



705-382-2900
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Minutes: December 7, 2023, 10:00 am via Zoom in the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre

Present: Rod Ward (Chair), Dan Robertson, Margaret Ann MacPhail, Brad Kneller, Chris Hope, Fraser Williamson (Vice Chair), Vicky Roeder-Martin, Tom Bryson, Norm Hofstetter, Camille Barr (Secretary)

Regrets: Jim Ronholm

Guest: Rebecca Paul (BFFHT), Susan Keast (HHR MAOHT), Isabel Pereira

Called to order at 10:00 am by Chair R. Ward

1. 2023-29 Moved by B. Kneller - Seconded by T. Bryson
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council adopt the minutes from the regular meeting of November 2, 2023, and special meeting of November 24, 2023, as circulated. Carried.

2. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OF INTEREST:** R. Ward declared pecuniary interest for resolution 2023-31

3. **DELEGATIONS:**

Rod Ward- Comments from the Chair

R. Ward provided an overview of his career working in healthcare IT. He highlighted how over time the system has continued to shift and evolve over the years. Additionally, he provided the group a history of how he came to be connected to the AHHC through his meeting of Bruce Campbell. Initially the group was formed to maintain the MAHC services in the Burk's Falls building, essentially spending 7 years focusing on the services within. The mandate of the group is health care for the entire region. He reiterated the partnership with the MAOHT and that this was based on discussion with both Nipissing and Muskoka.

An opportunity is on the table for a new healthcare building in Almaguin on Commercial Drive in Armour. The question posed is how we can take advantage of the opportunity. All agree there are many questions that need to be answered. Does this new prospect make sense for healthcare in Almaguin on the long term?

The discussions are still new with the developer and a bit premature however with the timing of the x-ray decision, R. Ward felt it must be placed on the table.

The Township of Armour will continue to have discussions with the developer and share available information with the group. The hope is more information within three months. There are many different ownership models to consider as well as an impact to the Village of Burk's Falls should this project move forward, and services potentially move to a new location.

Ultimately Council needs to protect the Almaguin communities and attain the services needed for our community's future healthcare.

Further conversations are needed and thoughtful consideration.

Susan Keast- Human Health Resources

S. Keast provided Council with an overview of the MAOHT HHR Task Force mandate, actions taken to achieve workplan goals, and highlights for Q4. One highlight is the physician recruitment website. S. Keast is working with Courtney of ACED to ensure Almaguin is represented. Additionally, a survey will be sent out to Primary Care Providers in January to understand opportunities and challenges in the area to help inform recruitment work.

A presentation was provided to the Health Council with links discussed available in the electronic copy.

4. RESOLUTIONS PASSED:

2023-30 Moved by F. Williamson - Seconded by V. Roeder-Martin

WHEREAS the Almaguin Highlands Health Council received a presentation from Chair Rod Ward on November 24, 2023;

AND WHEREAS it was explained that the x-ray equipment in the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre will need to be replaced within the next 2-3 years;

AND WHEREAS MAHC has confirmed with its x-ray vendor that they have enough spare parts to keep the equipment functioning for 2-3 more years;

AND WHEREAS the Huntsville Hospital Foundation has stated they would fundraise for its replacement but require a decision to be made of when this occurs and where it will be located for their budgeting purposes;

AND WHEREAS the Almaguin Highlands Health Council members require time to share the information received at the meeting with their individual Councils;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council directs MAHC to continue to maintain the current x-ray equipment as stated while thoughtful conversations by municipal councils are held regarding healthcare for Almaguin Highlands. Carried.

2023-31 Moved by F. Williamson - Seconded by V. Roeder-Martin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council agrees to pay \$41.48 from its account for the web domain *almaguin-health-org* for a renewal period of 2 years. Carried.

5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

a) Follow up discussion regarding the presentation on “Healthcare in Almaguin” dated November 24, 2023

Council asked questions to gain clarity on the new potential healthcare building in Armour. Ultimately it is too soon to answer many as it relates to an ownership model and investment protection or what investments may look like. R. Ward will share what he can as information is available. There is also desire to understand the long term goals for the Burk’s Falls facility as this will be needed while considering a new build. C. Hope shared a Foundation will be established for the Burk’s Falls building regardless.

Regarding the Xray machine it was asked if there is the potential for the machine to go down for periods of time while parts are gathered to keep it going the next 2-3 years. The answer is yes however to replace it x-ray would be down approx. 6 months so there is the potential of it being out of services either way. MAHC did say they may have access to a portable system.

b) Update on resolutions received regarding lab services in Burk’s Falls

Secretary reviewed resolutions of support received from Armour, Ryerson, Perry, Burk’s Falls, Magnetawan and Strong. She will reach back out to the remaining municipalities and then send the collective resolutions to MAHC. AHHC did receive a letter back from Cheryl Harrison regarding the original resolution, previously emailed to Council, confirming their commitment to providing laboratory services.

c) AHH Council account update

The AHH Council account holds a total of \$9,776.19, unchanged since last report.

d) Progress report: Not provided this meeting

e) Other business

There is a call for interest for the Transgender Services Task Force. The flyer will be shared with the group. Expressions of interests will be received by R. Paul.

The Home Care Modernization Working Group is now called the Care at Home Working Group. They are seeing more patients getting out of the hospital and into the community demonstrating “the needle is moving” in the right direction. M. McPhail shared basic information on the new build in Armour with the Care at Home Group. The group felt it was good idea. McPhail made it clear no promises could be made.

R. Paul invited anyone on Council interested in attending the MAOHT Collaboration Steering Committee to the table. Please let C. Barr know your interest and she will connect with R. Paul for dates.

2023-32 Moved by V. Roeder-Martin - Seconded by T. Bryson

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council adjourn at 11:56 am to meet again on January 4, 2024, at 10:00 am at the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre. Carried.