



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Chris Mackie, Medical Officer of Health
Michael Clarke, Chief Executive Officer (Interim)

DATE: 2021 February 18

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR POLICY REVIEW

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Governance Committee recommend to the Board of Health to receive Report No. 03-21GC re: “Governance Committee Accountability for Policy Review”.

Key Points

- The Board of Health (BOH) is responsible for establishing the general policies and procedures that govern the operation of the health unit and provide guidance to those managing its operations.
- The BOH for MLHU must be committed to the principle of establishing policies, making decisions and monitoring performance relating to the key dimensions of the business of MLHU and to the BOH’s own effectiveness.
- On October 15, 2020, the Governance Committee approved a new policy review process (included as [Appendix A](#) to this report) to better support the Committee in carrying out its duties.
- Evaluation of the policy review process is required post-implementation.
- It is recommended that the Chair of the Governance Committee solicit feedback from its members on the policy review process and to work with MLHU staff to implement required changes.

Background

According to the Association for Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) the Board of Health (BOH) is considered the “*governing body and policy maker of the health unit*”. The BOH is responsible for establishing the policies that govern the operation of the health unit and provide guidance to those managing its operations.

Furthermore, to align with the Association for Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) *2018 Orientation Manual for Boards of Health* a member of a Board of Health (BOH) should:

- commit to and understand the purpose, policies and programs of the health unit;
- attend board meetings, and actively participate on committees and serve as officers;
- actively participate in setting the strategic directions for the organization;
- acquire a clear understanding of the financial position of the health unit and ensure that the finances are adequate and responsibly spent;
- serve in a volunteer capacity without regard for remuneration or profit;
- be able to work and participate within a group, as a team;
- be supportive of the organization and its management;
- know and maintain the lines of communication between the board and staff;
- take responsibility for continuing self-education and growth;
- represent the public health of the community;
- be familiar with local resources;
- be aware of the changing community trends and needs;

- attend related community functions;
- have a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure; and
- be aware of the definition of conflict of interest and declare it.

In accordance with [Policy G-260 Governance Principles and Accountability](#) the BOH for MLHU must be committed to the principle of establishing policies, making decisions and monitoring performance relating to the key dimensions of the business of MLHU and to the BOH's own effectiveness.

Duties & Accountabilities of Governance Committee Members

According to the Governance Committee Terms of Reference ([Policy G-290 Standing and Ad Hoc Committees](#)), the accountability for making recommendations on governance policy and by-law development and review resides with the members of the Governance Committee.

On October 15, 2020, the Governance Committee approved a new policy review process (included as Appendix A to this report) to better support the Committee in carrying out its duties. The revised process was developed to adhere to the duties and accountabilities of the BOH and its members as guided by ALPHA. In addition, the purpose of implementing a new process was to increase efficiency and address the workload required of the Governance Committee members by spacing out the time period for reviewing policies that are due for review.

Policy Review Process Evaluation

Introducing a new process requires the need to evaluate its effectiveness post-implementation. The Governance Committee members are asked to identify any key challenges with the policy review process as it relates to the following:

- a) Ability to meet their duties and accountabilities as an effective member of the Governance Committee; and
- b) Adhere to the principle of establishing policies as it relates to the key dimensions of the business of MLHU and its BOH's effectiveness.

Next Steps

It is recommended that the Chair of the Governance Committee solicit feedback from the Governance Committee members on the policy review process and to work with MLHU staff to implement any required changes.

This report was prepared by the Healthy Organization Division.



Chris Mackie, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health



Michael Clarke, PhD
CEO (Interim)