



705-382-2900
www.almaguin-health.org

Minutes: April 4, 2024, 10:00 am via Zoom and at the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre

Present: Rod Ward (Chair), Delynne Patterson, Margaret Ann MacPhail, Chris Hope, Fraser Williamson (Vice Chair), Vicky Roeder-Martin, Tom Bryson, Jim Ronholm, Cheryl Phillip, Norm Hofstetter, Brad Kneller, Camille Barr (Secretary)

Regrets: Tom Bryson

Guest: Isabel Pereira, Cheryl Harrison (CEO and President of MAHC)

Called to order at 10:01 am by Chair R. Ward

1. 2024-12 Moved by N. Hofstetter - Seconded by D. Patterson
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council adopt the minutes from the regular meeting of March 7, 2024, as circulated. Carried.

2. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OF INTEREST:** None

3. **DELEGATIONS:** None

4. **RESOLUTIONS PASSED:** None

5. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:**

a) **Update on Hospital Build and Local Share**

Cheryl Harrison (CEO and President of MAHC) updated the group on the hospital project. Recent meetings with staff have been informing for all.

Next week MAHC will present the number of beds that will be at the Bracebridge site.

More community engagement session will begin soon and run until approximately June.

Communication with the government has been open. The submission needs to be into the Ministry by the end of the calendar year. Although they are currently behind in their projected timelines, they can make up time in other aspects.

The MRI machine is on track and will be operational early next year.

A spreadsheet has been created with the local share figures gathered. R. Ward will share the spreadsheets via email and asks the group to review for accuracy.

b) **Follow Up Discussion on 20% Holdback, Local Share**

N. Kunkel, past Clerk of Burk's Falls, attended an AHHC meeting to present 4 options to the group on how the deficit for the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre building could be supported. Based on this, R. Ward understood it would continue status quo for now and invoices would be sent out with municipalities having the option to contribute. The 20% holdback could be used to support this if municipalities so chose to. V. Roeder-Martin did ask her council what their understanding of the purpose of the 20% holdback was and feedback received was like a reserve to support community healthcare whether it be services or equipment.

Council discussed the need for a meeting to address the options and future of healthcare in Almaguin. With a new build in Armour being proposed, a centre in Burk's Falls and another in Sundridge, it is clear a collaborative front is needed.

The group needs a plan, and it was reiterated the AHHC needs to keep their focus on what will serve all Almaguin. At this point there are a lot of unknowns. What is Burk's Falls plan for the building and what is the life expectancy? What is the plan for the Armour project and what will it cost municipalities? All agree that data is required and that having a health care planner/consultant to lead the way is needed. It is also important that R. Paul and S. McKinnon are at the table as leaders in healthcare for our communities. R. Ward will contact C. Harrison for recommendations regarding a planner/consultant.

The group discussed the model that Sundridge Medical Center uses for management and funding and potentially modeling this in Burk's Falls.

C. Hope stated he does not want to see MAHC services leave the Burk's Falls building. Concerns about transportation costs for Burk's Falls residents who reside in the Village for its amenities and those with fixed incomes if services move.

The history of how the project came to be moved to the other side of the highway was shared. Ryerson and Armour residents are driving as it is.

The group discussed a mayor, council and clerks meeting, a public meeting. In the end, it was decided each member will go back to their clerks to discuss how a meeting of this manner would best be held and report back to this group.

An all of Almaguin approach and focus on healthcare is needed.

c) **Progress report:** None for this month.

d) **Other business**

R. Ward was in contact with a group from the University of Ottawa who are piloting a project that explores how drones may be used to deliver medical supplies expediently. He may ask this group to present to the AHHC.

F. Williamson shared the following "the SDMC held community visits for 2 internationally trained family physicians through the Practice Ready Ontario program. Susan Keast, MAOHT recruiter, organized and led the visits. The community visits

were well received by the physicians. This experience has set us up with a plan for future physician recruitment. The Sundridge and District Medical Centre would like to thank the MAOHT who funded many of the meals for the community visits. We are working through the next steps in the process and continuing conversation with our candidates.”

R. Ward to contact S. Keast regarding Huntsville recruitment initiatives and potential impacts in Almaguin.

2024-13 Moved by C. Hope - Seconded by F. Williamson
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council adjourn at 11:22 am to meet again on May 2, 2024, at 10:00 am at the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre. Carried.