



Board of Health Meeting MINUTES

Wednesday, May 28, 2025 - 5:00
SSM Algoma Community Room | Videoconference

BOARD MEMBERS

PRESENT: Sally Hagman
Donald McConnell - 2nd Vice-Chair
Luc Morrisette
Sonny Spina
Sonia Tassone
Suzanne Trivers - Board Chair
Jody Wildman - 1st Vice-Chair
Natalie Zagordo

APH MEMBERS

Dr. Jennifer Loo - Medical Officer of Health/CEO
Dr. John Tuinema - Associate Medical Officer of Health & Director of Health Protection
Rick Webb - Director of Corporate Services
Leslie Dunseath - Manager of Accounting Services
Brandon Hazelton - Communications Coordinator
Tania Caputo - Board Secretary

STAFF GUESTS: Hilary Gordon - Community Wellness Manager, Jennifer Miller - Public Health Nurse

REGRETS: Julila Hemphill - BOH Member, Kristy Harper - Director of Health Promotion & Chief Nursing Officer

1.0 Meeting Called to Order

S. Trivers welcomed the Board of Health members, read the land acknowledgment, took roll call, and asked for declarations of conflict of interest, to which none were declared.

- a. Land Acknowledgment
- b. Roll Call
- c. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

2.0 Adoption of Agenda

RESOLUTION
2025-54

Moved: S. Tassone
Seconded: S. Spina

THAT the Board of Health agenda dated May 28, 2025, be approved as presented.

CARRIED

3.0 Delegations / Presentations

a. Local Opioid Response

Hilary Gordon and Jennifer Miller provided the presentation on the opioid response highlighting the complexity of the toxic drug crisis in Algoma and detailed the findings of the "Toxic Drugs in Algoma" report. It emphasized a public health approach grounded in the social-ecological model and Ontario Public Health Standards, incorporating community consultations, lived experiences, and evidence-informed practices across the continuum of care. Key themes included addressing structural stigma, enhancing harm reduction strategies, and fostering cross-sector collaboration.

4.0 Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLUTION
2025-55

Moved: S. Hagman
Seconded: N. Zagordo

THAT the Board of Health meeting minutes dated April 23, 2025, be approved as presented.

CARRIED

5.0 Business Arising from Minutes

Not applicable.

6.0 Reports to the Board

a. Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer Reports

MOH Report - May 2025

Dr. Jennifer Loo, the Medical Officer of Health (MOH), delivered a report highlighting a return to public health leadership following a year-long leave, and extended her gratitude to Dr. John Tuinema and the Executive Team for their support during her absence. Dr. Tuinema will return to his role as Associate Medical Officer of Health (AMOH) and Director of Health Protection at APH. Key updates included ongoing efforts to address structural stigma through staff and community training, inspired by findings from the “Toxic Drugs in Algoma” report. The report also noted the successful hosting of the HIV 101 conference, which stemmed from client feedback and led to improved internal practices. Additionally, Dr. Loo addressed the resurgence of measles in Ontario, emphasizing the region’s preparedness and continued public education to combat vaccine hesitancy. Lastly, Algoma Public Health was recognized as a finalist in two categories at the Outstanding Business Achievement Awards, reflecting the organization’s commitment to excellence.

RESOLUTION

2025-56

Moved: L. Morrisette

Seconded: S. Spina

THAT the report of the Medical Officer of Health and CEO be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

b. Finance and Audit

i. Unaudited Financial Statements ending March 31, 2025.

L. Dunseath provided an overview of the Financial Statements.

RESOLUTION

2025-57

Moved: L. Morrisette

Seconded: J. Wildman

THAT the Board of Health accepts the Unaudited Financial Statements for the period ending March 31, 2025, as presented.

CARRIED

c. Governance

i. Governance Committee Chair Report

RESOLUTION

2025-58

Moved: S. Hagman

Seconded: N. Zagordo

THAT the Board of Health accepts the May 12, 2025, Chair Report for the Governance Committee Meeting as presented.

CARRIED

ii. Policy 02-05-085 Orientation Board Member

RESOLUTION

2025-59

Moved: S. Spina

Seconded: S. Tassone

THAT the Board of Health approves, **Policy 02-05-085 Orientation Board Member** as presented.

CARRIED

iii. Policy 02-05-087 Board Member Terms of Office

RESOLUTION

2025-60

Moved: S. Hagman

Seconded: S. Tassone

THAT the Board of Health approves, **Policy 02-05-087 Board Member Terms of Office** as amended.

CARRIED

iv. Policy 02-05-089 Chair Roles and Responsibilities

RESOLUTION

2025-61

Moved: S. Tassone

Seconded: J. Wildman

THAT the Board of Health approves, **Policy 02-05-089 Chair Roles and Responsibilities** as presented.

CARRIED

7.0 New Business/General Business

a. Monitoring Food Affordability and Food Insecurity - Briefing Note

The briefing note highlights Algoma Public Health's (APH) ongoing role in monitoring food affordability through the Nutritious Food Basket and underscores the persistent issue of food insecurity, affecting 17.6% of households in the region between 2021 and 2023. It emphasizes that food insecurity is primarily an income-based issue, best addressed through policies such as adequate social assistance, living wages, and basic income. The note supports a resolution urging the provincial government to recognize food insecurity as an income issue and to implement progressive economic policies. During the discussion, board members also raised the importance of complementary strategies, such as food skills education, gardening, and community partnerships, to help individuals access and prepare healthy food. APH staff noted existing initiatives like the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Program and collaborations to promote healthier food environments, while acknowledging the need to explore further community-based solutions.

RESOLUTION

2025-62

Moved: S. Hagman

Seconded: S. Tasone

Whereas, household food insecurity is the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints, meaning a household does not have enough money for food; and

Whereas, food insecurity is a serious public health problem that is strongly linked to adverse mental health conditions, increased risk of several chronic diseases, and is associated with increased healthcare costs; and

Whereas, an average of 17.6% of households in Algoma experienced food insecurity between 2021-2023 and almost one in four individuals (24.5%) in Ontario, including nearly 1 in 3 children, lived in a household experiencing food insecurity in 2023; and

Whereas, Algoma Public Health's monitoring food affordability data shows that social assistance rates and minimum wage are not enough to cover costs of living; and

Whereas, Ontario Works (OW) rates have not increased since 2018 and are not indexed to inflation and over half of households (52.8%) in Ontario that received any income from social assistance in 2022 were food insecure; and

Whereas, 58.6% of food-insecure households in Ontario relied on wages, salaries, or self-employment incomes as their main source of income; and

Whereas, while minimum wage in Ontario is \$17.20, a living wage in Northern Ontario is \$20.30 which local employers can commit to providing, through the Ontario Living Wage Network; and

Whereas, addressing the determinants of health and reducing health inequities are fundamental to the work of public health, and income is the strongest determinant of health; and

Whereas, the Board of Health of Algoma Public Health has previously endorsed and called on the provincial government to implement income-based policy interventions including 1) increasing minimum wage to a rate that better reflects costs of living, such as a living wage, 2) raising social assistance to reflect costs of living, 3) indexing OW to inflation, and 4) reducing income tax rates for the lowest income households (Resolution 2023-67); and

Whereas, the Ontario Dietitians in Public Health, local boards of health, and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) have called on the provincial government to use local food affordability findings to determine adequate social assistance rates: Motion #06-24 (Household Food Insecurity), A23-05 (Monitoring Food Affordability in Ontario and the Inadequacy of Social Assistance Rates); and

Whereas, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) has called on the provincial government to adopt a living wage perspective when setting minimum wage to ensure it covers actual costs of living, (Public Health Support for a Minimum Wage that is a Living Wage); and

Whereas, there has not yet been any provincial commitment or target set to reduce food insecurity since the government was elected in 2018.

Therefore be it resolved that the Board of Health of Algoma Public Health continue to advocate for income-based responses by calling on the recently re-elected provincial government to 1) recognize and acknowledge food insecurity as an income-based problem that requires income-based solutions, 2) set targets to reduce food insecurity, and 3) engage with all levels of government, private and non-profit sectors, and people with lived and living experiences, to implement progressive economic policies that increase household income (i.e., living wage, indexing all social assistance to inflation, and using monitoring food affordability data to set adequate social assistance rates).

CARRIED

b. Discussion on alPHA Resolution at June AGM

i. Indigenous Representation on Boards of Health: Discussion focused on a proposed alPHA resolution concerning Indigenous engagement in public health governance. Board members discussed the importance of involving Indigenous communities in decision-making, particularly given the services already provided to urban Indigenous populations. Points were raised about the need for prior consultation with Indigenous groups, potential constitutional issues, and clarity around the role of Indigenous board members. There was broad support for building relationships and initiating dialogue with Indigenous communities and organizations like Friendship Centres. The board agreed on the value of a collaborative, respectful approach and emphasized the need for local engagement to shape any future governance models. The discussion concluded with a consensus to provide feedback on the resolution at the alPHA AGM and explore pathways for meaningful Indigenous involvement.

8.0 Correspondence - requiring action

Not applicable.

9.0 Correspondence - for information

a. alPHA Information Break - May 2025

10.0 Addendum

Not applicable.

11.0 In-Camera - 6:24 pm

For discussion of labour relations and employee negotiations, matters about identifiable individuals, adoption of in camera minutes, **security of the property of the board**, litigation or potential litigation.

**RESOLUTION
2025-63**

Moved: S. Spina

Seconded: S. Tassone

THAT the Board of Health go in-camera.

CARRIED

12.0 Open Meeting - 7:12 pm
Resolutions resulting from in-camera meeting.

13.0 Bi annual Board of Health Meeting Evaluation

14.0 Announcements / Next Committee Meetings:

Finance Committee Meeting
Wednesday, Jun 11, 2025 @ 5:00 pm
SSM Algoma Community Room | Video Conference

Board of Health
Wednesday, June 25, 2025 @ 5:00 pm
SSM Algoma Community Room | Video Conference

15.0 Adjournment - 7:14 pm

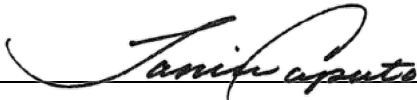
RESOLUTION	Moved: S. Spina
2025-66	Seconded: S. Tassone
THAT the Board of Health meeting adjourns.	
CARRIED	



Suzanne Trivers, Chair

June 25, 2025

Date



Tania Caputo, Secretary

June 25, 2025

Date