meeting regularly with local MPPs continually throughout the pandemic with updates on funding and other matters.

### **Motion 6.2**

**MOVED BY L. Oehm**

**SECONDED BY F. Pinto**

THAT the Board of Health receive this information and await the outcome of the alPHa working group on 2023 base funding for public health;

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health not submit a resolution for the alPHa Annual General Meeting (AGM) on this topic at this time.

**CARRIED**

**7. Announcements**

A. Kungl mentioned the upcoming Georgian College Community Partner Award of Distinction and congratulated C. Gardner, N. Riewe and staff for this acknowledgement. C. Miller will determine if live streaming for the May 2 event will be available and will share with Board members. A. Dubeau and N. Riewe will be attending the ceremony to accept this award on behalf of the agency,

**8. Items of Education**

8.1 alPHa Annual Conference and Section Meetings. Tuesday, June 14, 2022.

**9. Items of Information**

9.1 Letter from Anita Dubeau, Board Chair for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit to the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care re Response to the Opioid Crisis in Simcoe Muskoka and Ontario-wide.

9.2 Letter and Nomination Package from Ali Khonsari, Georgian College Chair of the Board of Governors to Dr. Charles Gardner, Medical Officer of Health and Natalie Riewe, Chief Nursing Officer, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit re Recipient of the Board of Governors' Awards of Distinction – Community Partner Award.

9.3 Letter from Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of the Blue Mountains to Dr. Charles Gardner, Medical Officer of Health of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit re South Georgian Bay Regional Pandemic Recovery Communications Task Force.

9.4 Letter from alPHa Executive re alPHa Elections Primer for 2022.

9.5 Letter from Gary McNamara, Chair for the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health to the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care re Letter of Support – Ontario Regulation 116/20, Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health.

9.6 Letter from Gary McNamara, Chair for the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health to the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier of the Ministry of

Health and Long-Term Care re Letter of Support – Health and Racial Equity:  
Denouncing Acts and Symbols of Hate.

9.7 alPHa Information Break – March 11, 2022

9.8 alPHa Information Break – April 8, 2022

**10. Date of Next Meetings**

- May 18, 2022
- June 15, 2022

**11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 am.

**Motion 11.0**

**MOVED BY** P. Koetsier

**SECONDED BY** P. Willmott

THAT the Board of Health meeting be adjourned.

**CARRIED**

**ORIGINAL Signed By:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Anita Dubeau

Chair, Board of Health

**ORIGINAL Signed By:**

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Dr. Charles Gardner

Medical Officer of Health