



## **Ottawa Board of Health MINUTES 15**

**Monday, February 8, 2021, 5:00 PM**

**By Electronic Participation**

**Contact for the Ottawa Board of Health:**

**Diane Blais, Board of Health Secretary**

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### **Board Members:**

**Chair: K. Egli**

**Vice-Chair: T. DeGiovanni**

**Members: E. Banham, J. Cloutier, E. El-Chantiry, G. Gower, T. Kavanagh,  
L. Leikin, S. Menard, S. Pinel, P. Tilley**

The Ottawa Board of Health met via Zoom on Monday, February 8, 2021 beginning at 5:00 PM.

The Board of Health Secretary presided over the beginning of the meeting, up to and including the confirmation of the Chair.

Councillor Keith Egli, Chair of the Board of Health, presided over the balance of the meeting.

## ROLL CALL

All members participated.

## REGRETS

No regrets were filed.

## DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (INCLUDING THOSE ORIGINALLY ARISING FROM PRIOR MEETINGS)

No declarations of interest were filed.

## CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**Confirmation of minutes of the meeting of November 30, 2020.**

CONFIRMED

## COMMUNICATIONS

**Seven communication items have been received (held on file with the Board of Health Secretary).**

MOTION TO INTRODUCE REPORTS

**Motion 15/1**

Moved by Member Banham

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the report titled Confirmation of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Chair of the Board of Health Verbal Report, the Medical Officer of Health Verbal Report, and the reports titled: Lessons Learned Working with Long-Term Care Homes (LTCHs) During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Covid-19 Pandemic Response – Looking Ahead and Building Back Better and Ottawa Public Health’s Strategic Plan for 2019-2022 – 2020 Year in Review, be received and considered;

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Rules of Procedure be suspended to receive and consider the report titled Ottawa Public Health Submission to the Government of Ontario on 2021 Budget Consultations given the submission deadline of February 12, 2020.

CARRIED

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

ACS2021-OPH-BOH-0001

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:**

1. **Confirm the election of Councillor Keith Egli as Chair for 2021, to be confirmed at the first meeting of each year of its term as required by the Health Protection and Promotion Act; and**
2. **Confirm the election of Member Tammy DeGiovanni as Vice-Chair for 2021, to be confirmed at the first meeting of each year of its term as required by the Health Protection and Promotion Act.**

CARRIED

Following a 'Consent Agenda' process, the Board considered the held items in the order in which they appear on the Agenda.

2. CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH VERBAL REPORT

ACS2021-OPH-BOH-0002

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive this verbal report for information.**

RECEIVED

Chair Egli began by sharing news of the Provincial Government's announcement about gradually lifting COVID-19 restrictions and returning to a regionally applied colour-coded system. He talked about one recent and two upcoming mental health initiatives. Specifically, the January 19 *Mental Health Expert Tips* live session on YouTube, the Youth Mental Health and Addictions Virtual Town Hall, planned for February 11<sup>th</sup>, and the early March launch of the second edition of the *Your Minute* Video Campaign. He then noted that February is Heart Health Month and provided tips for staying healthy. In closing, he shared the news of Vice-Chair DeGiovanni's recent promotion as CHEO's Chief Nurse and Senior Clinical Vice President and offered congratulations.

The discussion on this item lasted approximately 10 minutes. The report was then received by the Board. The attached memo includes the Chair's Verbal Update.

3. MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH VERBAL REPORT

ACS2021-OPH-MOH-0001

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive this verbal report for information.**

RECEIVED

As part of her verbal report, Dr. Etches recognized Black History Month and encouraged participation in Black History Month activities across the City. She then provided updates on COVID-19 vaccination, COVID-19 testing of school communities and Ottawa Public Health's financial situation. In closing, she talked about the local situation with respect to the Provincial announcement about the gradual lifting of restrictions and the return to a regionally applied colour-coded system.

Following her verbal update, Dr. Etches responded to questions from Board Members. The discussion on this item lasted approximately 55 minutes. The report was then received by the Board. The attached memo includes the Medical Officer of Health's Verbal Update.

4. **LESSONS LEARNED WORKING WITH LONG-TERM CARE HOMES (LTCHs) DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

ACS2021-OPH-HPS-0001

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:**

- 1. Receive, for information, key lessons learned from working with Long-Term Care Homes (LTCHs) during the COVID-19 pandemic, as described in this report;**
- 2. Approve Ottawa Public Health's recommendations for strengthening the prevention and management of infectious disease outbreaks in Ontario's Long-Term Care Homes, as outlined in this report; and**
- 3. Direct that the Chair of the Board of Health write to the COVID-19 Long-Term Care Commission, with a copy to the Premier of Ontario,**

**to share the recommendations and request their consideration in implementing them.**

CARRIED

Dr. Etches and Dominique Bremner, Program Manager of Public Health Inspection, responded to questions from Board Members on the report.

The Board received one (1) written submission relating to this item from:

- Mr. tOM Trottier, resident

The discussion on this item lasted approximately 10 minutes. The Board then voted to approve the report recommendations.

At approximately 6:25 p.m., before proceeding to the next Agenda item, the Board approved a motion to extend the time of the meeting beyond 7:00 p.m.

**Motion 15/2**

Moved by Member Banham

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health approve that the meeting time be extended past 7:00 p.m. pursuant to Subsection 8(1)(c) of the *Procedural By-law*.**

CARRIED

5. COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE – LOOKING AHEAD AND BUILDING BACK BETTER

ACS2021-OPH-KPQ-0001

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:**

1. **Receive, for information, the lessons learned to date from the COVID-19 pandemic response, as outlined in this report;**
2. **Approve Ottawa Public Health's recommendations for strengthening Ontario's public health and health care sectors, based on lessons learned from the pandemic response and as described in this report; and**
3. **Direct the Chair of the Board of Health to write to the Premier of Ontario to share these recommendations and request they be considered to form part of the Province's policy and/or regulatory framework going forward.**

CARRIED, as amended by Motion 15/3

Dr. Etches introduced this item by providing some opening remarks on the report.

Following the Medical Officer of Health's introductory comments, Member Menard introduced a motion to amend the report to request that the Province:

- a. Require employers in Ontario to provide no less than five paid sick days annually to workers, after three months of employment, through amendments to the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* or through a different mechanism; and
- b. Provide necessary funding, fiscal relief, and/or supports to employers so that all workers in Ontario have access to no less than 10 paid sick days annually in the event of a declared infectious disease emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board then heard from six (6) public delegations and received two (2) written submissions, all in support of paid sick leave:

- Michelle Arruda, Ottawa Area Director, Unifor
- Sam Hersh, Horizon Ottawa
- Everett Latulippe, resident
- Heather Farrow, resident
- Laura Sosnow, resident
- Erin Sirett, resident
- Naureen Rizvi, Unifor Ontario Regional Director (written submission)

- Linda Berry, resident (written submission)

Following the public delegations, Board members posed questions on the report and on Motion 15/3. The Board then proceeded to vote on the Motion and on the report, as amended. The discussion on this item lasted approximately one (1) hour.

### **Motion 15/3**

Moved by Member Menard

**WHEREAS, as its meeting of February 8, 2021, the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit is considering two reports from Ottawa's Medical Officer of Health on the subject of lessons learned to date from the COVID-19 pandemic titled "*Lessons Learned Working with Long-Term Care Homes During the COVID-19 Pandemic*" and "*COVID-19 Pandemic Response – Looking Ahead and Building Back Better*"; and**

**WHEREAS both reports underline the importance of staying home when sick in order to prevent the transmission of infectious illnesses like COVID-19, particularly as pertains to workers' ability to stay home when sick without fear of lost wages; and**

**WHEREAS the report titled "*COVID-19 Pandemic Response – Looking Ahead and Building Back Better*" makes both health and economic arguments in support of paid sick leave for Ontario's workforce, noting that:**

- **"The COVID-19 pandemic has underlined that a healthy population and a healthy economy go hand in hand and that differences in earning power and job security directly impact individual, family and community health";**
- **"Some of Ottawa's essential workers are precariously employed, limiting their ability to stay home when ill"; and**
- **"Employees attending work while sick can have a ripple effect at the workplace, including transmitting infectious diseases, increasing their risk of injury and decreasing productivity, which can ultimately lead to increased costs to employers"; and**

**WHEREAS, in addition to the economic benefits of paid sick leave to ensure workers stay home when sick to prevent the transmission of infectious illness, a COVID-19 outbreak in a workplace can also result in**



**reputational harm and stigma; and**

**WHEREAS on January 15, 2021, Ontario’s Big City Mayors put out a news release stating that “too many workers across Ontario are having to choose between going to work sick or losing income” and urging the provincial and federal governments “to implement a broader sick day program now that provides greater benefits and can be accessed by employees as quickly as possible”; and**

**WHEREAS, although the federal government has introduced a form of sick leave benefit, it has proven to be insufficient given that:**

- It is limited in terms of the maximum weekly amount payable to workers;**
- It is based on full weeks of missed work rather than days of missed work, leaving workers ineligible if they miss less than a full week; and**
- It requires workers to apply for the benefit, resulting in a wait for payment and a risk of their application being denied; and**

**WHEREAS workers should be able to miss work when they are sick, regardless of the percentage of days missed in a particular week, without needing their illness to be confined to two weeks within a calendar year, and without seeing a reduction in their income for time missed due to illness; and**

**WHEREAS, with the exception of a relatively small number of federally regulated industries, the majority of workplaces are provincially regulated, making it foremost the jurisdiction of provinces to ensure seamless access to paid sick leave for workers; and**

**WHEREAS during a press briefing on January 12, 2021, both the University of Toronto’s Dr. Adalsteinn Brown and Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Ontario’s Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health, indicated that a pandemic response that relies solely on restricting individual movements — and provides no increased social supports — will not work; and**

**WHEREAS during that same briefing, Dr. Yaffe also noted that for some, the lack of paid sick days is a barrier to reducing transmission of the novel coronavirus; and**

**WHEREAS during a January 11, 2021 press conference, Toronto’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Eileen de Villa, also talked about the importance of**

**paid sick leave provisions to protect the health of individual workers, workplaces, and the broader community”; and**

**WHEREAS, at its meeting of January 18, 2021, Toronto’s Board of Health approved recommendations calling on the Government of Ontario to:**

- a. require employers in Ontario to provide no less than five paid sick days annually to workers, after three months of employment, through amendments to the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* or through a different mechanism; and**
- b. provide necessary funding, fiscal relief, and/or supports to employers so that all workers in Ontario have access to no less than 10 paid sick days annually in the event of a declared infectious disease emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic; and**

**WHEREAS despite these and other calls from public health experts and officials, the Government of Ontario has yet to announce measures that include paid sick days; and**

**WHEREAS the reports from Ottawa’s Medical Officer of Health clearly outline the need for paid sick leave, which should be reflected in the Ottawa Board of Health’s recommendations to the province;**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ottawa Board of Health join the Toronto Board of Health in requesting that the province:**

- c. Require employers in Ontario to provide no less than five paid sick days annually to workers, after three months of employment, through amendments to the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* or through a different mechanism; and**
- d. Provide necessary funding, fiscal relief, and/or supports to employers so that all workers in Ontario have access to no less than 10 paid sick days annually in the event of a declared infectious disease emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Chair of the Board of Health include these specific recommendations in his letter to the Premier of Ontario further to recommendation 3 of the report titled “*COVID-19 Pandemic Response – Looking Ahead and Building Back Better*”.**

**CARRIED on a division of 10 YEAS and 1 NAY, as follows:**

**YEAS (10): Members E. Banham, J. Cloutier, G. Gower, T. Kavanagh,**

L. Leikin, S. Pinel, P. Tilley, Vice-Chair T. DeGiovanni and  
Chair K. Egli

NAY (1): Member E. El-Chantiry

6. OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2019-2022 – 2020  
YEAR IN REVIEW

ACS2021-OPH-KPQ-0002

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive this  
report for information.**

RECEIVED

ADDITIONAL ITEM

7. OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF  
ONTARIO ON 2021 BUDGET CONSULTATIONS

ACS2021-OPH-PCS-0001

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit approve the  
Medical Officer of Health's submission to the Government of Ontario in  
response to the 2021 budget consultations, as outlined in Document 1.**

CARRIED

MOTION TO ADOPT REPORTS

**Motion 15/4**

Moved by Member Banham

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the report titled Confirmation of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Chair of the Board of Health Verbal Report, the Medical Officer of Health Verbal Report, and the reports titled: Lessons Learned Working with Long-Term Care Homes (LTCHs) During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Covid-19 Pandemic Response – Looking Ahead and Building Back Better, Ottawa Public Health’s Strategic Plan for 2019-2022 – 2020 Year in Review, and Ottawa Public Health Submission to the Government of Ontario on 2021 Budget Consultations, be received and adopted.**

CARRIED

**MOTIONS REQUIRING SUSPENSION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

There were no motions requiring suspension of the rules.

**NOTICES OF MOTION (FOR CONSIDERATION AT SUBSEQUENT MEETING)**

There were no Notices of Motion (for consideration at a subsequent meeting).

**CONFIRMATION BY-LAW**

**Motion 15/5**

Moved by Member Banham

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT Confirmation By-law no. 2021-1, a by-law of the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit to confirm the proceedings of the**

**Ottawa Board of Health at its meeting of February 8, 2021, be read and passed.**

CARRIED

INQUIRIES

None

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

**Regular Meeting**

Monday, April 19, 2021 - 5:00 PM

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**BOARD SECRETARY**

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**BOARD CHAIR**