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Minutes: October 5, 2023, 10:00 am via Zoom and at the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre, Bruce Campell Boardroom

Present: Rod Ward (Chair), Delynne Patterson, Margaret Ann MacPhail, Brad Kneller, Chris Hope, Fraser Williamson (Vice Chair), Vicky Roeder-Martin, Camille Barr (Secretary)

Regrets: Jim Ronholm, Cheryl Philip

Guests: Isabel Pereira, Rebecca Paul (BFFHT), Susan Keast (MAOHT), Courtney Metcalf (ACED)

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

1. 2023-23 Moved by V. Roeder-Martin - Seconded by F. Williamson
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council adopt the minutes from the regular meeting of September 7, 2023 as circulated. Carried.
2. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OF INTEREST:** None
3. **DELEGATIONS:** Susan Keast, Human Health Recruiter for the Muskoka and Area Ontario Health Team provided Council with nine month recruiting update. She has spent time attending job fairs and connecting with NOSM to build relationships. Additionally, she has made connections with ROMP which represents the other 5 schools. Current efforts are aimed at marketing the area with a logo, a website which went live in September, and promotional materials. Health council asked about efforts for recruitment for Almaguin vs Muskoka. S. Keast says this has been a bit of a challenge due to confidentiality and not having the access to the contacts. The group expressed that Almaguin must be recognized as more than "other". S. Keast will meet with R. Paul, ED of the Burk's Falls Family Health Team to see what connections can be made. She provided the presentation which was shared with Council.
4. **RESOLUTIONS PASSED:**
2023-24 Moved by F. Williamson - Seconded by D. Patterson
Whereas Muskoka Algonquin Health care operates physiotherapy, E.C.G, Imaging, and Laboratory services at the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre; and

Whereas the laboratory has seen a significant number of closures over the summer due to staffing resources; and

Whereas Almaguin residents who rely on this vital service are impacted by closures resulting in redundant trips, rescheduling, or traveling to seek alternative service; and

Whereas healthcare professionals are impacted as they rely on this service to support their patients' healthcare needs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Almaguin Highlands Health Council requests a commitment from Muskoka Algonquin Health Care to resume laboratory services to their regular functions on a regular schedule;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be shared with Almaguin Highland Health Council Member municipalities for support.
Carried.

5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

a) Update 'Local Share'

R. Ward updated the Council on 'Local Share' by way of a presentation. 9 of the 12 Almaguin municipalities have responded to the commitment ask. Joly will have their response shortly. It was interesting to note the formulas used to determine the Almaguin share was very close. A summary of commitments was provided and a kudos to the group for their efforts.

b) Lab Services at the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre

R. Ward had the opportunity to speak with Diane George, Vice President of Integrated Care at MAHC regarding the frequent lab closures in Burk's Falls over the summer months. He has been assured that the lab is not closing and what is occurring is due to staffing resources being short. When there is a need for staffing in acute care, staff are redirected from the Burk's Falls location. They have hired a second person for the lab which will alleviate this pressure. R. Ward will ask for this in writing from MAHC.

c) Progress Report: Not provided this meeting

d) Other Business

C. Barr updated Council that the dental office in the Medical Building in Burk's Falls is aiming to open the end of October. They experienced some delays in the renovation process however it is now moving forward.

Last month the Sundridge Medical Centre hosted an open house and ribbon cutting to celebrate the grand opening of their newly renovated space. A great turnout and a beautiful space.

R. Paul shared that there has been no update regarding the proposals submitted by the BFFHT or Sundridge & District Medical Centre for primary care expansion. She will update as able. She also shared that without consultation the Ministry of Health changed the allotment of doctors for the BFFHT from 5 - 4.5. This is not a problem now however could be should a doctor leave. They are dealing with the matter. She also shared there are still 700 people on the waitlist.

R. Ward will speak to Dan of Graydon Smith's office regarding this and the issue of McMurrich - Monteith and Kearney still being left out of the BFFHT catchment area.

Armour has developed an informational flyer that can be shared to social media and individualized for municipalities. If a municipality would like one, connect with R. Ward.

2023-25 Moved by C. Hope - Seconded by D. Patterson

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Almaguin Highlands Health Council adjourn at 11:15 am to meet again on November 2, 2023, at 10:00 am at the Town of Kearney Municipal Office. Carried.