

MINUTES

**Northeastern Public Health Board of Health**

Special Meeting held on January 30, 2025 at 4:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

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1.0 **ROLL CALL**

**Board of Health Members**

|                      |                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Michelle Boileau     | City of Timmins                                                                                                                  |
| Andrew Marks         | City of Timmins                                                                                                                  |
| Mark Wilson          | Temiskaming Shores                                                                                                               |
| Jeff Laferriere      | Temiskaming Shores                                                                                                               |
| Carol Lowery         | Rural South: Armstrong, Brethour, Casey, Cobalt, Coleman, Harley, Harris, Hilliard, Hudson, Kerns, Latchford, Temagami, Thornloe |
| Paul Kelly           | Rural Central South: Charlton & Dack, Chamberlain, Englehart, Evanturel, Gauthier, James, Larder Lake, McGarry, Matachewan       |
| Peter Politis        | Cochrane, Smooth Rock Falls                                                                                                      |
| Gary Fortin          | Kapuskasing (MS Teams in Timmins)                                                                                                |
| Marc Dupuis          | Rural North: Fauquier-Strickland, Hornepayne, Hearst, Mattice Val Cote, Moonbeam, Opatatika, Val Rita Harty                      |
| Savion Nakogee       | Rural Far North: Moosonee, James Bay and Hudson Bay region                                                                       |
| Casey Owens          | Kirkland Lake                                                                                                                    |
| Cindy Marks-Campbell | Provincial Appointee                                                                                                             |
| Suzanne Perras       | Provincial Appointee (arrived at 4:16 p.m. MS Teams)                                                                             |
| Cathy Dwyer          | Provincial Appointee                                                                                                             |
| Todd Steis           | Provincial Appointee                                                                                                             |
| David Lowe           | Provincial Appointee                                                                                                             |
| Curtis Arthur        | Provincial Appointee                                                                                                             |

**Regrets**

|                |                                                           |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| John Curley    | City of Timmins                                           |
| Tory Delaurier | Rural Central North: Iroquois Falls, Black River Matheson |

**Northeastern Staff Members**

|                     |                                                          |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Dr. Lianne Catton   | Acting Medical Officer of Health/Chief Executive Officer |
| Rosa Montico-Reimer | Director of Finance                                      |
| Lori McCord         | Executive Assistant                                      |
| Rachelle Cote       | Executive Assistant                                      |

**Regrets**

Randy Winters Director of Corporate and Protection Services.

**Member of the Public** None

1.1 **CALL TO ORDER:** the meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm.

1.2 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION #17-S-2025**

Moved by: Paul Kelly

Seconded by: Marc Dupuis

That the agenda for the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit meeting January 30, 2025 be approved.

CARRIED

1.3 **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND GENERAL NATURE**

None declared.

2.0 **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

2.1 **PHU Board of Health Minutes – December 5, 2024**

The minutes from the Board of Health for the Porcupine Health Unit meeting dated December 5, 2024 were reviewed.

**MOTION #18-S-2025**

Moved by: Gary Fortin

Seconded by: Andrew Marks

That the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit approve the minutes for the Board of Health for the Porcupine Health Unit meeting dated December 5, 2024.

CARRIED

2.2 **THU Board of Health Minutes – December 4, 2024**

The minutes from the Board of Health for the Timiskaming Health Unit meeting dated December 4, 2024 were reviewed.

**MOTION #19-S-2025**

Moved by: Casey Owens

Seconded by: David Lowe

That the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit approve the minutes for the Board of Health for the Timiskaming Health Unit meeting dated December 4, 2024.

CARRIED

### **2.3 NEPH Board of Health Minutes – January 1, 2025**

The minutes from the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit meeting dated January 1, 2025 were reviewed.

#### **MOTION #20-S-2025**

Moved by: David Lowe

Seconded by: Cathy Dwyer

That the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit approve the minutes for the meeting dated January 1, 2025.

CARRIED

### **3.0 AGENDA ITEMS FOR INFORMATION, DISCUSSION, DECISION**

#### **3.1 Proposed Meeting Dates**

The Board of Health meeting schedule for 2025 was previously shared.

#### **MOTION #21-S-2025**

Moved by: Carol Lowery

Seconded by: Gary Fortin

That the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit approve the 2025 schedule of meeting dates as presented.

#### **3.2 Board Member Attendance to Workshops/Conferences**

##### **3.2.1 alPHa Conference – Feb 12-14, 2025 (virtual)**

Information around alPHa's Winter Symposium was previously shared with Board members with a request to advise of their interest in attending. Dr. Catton provided an overview of the symposium and shared that Chair Boileau has been asked to speak during one of the planned sessions.

#### **MOTION #22-S-2025**

Moved by: David Lowe

Seconded by: Andrew Marks

That the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit approve Board Members Sue Perras, Mark Wilson, Michelle Boileau to attend alPHa 2025 Winter Symposium.

CARRIED

#### **3.3 Orientation**

##### **3.3.1 Board Orientation Session**

As outlined in the By-Laws and the accountabilities in the *Good Governance and Management Domain* of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), an annual orientation session is being planned. As a new public health agency with a large Board of 19 members, connecting in-person to review the bylaws, policies, and the

latest public health sector updates. It is an important opportunity to learn more about each legacy health unit to help create the vision for our future as NEPH. Board orientation from a governance perspective especially through a merger, is exceedingly important, and the merger funding provides a unique opportunity to support a more comprehensive event. Representatives from ALPHa will be present to provide some governance training that many health units have benefitted from. An in-person event in Timmins will be planned. While attendance is strongly encouraged, if members are unable to attend alternate options for the training will be determined. Dates will be proposed and a survey circulated to Board members to determine a date.

### 3.3.2 Board Orientation Registration Forms

Board Member Conflict of Interest Declaration Form, Board Member Code of Conduct Declaration Form, and Board Member Confidentiality Agreement forms were previously shared with Board Members with the corresponding policies. Board members are requested to forward their signed documents to the Recording Secretary.

### **3.4 Appointment of Finance Committee**

Board members were previously requested to express their interest in serving on the Finance Committee. Membership as outlined in the draft Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee is comprised of six committee members and the Board Chair as ex-officio. Interest was expressed by the following seven members: Paul Kelly, Sue Perras, Jeff Laferriere, Andrew Marks, Gary Fortin, Curtis Arthur and Todd Steis. Board member Laferriere declined to have his name stand.

#### **MOTION #23-S-2025**

Moved by: Cindy Campbell

Seconded by: Jeff Laferriere

That the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit approve the appointment of the Finance Committee Members:

Paul Kelly

Sue Perras

Andrew Marks

Gary Fortin

Curtis Arthur

Todd Steis

Michelle Boileau, Chair Ex-Officio

CARRIED

### **3.5 Infrastructure Update**

#### 3.5.1 Request for Proposal – Pine St. Timmins HVAC System

For information purposes Dr. Catton provided an infrastructure update around the HVAC system at the Pine Street building in Timmins. The HVAC system is at end of life with an increased risk of failure and as such requires significant repairs. This is not an upgraded system, however, will ensure the continuity of heating, ventilation and cooling systems at the level of current function. The funding for this project was included and approved in the year one capital submission. The Ministry is aware that the project will extend into year 2. The initial assessment and estimate was \$750,000.00. Consultation around the required HVAC needs and support of the RFP process was provided by J.L. Richards. Following the procurement policy, the RFP was issued on November 28, 2024 and went to public tender on January 23<sup>rd</sup> with three bids submitted for review. Recommendation for the successful proponent will be brought to the Board for approval.

### 3.5.2 Request for Proposal – NEPH Phone System

Rosa Montico-Reimer, Director of Finance provided an overview of the phone system. The current system supports over 13 offices in 12 communities and 197 staff members. Legacy PHU Board members were aware of issues with the current system which is at end of life. The Board was advised that funding for this project was included and approved as part of the merger costs. Rosa Montico-Reimer advised that the procurement policy was followed and noted it was the first RFP that followed the bids and tender platform. The RFP was issued on September 3, 2024 and included the merged entity. Eighteen proposals were received and an independent review and cost scoring was conducted. The recommendation to the Board is to award the RFP to Sunwire. Rosa Montico-Reimer advised the estimated one time implementation cost is \$100,001.00 with ongoing annualized cost of \$44,229.00.

#### **MOTION #24-S-2025**

Moved by: Marc Dupuis

Seconded by: Curt Arthur

That the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit approve the awarding of the NEPH phone system tender to Sunwire with an estimated one-time implementation cost of \$100,101.00 and ongoing annual cost of \$44,229.

CARRIED

## **4.0 MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT**

Dr. Catton provided a verbal update.

Strengthening Public Health: The Strengthening Public Health Strategy aimed to optimize capacity, stability and sustainability in the public health sector. The initiatives under the Strengthening Public Health Strategy were to support voluntary mergers, review public health funding and update the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). Supporting voluntary mergers was announced at AMO in August 2023. To date nine Boards of Health have merged into four new public health entities. Northeastern Public Health team members meet regularly with partners from other merged health units as well as with the Ministry. The second initiative to

strengthen public health is the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) review. The review has not resulted in any notable decrease in accountabilities of local public health. It is expected that there will be a levelling of priorities and a review of opportunities where public health could decrease duplication and increase opportunities. It is expected that the new standards will be released in time to implement in January 2026. There have been no further updates around funding and no changes to funding are expected beyond the 1% increase in 2024, 2025, 2026.

Ministry of Health Engagement/Leadership Roles: Continued involvement at several tables includes current role as the Chair of the Council of Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) Section which includes membership on the alPHa Executive and the alPHa Board. Northern regional representative at the Public Health Leadership Table, with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (OCMOH) and Public Health Ontario (PHO).

Vaccine Preventable Disease/COVID-19/Influenza Activity: Northeastern Public Health (NEPH) continues to see influenza, COVID-19, RSV, and outbreaks continue to be investigated, declared and supported across the region. Hospitals have been reporting significant increases in presentations to the emergency departments for respiratory illness. Northeastern Public Health continues to support opportunities for vaccination for influenza, COVID-19 and RSV across the region. Increased cases and clusters of invasive Group A Streptococcus (iGAS), Blastomycosis and Pertussis have also been noted. Northeastern Public Health shares information widely with health care providers highlighting these trends and, as appropriate, guidance for testing, treatment and reporting. Trends are also shared with partners and on social media platforms. Northeastern Public Health continues to support communities and regions experiencing increases in infectious diseases. NEPH works closely with First Nation communities, Indigenous Services Canada, Public Health Ontario, provincial laboratories, local hospitals and providers in supporting any clusters or outbreaks of communicable or reportable diseases that may be occurring.

Programs and Services Highlights/Updates: Northeastern Public Health continues to see an increase in suspected opioid related overdoses and events. Most recently a yellow alert was shared in legacy PHU region. Work continues to integrate legacy THU and PHU surveillance. Alerts are shared widely across the region. Ontario Health Teams continue to work with both legacy THU. In legacy THU this includes work on an online booking system. Both Legacy PHU and THU continue involvement with local Community Safety and Well-Being Plans supporting partners and initiatives. Planet Youth is active in both legacy health units and will continue as is at this time due to strong local partnerships and community coalitions in addressing reducing harmful substance use rates. Recent team trips to support the Moosonee office resulted in exciting initiatives with the NEPH dietician and APANO Lead in Moosonee. The school team is busy implementing the Immunization of Schools Act (ISPA) across the region. Integration of both legacy PHU-THU school programs began early in the merger to ensure alignment of programs and consistency of communications across all 9 school boards in the region for the school year.

The Board thanked Dr. Catton for the report.

**5.0 NEPH MERGER TRANSITION REPORT**

Dr. Catton provided an overview of the historical background and timelines around the PHU-THU merger. Dr. Catton advised that much work has been done around the integration of business, workforce, programs and services, governance and communities. A summary of the milestones completed to date, NEPH's current focus and the next steps planned were shared. The Board acknowledged the valuable update shared.

**6.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence was received for information purposes.

**7.0. CLOSED SESSION**

N/A

**8.0 RISING AND REPORTING OF CLOSED SESSION**

N/A

**8.0 ADJOURNMENT**

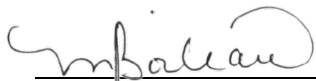
**MOTION #16-S-2025**

Moved by: Todd Steis

Seconded by: Andrew Marks

That the next meeting of the Board of Health for the Northeastern Health Unit be held on February 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

CARRIED



February 27, 2025

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Michelle Boileau, Board Chair

Lori McCord, Recorder, Rachelle Cote, Recorder