

Board of Directors Meeting (Open Session)

MINUTES OF MEETING

September 26, 2023

St. Catharines Site

	Sept 26/2023						
Simon Akinsulie (ex-officio)	✓						
Ray Archer	✓						
Gervan Fearon	✓*						
Susanne Flett	✓						
Jennifer Li	✓						
Lynn Guerriero (ex-officio)	✓						
Alison MacTavish (ex-officio)	✓						
Shane Malcolm	✓*						
Bill Maurin	✓						
John McKinley	✓						
Stephen Murdoch	✓						
Catherine Novick	✓*						
Marylee O’Neill, Chair	✓						
Charlie Rate	✓						
Anthony Reitboeck	✓						
Carmen Rossiter	✓						
Janice Thomson	✓						
Johan Viljoen (ex-officio)	R						
Elisabeth Zimmermann	✓*						
<i>Staff and Guests in Attendance:</i>							
Harpreet Bassi	✓						
Linda Boich	✓						
Sonali Kohli	✓						
Heather Paterson	✓						
Fiona Peacefull	✓						
Angela Zangari	✓						

*Virtual Attendance

Guests:

- James Hiebert – Medical, Surgical and Safety Supplies
- Shay McFadden – Medical, Surgical and Safety Supplies
- Zeau Ismail – Director, Interprofessional Practice, Research & Education
- Andrea Scott – Niagara Health Foundation
- Albert Iannantuono – Niagara Health Foundation
- Kevin Wilson – Niagara Health Foundation

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Marylee O’Neill welcomed fellow Directors, staff and guests and called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

Marylee O'Neill acknowledged the lands that the Board was gathered on and welcomed Directors to reflect on their own personal acknowledgements.

Niagara Health recently became the first hospital to receive a shipment of Indigenous-supplied, acute care nitrile medical gloves through a partnership with Medical, Surgical and Safety Supplies (MSS). The Chair welcomed James Hiebert and Shay McFadden from MSS who recognized Niagara Health's commitment and forward thinking approach towards enhancing the influence and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples. Niagara Health is the first organization in Canada to earn the designation, part of MSS's Reconciliation Champions program.

1.2 Quorum

There was quorum and the meeting was properly constituted for the transaction of business.

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

MOTION B23-052:

It was MOVED by J. McKinley and SECONDED by R. Archer that the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the Open Session Agenda for the September 26, 2023 Meeting as presented. CARRIED.

1.4 Declaration of Conflicts

There were no conflicts declared with the subject matter contained within the agenda.

1.5 Chair's Comments

The Chair welcomed fellow new and returning Directors and Staff to the first formal meeting of the 2023/24 Board year. The Chair recognized Albert Iannantuono for his contributions while Chair of the Niagara Health Foundation Board, and welcomed Kevin Wilson as the new incoming Chair.

As the new Board Chair, Marylee O'Neill committed to being impartial and ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to contribute to discussions. Directors who feel their voice is not being heard were encouraged to connect with her directly. She noted that Committees will need to be mindful that they are focusing their attention on appropriate matters and not straying into operations. It was also recognized that with the realities of COVID and the impending flu season, in person meetings may not always be possible. This environment will regularly be evaluated.

1.6 Patient Story

Heather Paterson provided the Board with the story which demonstrated Niagara Health's ongoing commitment to honoring cultural practices and ceremonies where possible.

2. EDUCATION

2.1 Accreditation Preparedness and Niagara Health Ethics Framework

Linda Boich shared a high level overview of the Accreditation process, preparatory materials and activities planned in advance of the November survey.

Simon Akinsulie and Zeau Ismail provided a presentation outlining Niagara Health's Ethical Framework, education resources and supports for staff and specific examples of when the framework was employed by the Board to make difficult resource allocation decisions. The process for research ethics, as well as assistance for clinical decisions in emergency situations, were discussed.

3. **CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION B23-053:

It was **MOVED** by S. Murdoch and **SECONDED** by B. Maurin that the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the Consent Agenda for the September 26, 2023 Open Session meeting as presented, including the motions listed below:

- That the Minutes of the June 27, 2023 Open Session Meeting and June 27, 2023 Post Annual Meeting of the Niagara Health System Board of Directors be approved as presented.
- That, on the recommendation of the Governance and People Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the Board Evaluation Policy and Appendix as amended.
- That, on the recommendation of the Governance and People Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the addition of supplementary questions “Did you understand the agenda items?” and “Were you able to participate effectively?” to the Board and Committee meeting evaluations for 2023/24.
- That, on the recommendation of the Governance and People Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the new Director onboarding program effectiveness evaluation process and timelines.
- That, on the recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approve the Hospital Parking Directive Attestation for the period of September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023 and the HSA Article 8 Declaration of Compliance for the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. **CARRIED.**

4. **REPORTS**

4.1 **Report of the President and CEO**

Lynn Guerriero provided highlights from the September 2023 President and CEO’s report including the following:

- Further discussion is occurring with respect to the Long Term Care licenses. It is anticipated that a final recommendation will come forward by the new year.
- COVID infections are on the rise in the community and the Hospital is seeing a number of outbreaks and staff that are ill. Provincial directions will continue to be monitored to ensure compliance, including with respect to vaccinations.
- Bill 124 impacts continue to be calculated. Arbitration awards are placing strain on the budget due to the scale of retroactive payments. Niagara Health continues to advocate for funding to address the shortfalls.
- Niagara Health will be receiving one-time funding as part of the government’s investment in emergency departments across the province to reduce wait times. These funds are allocated to hospital ED’s that have demonstrated improvements in the prior year.

4.1.1 **ED Assessment Panel Report**

The Board was provided an update on the actions Niagara Health is taking following receipt of the Emergency Department (ED) Assessment report. All recommendations in the report have been accepted and have either been implemented or are in progress. An Indigenous Health and Reconciliation Strategic Plan is being developed as part of Niagara Health’s overall Strategic Plan Patient Experience pillar. This will provide an opportunity to report back to the community on the progress of these initiatives.

4.1.2 **Niagara Health Physician Review Report**

The Board was provided an update on the actions Niagara Health is taking following receipt of the final Physician Review Report. A working group is being established to review and prioritize the recommendations and develop an action plan. Further updates will be provided as they become available.

4.2 **Report of the Niagara Health Foundation**

Andrea Scott and Albert Iannantuono provided highlights from the September 2023 report including the recent transformational \$60Million gift received from Greg and Diane Slaight, the Kids Ultimate Challenge, as well as the upcoming Elimination Draw in November and Gala in February. Three new Directors will be joining the Foundation Board at the upcoming Annual Meeting.

5. **BUSINESS ARISING**

5.1 **Strategic Plan Dashboard**

The Board was provided with the first quarterly update on Niagara Health's Strategic Plan. The scorecard includes a summary of the outcome and project indicators under each pillar of the Plan. More detailed discussions on individual indicator progress will occur at the Standing Committee level. At an operational level, there are plans for each objective and all Executive/Management goals and objectives are aligned to the Plan.

The Board was provided with an overview of the process for target setting for the Strategic Plan, as well as other programs such as the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). There is rich data for many areas in healthcare which can be used for benchmarking and target setting.

6. **MATTERS FOR DECISION/DISCUSSION**

6.1 **Report of the Quality and Patient Experience Committee**

Elisabeth Zimmermann, Quality and Patient Experience Committee Chair, provided highlights from the Committee's September meeting as outlined in the Committee report to the Board. The Committee received an update on the reduction in Urgent Care Centre hours implemented in July 2023 in response to ED physician staffing shortages. The change has been successful in reducing the risk for ED closures due to unfilled shifts. The Committee also received a report on the ED and Mental Health and Addictions Collaboration and Partnership.

6.1.1 **Integrated Quality and Safety Framework (IQSF)**

The IQSF is an Accreditation Canada requirement. The Board reviewed the IQSF which is a refresh from the Plan developed in 2019 with extensive engagement with Patient Partners, Staff and Physicians. It has been aligned to the new Strategic Plan as noted in the key drivers and activities. It was clarified that Niagara Health also has a Quality Improvement Plan which is one component of the IQSF.

MOTION B23-054:

It was MOVED by E. Zimmermann and SECONDED by J. Thomson that, on the recommendation of the Quality and Patient Experience Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the refreshed Integrated Quality and Safety Framework. CARRIED.

6.1.2 Follow up on June Delegation – South Site Surgeon Recommendations

A delegation of South Niagara General Surgeons attended the Board meeting in June and presented recommendations related to the redesign that was implemented in February 2023. The Board directed management to review these recommendations for potential follow up and next steps. The report and suggested response reviewed by the Committee was shared with the Board. No further action is required at this time.

6.2 Report of the Governance and People Committee

John McKinley, Governance and People Committee Vice-Chair, provided highlights from the Committee's September meeting as outlined in the Committee report to the Board. The Committee reviewed the results of the Employee and Physician Engagement Survey, an important focus for the Committee. The Board Education Plan for the 2023/24 Board year was also endorsed.

6.2.1 Appointment of Chief, Obstetrics and Gynaecology

The Committee reviewed the selection process which was in keeping with Niagara Health's Professional Staff By-Laws and the Public Hospitals Act. The Committee accepted the recommendation of the preferred candidate which was endorsed by the Medical Advisory Committee on September 6th.

MOTION B23-055:

It was MOVED by J. McKinley and SECONDED by R. Archer that, on the recommendation of the Medical Advisory and Governance and People Committees, having considered the information provided in accordance with the processes set out in the Niagara Health System By-Law Number 2, Professional Staff By-Law and the Public Hospitals Act, the Governance Committee approves the appointment of Dr. Karen Macmillan as Chief of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Niagara Health, effective October 1, 2023. CARRIED.

6.3 Report of the Finance and Audit Committee

Charlie Rate, Finance and Audit Committee Chair, provided highlights from the Committee's September meeting as outlined in the Committee report to the Board.

6.3.1 Service Accountability Agreements

There are three Accountability Agreements with the province that govern the relationship from a financial perspective. The amending agreements extend the current agreements until March 31, 2024 with all other terms and conditions remaining the same. These extensions are due in large part to hospital being in deficit positions as a result of Bill 124 being repealed.

MOTION B23-056:

It was MOVED by C. Rate and SECONDED by A. Reitboeck that, on the recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approve the Service Accountability Agreement amending extensions until March 31, 2024. CARRIED.

6.3.2 Diagnostic Imaging Equipment Requests

The Committee reviewed the request to purchase replacement equipment for the Diagnostic Imaging Program as it is end of life – two CT Scanners for the St. Catharines Site, one CT Scanner for the Welland Site and two radiology fluoroscopy machines for the St. Catharines Site. The request requires Board approval as the cost is beyond the threshold for management to approve.

MOTION B23-057:

It was MOVED by C. Rate and SECONDED by S. Flett that, on the recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors endorse management to issue the RFP and subsequent award of the vendor for the purchase of replacement equipment including two CT scanners for SCS, two Radiology Fluoroscopy machines for SCS and one CT scanner for WS. CARRIED.

6.4 Medical Advisory Committee

The Board was provided with a summary of the Committee's September meeting as outlined in the report to the Board.

6.4.1 Head of Service – Medicine (Niagara Falls)

The Committee reviewed the selection process which was in keeping with Niagara Health's Professional Staff By-Laws and the Public Hospitals Act. The Committee endorsed the preferred candidate for approval by the Board.

MOTION B23-058:

It was MOVED by C. Rate and SECONDED by S. Murdoch that, on the recommendation of the Medical Advisory Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors, approves the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Robert as the Niagara Falls Site Head of Service, Medicine in the department of Medicine effective October 1, 2023. CARRIED.

6.4.2 Head of Service – Radiation Oncology

The Committee reviewed the selection process which was in keeping with Niagara Health's Professional Staff By-Laws and the Public Hospitals Act. The Committee endorsed the preferred candidate for approval by the Board.

MOTION B23-059:

It was MOVED by J. McKinley and SECONDED by J. Thomson that, on the recommendation of the Medical Advisory Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors, approves the appointment Dr. Adrian Ishkanian as the Head of Service, Radiation Oncology for the department of Oncology effective October 1, 2023. CARRIED.

7. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Report of the Quality and Patient Experience Committee

The September report was provided to the Board for information.

7.2 Report of the Governance and People Committee

The September report was provided to the Board for information.

7.3 Report of the Finance and Audit Committee

The September report was provided to the Board for information.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

There being no further business, the Open Session adjourned at 6:28p.m.

MOTION B23-60:

It was MOVED by S. Murdoch and SECONDED by J. Li that the Niagara Health System Board of Directors Open Session Meeting of September 26, 2023 be adjourned, and moved to a Closed Session. CARRIED.

Recording Secretary: D. Dube

Marylee O'Neill, Chair