



# Health, Ambulance and Social Services Committee

## Minutes - March 31, 2008

### Special Session - Board of Health

GODERICH, ONTARIO



Goderich, Ontario  
March 31, 2008

A Special BOARD OF HEALTH meeting was held in the Auditorium of the Health and Library Complex, Clinton at 9:00 a.m. with all members present except Councillor K. Oke.

## **BOARD OF HEALTH**

Chair J. Grace questioned the appropriateness of Human Resource and Treasury staff being present during discussions and whether or not the meeting was open or closed. Staff in attendance included Larry C. Adams, Marlene Price, Dr. Beth Henning, Darcy Michaud, Dave Carey, and the County's Solicitor, Greg Stewart. It was stated that the meeting is open until the Board makes a motion to close it. Chair, J. Grace, then read a portion of the County of Huron Procedural By-law, No. 20, 2006, Part 12, Duties of Committees, Section 28.(4) as follows: "While sitting as the Huron County Board of Health it shall consider all matters pertaining to the Health Unit." Councillor J. Grace announced that he called a meeting in order to discuss personnel issues.

"IN CAMERA"

**Moved by B. Van Diepenbeek**

**Seconded by R. Rognvaldson**

**That the committee proceed "In Camera" at 9:15 a.m. to discuss personnel matters and that Larry C. Adams, M. Price, Dr. B. Henning, D. Carey, D. Michaud, and the County Solicitor, G. Stewart remain in attendance.**

**CARRIED**

**Moved by M. Scott**

**Seconded by D. Johnston**

**That the committee rise from "In Camera" at 10:50 a.m. with no report.**

**CARRIED**

The Board of Health then had a short break at 10:55 a.m. and resumed at 11:10 a.m.

### **1. Report of the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Beth Henning**

Dr. Beth Henning, Medical Officer of Health, distributed the attached report with two main components for discussion: Roles and Responsibilities of the Medical Officer of Health; and a Brief Overview of Human Resources Levels and Issues. Dr. Henning stated that the County's Health Unit is one of a shared leadership model that requires a fluid relationship between the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and the Director of the Health Unit. In her opinion the compatibility of these two positions should not be understated. She further stated that she has held the MOH position for the past eleven years, as endorsed by the Board of Health.

Dr. Henning expressed concern regarding the dismissal of the Director of the Health Unit. She was not apprised of any issues concerning the Director nor was she informed of the hiring of an Acting Director. She was unaware of any of the County plans and asked the Board what their plan is.

Councillor B. MacLellan wished to assure staff that the Board wants business at the Health Unit to be conducted as usual and suggested bringing someone in to speak with staff to coordinate communications and put uneasy feelings of staff to rest.

Warden J. Bezaire stated the Board has endorsed a shared leadership model where the MOH represents the Board and the Director represents the County and would welcome input from the MOH and M. Price, Acting Director, for the hiring of a future Director.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding hiring a third party facilitator to allow the MOH and staff to speak freely and address the working environment. Dr. Henning stated that job security and feelings of staff are a concern. She supports hiring a neutral third party consultant. Chair J. Grace stated that there needs to be a good working relationship between the CAO's office and departments. It was suggested that the CAO, MOH and Acting Director schedule some meetings to decide how to move forward.

Dr. Henning reiterated that job security is a concern. Board Member B. Van Diepenbeek assured Dr. Henning that the Board has no indication that any other employee has issues for concern. The Board's plan is to move forward. Dr. Henning inquired, when making decisions about leadership what is the role of the Board of Health and the MOH? She expressed concern because she was told that the County would move forward without considering these two roles.

Board Member D. Johnston requested Dr. Henning to clarify her question to the Board. Dr. Henning clarified that a MOH has specific powers and duties as outlined in the provincial legislation, Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA), and in her opinion that legislation supports her being involved in matters of leadership.

Provincial Appointee, R. Rognvaldson, shared her opinion on the legislation being that the MOH is appointed by the Board with the approval of the Minister and the HPPA takes precedence over the County. Board Member D. Johnston felt that the Act and County policy conflicts and that it was not clear who is to hire; the County or the Board and MOH. The Warden reminded Board Members that the Health Unit is operated as a shared leadership model with the MOH representing the Board of Health and the Director representing the County. Board Member B. Van Diepenbeek stated that if the provincial act over-rides County policy then the County policy needed to be amended to reflect that fact.

Warden J. Bezaire left the Auditorium at 11:38 a.m. for a prior commitment.

## **2. Report of the Board of Health Provincial Appointee**

Rosemary Rognvaldson, Board of Health Provincial Appointee, gave an oral report on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Huron County Board of Health and the Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair for the Huron County Board of Health (notes attached).

Board Member R. Rognvaldson informed the Board that she conducted her research using resources from the Board of Health Manual, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care web-site, and other sites such as the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In her opinion the Board of Health should be engaged in all human resource processes including hiring and termination; that there is nothing in the legislation giving power to municipalities to interfere with the operation of the Board; and that the HPPA supercedes County of Huron policy.

Board Member B. MacLellan noted that our model of the Health Unit is not the traditional model but a shared leadership model and the Act applies to the traditional model.

Board Member R. Rognvaldson commented on Board obligations regarding workplace intimidation and harassment and on conflicts of interest. Board Member R. Rognvaldson stated that if there is any doubt concerning conflicts the golden rule is "when in doubt – declare".

The role of the Chair was then reviewed. It was noted that the County has not appointed a Vice Chair as required in the HPPA Section 57.1. The Chair retains the right to call a meeting at any time.

A lengthy discussion ensued. The MOH stated that she wanted her role defined as she feels that without it being clearly defined she is not able to continue as it is.

**Moved by B. MacLellan**

**Seconded by D. Johnston**

**That the County's solicitor, Mr. Greg Stewart, be requested to research provincial legislation in comparison to County policy and the hybrid model of our Health Unit and report back to the Board of Health.**

**CARRIED**

**Moved by D. Johnston**

**Seconded by M. Scott**

**That the County's solicitor, Mr. Greg Stewart, be requested to investigate and report back to the Board of Health on the roles and responsibilities of the Medical Officer of Health as it relates to legislation, County policy, and the hybrid model of our Health Unit.**

**CARRIED**

The Board of Health then had a short break at 12:05 p.m. and resumed at 12:10 p.m.

"IN CAMERA"

**Moved by B. MacLellan**

**Seconded by R. Rognvaldson**

**That the committee proceed "In Camera" at 12:15 p.m. to discuss personnel matters and that Larry C. Adams, Dr. Henning, M. Price, D. Carey, D. Michaud, and the County Solicitor, G. Stewart remain in attendance.**

**CARRIED**

Warden J. Bezaire returned at 1 p.m.

**Moved by D. Johnston**

**Seconded by R. Rognvaldson**

**That the committee rise from "In Camera" at 1:09 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

There was a short discussion around the issue of hiring a third party to conduct communication sessions and advise the Board of Health. It was suggested that Hugh Thomas be contacted. There was a general consensus that before anyone was hired there needed to be a list developed of preliminary questions that the Board wished answered. It was noted that a Terms of Reference would be required before any hiring was initiated.

Board Member B. MacLellan requested that the MOH, along with Chair J. Grace, Board Member R. Rognvaldson, and the CAO develop a list of questions for the third party (possibly Mr. Thomas) to address at the next meeting.

The Chair suggested that the MOH, CAO and Director of Human Resources provide insight to the consultant.

Warden J. Bezaire announced that he would abstain from voting on the motion as he was absent for most of the discussion.

**Moved by B. MacLellan**

**Seconded by B. Van Diepenbeek**

**That the Chair and Board Member Rognvaldson invite Mr. Hugh Thomas to attend the next Board of Health meeting of April 8, 2008.**

Councillor D. Johnston requested a Recorded Vote.

**RECORDED VOTE**

YEAS: Grace, Van Diepenbeek, Scott, MacLellan,  
Rognvaldson = 5

NAYS: Johnston = 1

ABSENT: Oke = 1

ABSTAINED: Bezaire = 1

**CARRIED**

**3. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Health, Ambulance and Social Services Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.

**4. Adjournment**

**Moved by M. Scott**

**Seconded by B. MacLellan**

**That the meeting adjourn at 1:25 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

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Chair