

MINUTES
MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH
2011 February 17

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Patricia Coderre (Chair)
Mr. Al Edmondson
Dr. Francine Lortie-Monette
Mr. Marcel Meyer
Ms. Viola Poletes Montgomery (Vice-Chair)
Ms. Nancy Poole
Mr. Don Shipway
Mr. Mark Studenny
Mr. Joe Swan

REGRETS:

Ms. Denise Brown
Ms. Doreen McLinchey

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Graham Pollett, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Wally Adams, Manager, Environmental Health
Dr. Caroline Armstrong, Medical Resident, University of Western Ontario
Mr. Joel Armstrong
Ms. Diane Bewick, Director, Family Health Services
Mr. John Braam, Division Manager, Water & Sewer Operations, City of London
Dr. Joseph Cummins, Professor Emeritus, University of Western Ontario
Mr. Dan Flaherty, Manager, Communications
Mr. Chris Gupta
Mr. Dan Huggins, Water Quality Supervisor, City of London
Mr. Iqbal Kalsi, Manager, Environmental Health
Mr. Sean Keating
Ms. Pam Killeen
Ms. Nicole Kuzmanovich
Ms. Heather Lokko, Manager, Family Health Services
Ms. Kallie Miller
Mr. John Millson, Director, Finance and Operations
Mr. James Reffle, Director, Environmental Health and Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention Services
Ms. Sherri Sanders, Executive Assistant to the Board of Health (Recorder)
Mr. Rick Shantz, Director, Information Technology
Mr. David Thomas
Ms. Louise Tyler, Director, Human Resources and Labour Relations
Mr. Michael van Holst
Dr. Bryna Warshawsky, Associate Medical Officer of Health and Director, Oral Health, Communicable Disease and Sexual Health Services

MEDIA OUTLETS

Ms. Priye Mann, A News
Mr. Chad Martin, London Free Press
Mr. Nathan Vanderkop, XFM Fanshawe News

Ms. Patricia Coderre, Board of Health Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Board Member, Ms. Doreen McLinchey, sent her regrets as she was on vacation.

DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICT(S) OF INTEREST

Chair Coderre inquired if there were any disclosures of conflict of interest to be made. None were declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Shipway, seconded by Mr. Studenny *that the Minutes of the January 20, 2011, Board of Health meeting be approved.* Carried

It was moved by Mr. Edmondson, seconded by Dr. Lortie-Monette *that the CONFIDENTIAL Minutes of the January 20, 2011, Board of Health meeting be approved.* Carried

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Mr. Meyer, seconded by Mr. Swan *that the February 17, 2011, Agenda be approved with the addition of the following delegations re Fluoridation of the City of London's Drinking Water:*

7:10 – 7:20 PM	Mr. Chris Gupta
7:20 – 7:30 PM	Dr. Joe Cummins, Professor Emeritus of Genetics, University of Western Ontario,
7:30 – 7:40 PM	Mr. Michael van Holst
7:40 – 7:50 PM	Mr. Sean Keating
7:50 – 8:00 PM	Ms. Nicole Kuzmanovich
8:00 – 8:10 PM	Mr. Dan Huggins, Supervisor, Water Supply Operations, City of London
8:10 – 8:25 PM	Dr. Bryna Warshawsky, Associate Medical Officer of Health and Director, Oral Health, Communicable Disease and Sexual Health Services

Carried

ACTION REPORTS

1) Report No. 013-11 re Promoting Eye Health in Children

Ms. Heather Lokko, Manager, Child Health Team, Family Health Services, assisted the Board with its understanding of this report.

It was moved by Dr. Lortie-Monette, seconded by Mr. Studenny:

1. *That the Board of Health endorse the discontinuance of the school vision screening program to be replaced by a comprehensive strategy to promote preschool screening as described in Report No. 013-11; and further*
2. *That a letter of appreciation be sent from the Board of Health to each Volunteer who assisted with vision screening in the schools.*

Carried

2) Report No. 014-11 Fluoridation of the City of London's Drinking Water

Chair Coderre reminded everyone that each delegate had ten minutes to make his/her presentation and that the Recorder would signal when two and one minute remained. The Chair also stated that to ensure accuracy of the minutes, the meeting would be recorded. She informed Board Members that questions would be held until the end of all of the presentations.

Chair Coderre welcomed Mr. Chris Gupta. Mr. Gupta's presentation notes are filed with the minutes. Mr. Gupta's concerns included the following: The harmful effects of fluoride demonstrated in countries like India, Turkey and China; the hydrofluorosilicic acid used in London's drinking water is a waste product of industry; and topical applications of fluoride are widely available. Mr. Gupta recommended that fluoridated drinking water should not be used to make baby formula and that London should discontinue fluoridating its drinking water.

Chair Coderre thanked Mr. Gupta for his presentation.

Chair Coderre welcomed Dr. Joe Cummins.

Dr. Cummins' concerns included the following: the relationship between fluoride and cancer and the relationship between fluoride and lead in drinking water. Dr. Cummins expressed his concerns about how fluoride could result in lead entering drinking water as a result of the acidic effect on lead pipes found in older homes.

Chair Coderre thanked Dr. Cummins for his presentation.

Chair Coderre welcomed Mr. Michael van Holst. Mr. van Holst's handout is filed with minutes

Mr. van Holst summarized a lesson that he recently taught his high school students about fluoride in drinking water. The class examined the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for sodium fluoride and discussed its acute toxicity. Based on the lesson, the students concluded a lethal dose of sodium fluoride would be one teaspoon and understood why there are warning labels on toothpaste. Mr. van Holst also expressed concern about how fluoridating drinking water would actually cost low income families more as they would have to

purchase bottled water to make formula. Mr. van Holst asked the Board to look at the fluoride issue more deeply.

Chair Coderre thanked Mr. van Holst for his presentation.

Chair Coderre welcomed Mr. Sean Keating.

Mr. Keating expressed concern about the following: personal health concerns he attributed to drinking fluoridated water as they resolved three months after he started drinking water treated by reverse osmosis; the amount of fluoride a person receives is dependent on the amount of water s/he drinks and the size of the person (infant versus adult); and the waste to City taxpayers as fluoridated water also is used to water lawns, fill swimming pools etc. Mr. Keating felt that people should have the choice to receive fluoride or not.

Chair Coderre thanked Mr. Keating for his presentation.

Chair Coderre welcomed Ms. Nicole Kuzmanovich.

Ms. Kuzmanovich expressed concern about the fluorosis of her daughter's teeth and the negative effects of fluoride in general. She also invited Board members to attend the March 2, 2011, presentation against fluoride in drinking water that is organized by the Fluoride Action Network. She expressed her opinion that fluoride is a waste product of the fertilizer industry and that adding fluoride to water is unethical.

Chair Coderre thanked Ms. Nicole Kuzmanovich for her presentation.

Chair Coderre welcomed Mr. Dan Huggins, Water Quality Supervisor, for the City of London.

Mr. Huggins reported that the City of London started adding fluoride to its water in September 1967 after a 1966 plebiscite in which City residents voted in favour of fluoridation. As directed by the Dental Director of the Health Unit, fluoride is added at 0.7 milligram per litre (mg/L) which is the optimum level for control of tooth decay. Mr. Huggins stated that 85% of the City of London's water comes from the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System where fluoride is added at the Arva Pumping Station; 15% of the water comes from the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply System (Lake Erie) where fluoride is added in Port Stanley at the Water Treatment Plant. Mr. Huggins confirmed that fluoride at both sites is added in the form of hydrofluorosilicic acid (HFSA). Mr. Huggins addressed four concerns expressed by the previous speakers:

1. Lead eroding from the pipes – Mr. Huggins explained that HFSA does lower the pH of the water which could cause leaching of lead in older pipes. However, because this is a known phenomenon, the HFSA effect is countered by adding a base to the water so no change in water pH occurs.
2. Waste product - The HFSA that is used to fluoridate London's water is processed from an ore mined in Florida and purchased for its intended use; therefore, it is not a waste product. The HFSA has to meet more stringent requirements for drinking water than it does for use in pharmaceuticals.
3. MSDS information –Mr. Huggins explained that MSDS lists the harmful effects of a substance at the concentration at which it is received (e.g., the workers handling the HFSA at the Arva pumping station). HFSA in water dissociates into fluoride ions; therefore, the MSDS for HFSA does not apply to the fluoride in the drinking water.
4. Cost – Mr. Huggins estimated that it costs 38¢ per person per year to add fluoride to London's drinking water.

Chair Coderre thanked Mr. Huggins for his presentation.

Chair Coderre welcomed Dr. Bryna Warshawsky, Associate Medical Officer of Health and Director, Oral Health, Communicable Disease and Sexual Health Services. Dr. Warshawsky assisted the Board with its understanding of Report No. 014-11 re Fluoridation of the City of London's Drinking Water with the use of a PowerPoint presentation. The PowerPoint slides are filed with the minutes and posted on the Health Unit's website at www.healthunit.com.

Dr. Warshawsky explained how the association between fluoride in drinking water and tooth decay prevention was made in the early 1900's. She also emphasized that adding fluoride is a preventative measure that helps reduce the need for treatment. This is especially important when treatment is not available or cannot be afforded. She explained that fluoride is not only a benefit to children's teeth but also to adult teeth. With age, gums recede and expose more of the roots which are not protected by enamel and so are prone to decay. Fluoride in drinking water bathes the teeth, causing remineralization and making them more resistant to decay. Dr. Warshawsky emphasized that fluorosis is caused before a tooth erupts which occurs in children less than six years of age (with maximum risk at around 22-26 months of age). The Canadian Health Measures Survey indicates that fluorosis occurs at a very low rate in Canada and is more prevalent among those with higher incomes.

Dr. Warshawsky explained that the Ministry of Environment sets fluoride levels for drinking water at 0.5 to 0.8 mg/L. In London, fluoride is added at 0.7 mg/L which is the optimum level for control of tooth decay and to

minimize fluorosis. The Maximum Acceptable Concentration for fluoride found naturally in drinking water is 1.5 mg/L.

Dr. Warshawsky highlighted that the information on which the Health Unit bases its recommendations comes from systematic reviews of published, peer reviewed literature. As part of this process, all of the studies are graded, and recommendations are made by groups of experts considering the full array of the studies available, not just on the results of one study taken in isolation.

Dr. Warshawsky reported that aside from dental fluorosis, the systematic reviews have not concluded that fluoridation of water results in any other harmful effects. She also stated that Health Canada does not advise against using fluoridated water to make baby formula although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that consideration can be given to using some non-fluoridated water if a baby is solely drinking reconstituted baby formula made exclusively from fluoridated water.

Dr. Warshawsky made an addendum to page 2.2 of the Board of Health Agenda where it states fluoride is not added to water in any jurisdiction in Middlesex County. She reported that three communities (Arva, Ballymote and Delaware) in the Municipality of Middlesex Centre do receive fluoridated water from the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System from the Arva Pumping station.

At the completion of the delegations' presentations, Chair Coderre invited Board Members to ask questions of the presenters. There were no questions. There being no discussion, Chair Coderre asked for a motion to approve the staff recommendation.

It was moved by Ms. Poole, seconded by Mr. Studenny *that the Board of Health support the ongoing fluoridation of the City of London's drinking water supply as a measure to achieve optimal dental/oral health for all residents, which is an important component of total health.*

Carried

Chair Coderre called a five minute recess.

3) Report No. 015-11 re Board of Health Policy 2-010 and Bylaw Amendments

Dr. Pollett, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer, assisted the Board with its understanding of this report.

It was moved by Ms. Poletes Montgomery, seconded by Mr. Edmondson:

1. *That the Board of Health endorse the proposed revisions identified in Report No. 015-11 to Policy 2-010 re Structure and Responsibilities of the Board of Health; and further*
2. *That the Board of Health review Board of Health Bylaw Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and adopt the proposed amendments identified in Report No. 015-11; and further*
3. *That the Board of Health approve that the amended Bylaws attached to Report No. 015-11 receive all three readings at one meeting.*

Carried

First Reading

It was moved by Ms. Poletes Montgomery, seconded by Dr. Lortie-Monette *that Board of Health Bylaw Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 be read a first time.* Carried

Second Reading

It was moved by Mr. Shipway, seconded by Mr. Swan *that Board of Health Bylaw Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 be read a second time.* Carried

At this time, it was discussed whether it would be more appropriate to have a community representative serve as Chair versus an elected official to avoid conflict of interest around budgets. It was agreed to maintain the current practice of calling for nominations for Executive positions from all eligible members regardless of their elected status.

Third Reading

It was moved by Mr. Swan, seconded by Mr. Studenny *that Board of Health Bylaw Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 be read a third time and finally passed and enacted as Bylaws of the Board of Health of the Middlesex-London Health Unit.* Carried

4) Report No. 016-11 Board of Health Policy 2-020 Amendments

It was moved by Ms. Poletes Montgomery, seconded by Mr. Studenny *that the Board of Health endorse the proposed revisions to Policy 2-020 re Orientation for Board of Health Members as identified in Report No. 016-11.* Carried

5) Report No. 017-11 re 2010 Remuneration Report

Dr. Pollett assisted the Board with its understanding of this report.

It was moved by Mr. Edmondson, seconded by Mr. Studenny *that the 2010 Remuneration Report attached as Appendix A to Report No.017-11 be forwarded to the Treasurers for the City of London and Middlesex County to be included in their respective annual reports.* Carried

INFORMATION REPORTS

6) Report No. 018-11 re Medical Officer of Health Activity Report – February

Dr. Pollett reported that on February 16, 2011, the City of London Council had its first formal review of the 2011 budget, including that of the Health Unit. The goal of a 0% increase was achieved. The Board of Health budget was approved at this stage without change. Final City Council approval is expected on February 28, 2011.

Dr. Pollett also reported that he and Board member, Mr. Al Edmondson, attended the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa) Winter Symposium on February 10 and 11, 2011, in Toronto. The session on fluoridation was very informative. Mr. Edmondson also reported that he received a lot of very good information. Dr. Clinton, who had presented at the January 20, 2011, Board of Health meeting, also spoke to the Board of Health Section. She reiterated her comments to the aLPHa audience that the first five years of life play an important role, not only in the future of the child, but in the future of the country.

Dr. Pollett advised that the 2010-11 influenza season has been longer and involved more long-term care facilities than usual. He asked Dr. Warshawsky to comment on the influenza season. Dr. Warshawsky reported that the season started in September 2010 with an outbreak in a long-term care facility. The number of cases of influenza is still increasing. Dr. Warshawsky explained that in the elderly, the influenza vaccine aims to prevent death and reduce hospital admissions – it does not necessarily prevent individuals from contracting the illness. The current vaccine is well matched with the strain of influenza circulating in the population.

Dr. Warshawsky also reported that between 35-50% of health care workers in long-term care facilities and hospitals in London-Middlesex received the flu vaccine. Dr. Warshawsky explained that in long-term care facilities, if an employee is not vaccinated, s/he is excluded from work or has to take an anti-viral drug. Although Board Members suggested that the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario should make it mandatory that all health care workers received the flu shot, staff explained that employee unions are resistant to agreeing to such a requirement.

Dr. Pollett reported that the elevator at 50 King Street is once again operating.

Dr. Pollett explained that Dr. Neil Farrell, former Dental Director, had hoped to attend the meeting and speak to the fluoride issue; however, he was unable to attend due to recent health issues.

Dr. Pollett also announced that Dr. Maria van Harten has accepted the shared Dental Director position and will start in May. Dr. van Harten will divide her time among the following: Middlesex-London Health Unit, Elgin St. Thomas Public Health, Lambton Community Health Services Department, Perth District Health Unit, and Huron County Health Unit.

Dr. Pollett explained that as one of the next steps in the Strategic Planning process, Consultant, Maria Sánchez-Keane, wishes to meet with the Board in May to discuss the draft plan. The Executive Assistant to the Board of Health will send a list of potential dates to Board Members to consider. It was agreed an evening time, not during the week of the 16th of May (Board Meeting week), was preferred.

In response to Board members' questions, Dr. Pollett reported that the Health Unit continues to receive calls from the public related to PCB's and blood testing. In the past, the blood testing (\$1000 per test) was paid for by special Ministry funding that is no longer available; therefore, new requests for blood tests cannot be accommodated. Dr. Pollett also reported that the decommissioning of the Pottersburg Creek site has been completed.

Dr. Pollett asked Mr. James Reffle, Director, Environmental Health and Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention Services, to address a question about Bed Bugs. Mr. Jim Reffle explained that staff has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, outlining how the Health Unit would use designated funding. The funding would be used primarily to work with vulnerable populations and secondarily for education and awareness. Bringing together stakeholders, including licensed pest control operators, would be an important first step. Staff will bring forward a Board Report re Bed Bug Funding at a future Board meeting.

7) Report No. 019-11 re Summary of Lead Flushing and Sampling at Schools, Private Schools and Day Nurseries

8) Report No. 020-11 re Final Strategy of Shaken Baby Syndrome, "Period of Purple Crying," Implementation Program

9) Report No. 021-11 re Emergency Preparedness Exercise

10) Report No. 022-11 re Connecting Children and Youth to Lifelong Physical Activity and Sport

11) Report No. 023-11 re 2010 Vendor Payments

It was moved by Mr. Studenny, seconded by Mr. Swan *that the above Information Reports listed as items 6 through 11 be received for information.* Carried

CORRESPONDENCE

No questions re correspondence.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Edmondson reported that alpha has two openings in the Southwest for Members of its Board of Directors. Nomination forms must be submitted to alpha by March 1, 2011. He indicated that he would be willing to serve.

It was moved by Mr. Studenny, seconded by Ms. Poletes Montgomery *that Mr. Al Edmondson be nominated to serve on the alpha Board of Directors for the year 2011.* Carried

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday, March 17, 2011

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:17 p.m., it was moved by Dr. Lortie-Monette, seconded by Mr. Studenny *that the meeting be adjourned.* Carried

PATRICIA L. CODERRE
Chair

GRAHAM L. POLLETT
Secretary-Treasurer