



**CANADIAN  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION**

**ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE DE  
SANTÉ PUBLIQUE**

**The Voice of Public Health  
La voix de la santé publique**

Canadian Public Health Association

**2021 Annual General Meeting**

Wednesday 5 May 2021 | 12:00-14:00 (EDT)

Via Webinar

**MINUTES**

*Chair: Benita Cohen*

*Parliamentarian: Lynn McIntyre*

*In attendance: 41 members*

**1.0 Opening Remarks**

The meeting was called to order and quorum was confirmed.

Benita Cohen, Chair, welcomed delegates to the 2021 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) with greetings in both official languages and acknowledged the traditional lands from which she was participating and where CPHA's office is located.

For this Zoom video conference, members were instructed on how to ask a question, make a general comment, to move or second a motion and to vote on a motion.

The Chair introduced the CPHA Board Members:

- Vamini Selvanandan, CPHA Chair-Elect, and Chair of the Nominating Committee;
- Jason Cabaj;
- Katie-Sue Derejko;
- Monica Emode, Student Director and Chair of the Finance Committee;
- Yipeng Ge;
- Donika Jones;
- Nancy Laliberté;
- Sume Ndumbe-Eyoh, Chair of the Awards Committee;
- Thomas Piggott; and
- Laura Taylor.

Lynn McIntyre was introduced as the official Parliamentarian for the meeting. The Rules of Order were included in the meeting information package.

The Chair noted that the AGM is the opportunity for members to hear about the business of the Association and that it is the Board's opportunity to hear from members. We want their thoughts about the progress being made and the future direction of the Association. The Board is present to hear members' perspectives so that they can be included in our forward planning. If there are any ideas for policy options for which CPHA should be advocating, members can submit a proposed position or policy statement at any time. Members can visit the policy and advocacy section of CPHA's website where they will find information on the policy development process and guidelines for submission.

**2.0 Adoption of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 27 May 2020**

**Motion:**

***Ardene Robinson Vollman/Thomas Piggott***

That the minutes of the 27 May 2020 Annual General Meeting be accepted as circulated.

***.../CARRIED***

### 3.0 Adoption of the 2020 Audited Financial Statements

Monica Emode, Chair of the Finance Committee, presented the 2020 Audited Financial Statements. Both the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors reviewed the statements and recommended their approval.

CPHA's goal is to have a balanced budget over any three-year period, understanding that there may be fluctuation on a year-to-year basis. Fortunately, the three-year budget cycle ending in 2020 was in a surplus position. Based on current projections, the surplus position will remain for at least the next three years. The letter from the auditors to the Board of Directors detailed the terms of reference and specific conditions of their audit. CPHA once again received a "clean" audit as is indicated in the "Opinion" section of the letter. The Statement of Financial Position showed an increase in assets of just over \$734,000, mostly related to an increase in Cash. Liabilities also increased, but by only \$63,000 leaving net assets at \$970,000. The Statement of Changes in Net Assets reflected the remaining assets (\$970,000). The Statement of Operations reflected the increase in revenue of just over \$1.1 million and net revenue (surplus) of just over \$670,000. This represents a significant positive variance from the original budget for 2020. The Statement of Cash Flows showed the movement of cash through the year; it reflected the increase in net revenue resulting in an increase in the amount of cash available.

No new accounting policies were introduced in 2020 and the remainder of the notes provided details on what was included in the financial statements. There was nothing in the notes to which the auditor needed to draw attention.

There were no questions.

**Motion:** *Caitlin Johnston/Hope Beanlands*  
That the 2020 Audited Financial Statements of the Canadian Public Health Association be accepted. *.../CARRIED*

### 4.0 Appointment of the CPHA Auditor for 2021

CPHA continues to receive excellent service and very competitive pricing from the firm Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP (OHCD LLP). As such, CPHA's Finance Committee and Board of Directors recommend that the firm be appointed CPHA's auditors for 2021.

**Motion:** *Sheilah Sears/Laurie Baugh Littlejohns*  
That the firm of Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP (OHCD LLP) be appointed as CPHA's Auditors for 2021. *.../CARRIED*

### 5.0 Annual Report to the AGM

Vamini Selvanandan, Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the report of the Nominating Committee. Members of the 2020 Nominating Committee included:

- Benita Cohen;
- Georgia Carstensen;
- Nancy Laliberté;
- Sume Ndumbe-Eyoh; and
- William Osei.

Richard Musto and the Executive Director also served *ex officio*. The Nominating Committee implements the process by which Board members are elected by the membership and it offers advice to the Board on ongoing processes and possible appointments. As a result of the 2020 elections, the following four Board members began their first two-year term starting 1 January 2021:

- Jason Cabaj from Alberta;
- Yipeng Ge from Ontario;
- Thomas Piggott from Newfoundland and Labrador; and
- Laura Taylor from Alberta.

Sume Ndumbe-Eyoh was re-elected for a second two-year term. Nancy Laliberté, Julie Stratton and Richard Musto whose Board terms ended 31 December 2020 were recognized for their dedication and contributions to CPHA.

It was noted that the Call for Nominations for the 2021 election will be circulated to all members in June with a closing date of 9 September. Elections will take place in October and November. Candidates are sought who collectively possess a mix of knowledge, experience and expertise, particularly individuals from a variety of public health disciplines and roles who can bring experience in the distinct needs of diverse populations and communities, finance and business, or communications and membership engagement. Members were encouraged to consider this call and to contact a member of the Nominating Committee or the Board if were interested in standing for election.

The Chair presented CPHA's 2020 Annual Report. A variety of papers and documents are referred to throughout the report that are available on CPHA's website.

While COVID-19 dominated all aspects of our lives in 2020, it also brought public health and the people who work in it into sharp focus for Canadians. The efforts of CPHA's members, although often unseen by the public, have made and will continue to make the crucial difference in how deep the impacts of this global pandemic are felt in Canada.

### **Truth and Reconciliation**

As part of the Association's ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, CPHA established an Indigenous Advisory Council. The Council supports CPHA in fulfilling its role as a trusted advocate for public health that works towards addressing the historic and contemporary health inequities faced by Indigenous communities by bringing Indigenous perspectives to all aspects of the Association's policies, practices and programs. The members of the inaugural Council are:

- Gabriella Emery;
- Margo Greenwood, representing the Assembly of First Nations;
- Maureen Gustafson;
- Sheri McKinstry;
- Michele Mousseau Bailey;
- Deborah Van Dyk, representing Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; and
- Eduardo Vides, representing the Métis National Council.

The establishment of the Indigenous Advisory Council was the direct result of a conversation held at CPHA's 2016 AGM in Vancouver. The resulting consultations with Indigenous leaders and with our membership led to the Advisory Council model as the first step in our path towards Reconciliation.

CPHA supported the call for the federal government to adopt anti-racism as a sixth pillar of the *Canada Health Act*, prohibiting discrimination based on race and affording everyone the

right to the equal protection and benefit of the law. Members who had not done so already, were encouraged to endorse this call.

In recognition of the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples to self-determine their economic, social, cultural and knowledge development, in 2020, the *Canadian Journal of Public Health* established a new policy that requires authors to clearly describe how relevant Indigenous Peoples were engaged in order to be considered for publication. It was noted that the CJPH is believed to be the first scientific journal in Canada to adopt such a policy. The Journal operates at arms length from CPHA's Board of Directors and the Editorial Board under the guidance of Dr. Louise Potvin was congratulated for this important policy innovation.

### **COVID-19**

Throughout the pandemic, CPHA continued its efforts to respond to public health issues by developing evidence-informed approaches and policy alternatives.

CPHA [publicly reaffirmed](#) its support for Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the provincial/territorial and local public health authorities responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognizing CPHA's commitment to health equity, anti-racism and reconciliation, the Association advocated for a nimble response to collaborating with and being accountable to communities that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 to ensure [the collection and responsible use of race-based and socio-demographic data](#) that would enable appropriate service response during this and upcoming waves of COVID-19, and provide the basis for improved data collection in the future.

We also conducted [A Review of Canada's Initial Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) that provided a non-governmental perspective and overview of the public health measures taken during the first wave of the pandemic, and those actions taken to address the social determinants of health. The review identified the need to strengthen supply chains for personal protective equipment and to improve collection of race-based and socio-demographic data, while recommending a basic income for Canadians and the need for a federal public health legislation.

### **Health Equity Impact Assessment**

As a component of its Strategic Plan, CPHA committed to inspiring and motivating change in support of health equity, with the desired outcomes of having all policy alternatives and project activities founded on the principle of health equity, and that the Association become a leader in promoting policies and programs that address it. To help accomplish this goal, the Board of Directors approved a [health equity impact assessment tool](#) that will be applied to all future position statements as a means of incorporating health equity in the policy development process. To date, the tool has been applied to its [Review of Canada's Initial Response to COVID-19](#), the position statement on [Population Mental Wellness](#), and our soon-to-be released position statement on [Tobacco Vaping and Use in Canada](#). The results of the assessments, including a description of how the results were incorporated into the final document, is included in the final version of these papers as published on CPHA's website.

### **Population Mental Wellness**

Population mental wellness has been an underlying theme in much of the Association's recent work, whether it be to address [children's access to play](#), [substance use](#), the social determinants of health, [stigma and racism](#), [Jordan's Principle](#) or sexual health. CPHA's position statement on [A Public Health Approach to Population Mental Wellness](#) described how personal, social and

ecological determinants of health can affect population mental wellness, and how public health approaches can be applied.

### **Funded Projects**

[CPHA developed a free toolkit](#) with information on how to apply trauma- and violence-informed care framework to provide safer and more inclusive sexual health, substance use and STBBI-related services.

In 2018, CPHA released [Cannabasics](#), a series of fact sheets for health and social service providers in response to cannabis legalization. The [Beyond Cannabasics workshop](#) was developed in 2020 to expand on the concepts outlined in Cannabasics within the context of specific age groups. The turnkey workshop resources, including a facilitation manual, a participant workbook and the presentation slides, can be used to facilitate training sessions.

CPHA was funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada to create a national forum for knowledge exchange, capacity building and collaboration to address infectious diseases and climate change. The project's goal is to increase the knowledge and capacity of, as well as collaborations among, professionals and providers across Canada so that they can inform and educate their communities and respond to the increasing demands posed by climate change and infectious diseases.

CPHA was also funded by Health Canada to partner with a number of communities across Canada to engage people with lived and living experience, professionals, service providers, decision-makers, and first responders who have an impact on current approaches to substance use. Working in partnership with these communities, we will co-develop resources to build the capacity of public health and public safety professionals to implement a public health approach to substance use in their communities.

### **Conferences**

In the 110 years since its foundation, CPHA has weathered pandemics, economic downturns, two world wars, and massive social changes. In 2020, our staff and volunteer steering committees embraced existing and new technologies that enabled our conferences to proceed online with success!

The 2020 Tobacco and Vaping Control Forum welcomed 430 delegates (three times as many as were present at a previous in-person Forum), while Public Health 2020 and the Canadian Immunization Conference each welcomed 1,150 and 735 delegates, respectively.

While these events were a success (and they will remain virtual events for 2021), a return to an in-person national conference is planned for Winnipeg in October 2022.

### **Strategic Plan**

CPHA's Board of Directors approved the Association's Strategic Plan for 2021-2025. The plan, entitled "Roadmap to Change," charts a new course for the Association that builds on the strengths established by previous strategic plans. While the challenges faced by public health are greater than ever, the plan calls on the Association to live up to its commitment to social justice and to continue to be the voice of public health in Canada. The plan features new vision, mission and value statements for the Association as well as six interconnected strategic priorities:

- Strengthen and renew public health systems and practice;
- Advance Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples;
- Advance social justice, anti-oppression and anti-racism;
- Promote population mental wellness;

- Promote action on the ecological determinants of health; and
- Enhance engagement and organizational sustainability.

In addition to the current members of the Board of Directors, former Board members who played a crucial role in the development of this strategic plan were thanked for their contributions. Former Board members included Nancy Laliberté, Julie Stratton, Caitlin Johnson, Ingrid Tyler, Manasi Parikh and Richard Musto, who was Chair of the Board during the development of the plan.

CPHA's dynamic and engaged membership, including all who participated in this meeting, demonstrated their commitment in many ways in 2020. These contributions are invaluable and allow the Association to do so much of its work.

## **6.0 Presentation of the Honorary Awards**

Ian Culbert, Executive Director, presented the 2021 CPHA honorary awards on behalf of Sume Ndumbe-Eyoh, Chair of CPHA's Awards Committee, who was not able to attend. All recipients were present. Following an introductory background, each candidate in turn was congratulated and invited to speak on their acceptance. Their full citations are on CPHA's [website](#).

### **Certificate of Merit**

Anna Betty Achneepineskum

### **Ron Draper Health Promotion Award**

Dr. Bernadette Pauly

### **Public Health Hero Award**

Jennifer King, Michael Finlay and Liane Langstaff from Gowling WLG's Environmental Law Group, the lawyers who represented CPHA *pro bono* as it intervened in support of the federal government's *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*.

### **Honorary Life Membership**

Dr. Brent Friesen

### **R.D. Defries Award**

Dr. Louise Potvin

## **7.0 Question and Discussion Period**

The Chair provided an update on a subject that was raised in the 2020 AGM question period regarding CPHA's work on a racial equity lens, or framework. A Working Group started to look at the issue, but their work was paused so the strategic plan could be completed and then to incorporate the issue of anti-racism, anti-oppression into the strategic priorities. The Board had a broad open discussion at their last meeting about how to implement the strategic plan and, over the next few months, will work on very specific activities and measurable indicators. The final Health Equity Impact Assessment includes a racial equity lens. The results of these assessments will be available with each position statement when published. The Board continues to actively work on development of anti-racism and anti-oppression internally as a Board and externally with other partners.

Mick Mawani commented that this is his first time attending. He thanked CPHA for the great job we are doing and looks forward to participating in CPHA whenever possible.

The Chair commented on the news that there is a new letter signed by 125 physicians working in intensive care and emergency expressing their concern that the longer the pandemic goes on, the more likely it is for public health to become a target of dissatisfaction. It is really important

that we acknowledge that the daily decisions in public health are not easy ones to make. It is important that we, as a public health community, support our colleagues.

On May 3, the Executive Director appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health to address their ongoing study of the emergency related to COVID-19. He was questioned by Members of Parliament as to why provincial/territorial Medical Officers of Health were not using their authorities more fully. The Executive Director reminded the Members of Parliament that Chief Medical Officers of Health and Medical Officers of Health are provincial/territorial employees whose role is to advise the elected officials who have the authority to make the final decisions.

Harman Sandhu referred to reports studying how COVID-19 impacted long-term care centres and asked if CPHA was planning to position itself on this issue.

*CPHA is not an expert organization on long-term care health and would not take the lead on related issues, but could be supportive of initiatives taken by other organizations.*

H. Sandhu commented that the pandemic has increased interest in public health by the public and youth are becoming passionate about pursuing a public health career. Are there any conversations at the government level, or within CPHA regarding strategizing for public health workforce planning?

*Public health human resources planning has been a challenging area and a post-SARS taskforce examined the issue. Workforce planning will be part of CPHA's ongoing post-COVID work.*

Lynn McIntyre asked to hear about CPHA's advocacy for a proposed federal public health legislation.

*CPHA is proposing a new "Canada Public Health Act"; not amendments to the Canada Health Act. This would be separate legislation to create national standards in a number of different areas across public health service delivery and provide federal funding to support provinces/territories to meet those standards. We will reach out to members as a draft paper becomes available.*

Sheila Sears asked if CPHA would ever consider not going back to in-person meetings (including the AGM), for the environment and for more equitable access.

*The Board has had some initial discussions about this. These certainly are valid reasons for doing all virtual meetings, however, there has been feedback from members talking about the value of a face-to-face meeting. The initial thought is to try to find a balance with some face-to-face and some virtual while not ruling out fully virtual sometime in the future. We will continue to explore the options. CPHA is, however, contractually obligated to hold three more in-person conferences.*

Surkhab Peerzada asked how do we galvanize support for investment in upstream public health initiatives? What does that advocacy and engagement look like, for example, defunding police to invest in community-based models of supports?

*One of the discussions at the recent Board meeting is about how, over the past eight years, we think we have done a good job developing evidence-based backgrounders and position statements. Feedback is that members are finding them useful, but we need to talk more about how our Association engages in the advocacy beyond producing these statements. The Board wants to have discussions with members about how to galvanize and advocate for these structural and systemic changes.*

**8.0 Closing Remarks and Date of Next Meeting**

The Chair acknowledged the work of CPHA's staff and noted the resignation of Frank Welsh from his position as CPHA's Director of Policy, effective 30 June 2021. On behalf of his colleagues, the Board of Directors, the Public Policy Committee with whom he worked and all the members of the Association, Frank was thanked for his contributions to CPHA and he was wished the very best with his new challenges.

Vamini Selvanandan added an addendum to the Nominating Committee report, thanking Caitlin Johnston for her service as the Board representative on the Nominating Committee from 2019-2020 (with sincere apologies for overlooking her in the original report).

In closing, the Chair thanked CPHA's members for their support. CPHA will continue to advocate for healthy public policy on current and emerging public health issues while acknowledging and speaking out on deep-rooted inequities and social injustices. With courage, innovation and commitment, CPHA will draw on the collective strength of its members' public health expertise and passion for change to accelerate progress in key areas.

The next Annual General Meeting will take place virtually on Wednesday 4 May 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:33 (EDT).