



BOARD OF HEALTH REPORT 21-002

9:30 a.m.

Friday, February 19, 2021

**Council Chambers
Hamilton City Hall**

Present: Mayor F. Eisenberger
Councillors M. Wilson (Vice-Chair), J. Farr, N. Nann, S. Merulla, C. Collins, T. Jackson, E. Pauls, J.P. Danko, , M. Pearson, B. Johnson, L. Ferguson, A. VanderBeek and J. Partridge

**Absent with
Regrets:** Councillors B. Clark and T. Whitehead – Personal

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION:

- 1. Correspondence from Peggy Sattler, MPP, London West, respecting Support for the Private Member's Bill entitled Stay Home If You Are Sick Act (Item 5.1)**

That the Correspondence from Peggy Sattler, MPP, London West, respecting Support for the Private Member's Bill entitled Stay Home If You Are Sick Act, be endorsed.

- 2. 2020 Board of Health Self-Evaluation Survey Results (BOH20021(a)) (City Wide) (Item 7.1)**

That Report BOH20021(a) respecting the 2020 Board of Health Self-Evaluation Survey Results, be received.

- 3. Hamilton Drug Strategy 2020 Year End Report (BOH21002) (City Wide) (Item 7.2)**

That Report BOH21002 respecting the Hamilton Drug Strategy 2020 Year End Report, be received.

**4. Call for Permanent Inclusion Of Paid Sick Leave Provisions Under The
*Employment Standards Act (Added Item 11.1)***

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization and it has given rise to declarations of emergency under the Emergency Management and Civic Protection Act by the Government of Ontario, which declared a second a second provincial emergency as of January 12, 2021;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is spread from an infected person to a close contact by direct contact or when respiratory secretions from the infected person enter the eyes, nose or mouth of another person;

WHEREAS, the rapid and steep uptick in COVID-19 cases and the emergence of new variants of concern have been alarming;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the close interconnection between the economy and population health;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has revealed the need for policies to contain the epidemic effectively, prevent recurrent waves of infection and minimize mortality;

WHEREAS, global climate change and mass movements of population will mean that the current novel pandemic is unlikely to be the last one we face and the policies we put in place now will also help prepare us for the next pandemic;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed stark deficiencies in various policies for protecting both workers and firms during crisis in which there is major disruption to employment;

WHEREAS, places of work have been identified as increasingly significant drivers of COVID-19 transmission and outbreaks;

WHEREAS, there is increasing recognition of the importance of staying home when sick in order to prevent the transmission of infectious illnesses like COVID-19;

WHEREAS, not everyone has the ability to stay home when sick due to fear of lost wages and differences in job security;

WHEREAS, employees attending work while sick can have a ripple effect at the workplace, including transmitting infectious diseases which will ultimately increase costs to employers and affect goods or service outputs;

WHEREAS, some of Hamilton's essential workers are precariously employed, limiting their ability to stay home when ill;

WHEREAS, on January 15, 2021, Ontario's Big City Mayors put out a news release stating that "too many workers across Ontario are having to choose between going to work sick or losing income" and urging the provincial and federal government "to

implement a broader sick day program now that provides greater benefits and can be accessed by employees as quickly as possible”;

WHEREAS, with the exception of a relatively small number of federally regulated industries, the majority of workplaces are provincially regulated, making it foremost the jurisdiction of provinces to ensure seamless access to paid sick leave for workers;

WHEREAS, despite these and other calls from public health experts and officials, the Government of Ontario has yet to announce measures that include paid sick days; and

WHEREAS, the Government of Ontario should reinstate guaranteed paid sick leave under the *Employment Standards Act* to ensure that workers do not have to choose between their livelihoods and following public health directives

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- (a) That correspondence be sent to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care endorsing the City of Hamilton’s call for the permanent inclusion of paid sick leave provisions under the *Employment Standards Act* as a public health measure to prevent transmission of communicable diseases including COVID-19; and
- (b) That a copy of the correspondence be forwarded to local-area Members of Provincial Parliament.

FOR INFORMATION:

(a) CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES (Item 1)

There were no ceremonial activities.

(b) CHANGES TO THE AGENDA (Item 2)

The Committee Clerk advised the Board of the following changes:

6. REVISED DELEGATION REQUESTS:

- 6.1. Delegation Request from Lyndon George respecting Structural Reform of the Board of Health (for a future meeting)
- 6.2. Delegation Request from Madeleine Verhovsek respecting Structural Reform of the Board of Health (for a future meeting)

The delegates have asked to have their requests considered for a future meeting.

12. NOTICE OF MOTION

12.1. Call for Permanent Inclusion of Paid Sick Leave Provisions Under the Employment Standards Act

The agenda for the February 19, 2021 Board of Health was approved, as amended.

(c) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

(d) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

(i) January 11, 2021 (Item 4.1)

The Minutes of the January 11, 2021 meeting of the Board of Health were approved, as presented.

(e) COMMUNICATIONS (Item 5)

(i) Correspondence from the Honourable Christine Elliot, Minister of Health, respecting COVID-19 Extraordinary Costs (Item 5.2)

That the Correspondence from the Honourable Christine Elliot, Minister of Health, respecting COVID-19 Extraordinary Costs, be received.

(f) DELEGATION REQUESTS (Item 6)

The following delegation requests were approved for a future meeting:

- (i) Delegation Request from Lyndon George respecting Structural Reform of the Board of Health (for a future meeting) (Item 6.1)
- (ii) Delegation Request from Madeleine Verhovsek respecting Structural Reform of the Board of Health (for a future meeting) (Item 6.2)

(g) STAFF PRESENTATIONS (Item 9)

(i) Overview of COVID-19 Activity in the City of Hamilton 11 Mar to Present (Item 9.1)

Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, Medical Officer of Health; Michelle Baird, Director, Healthy and Safe Communities and Stephanie Hughes, Epidemiologist, Healthy and Safe Communities, addressed the Board with an Overview of COVID-19 Activity in the City of Hamilton 11 Mar to present, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

The Presentation respecting an Overview of COVID-19 Activity in the City of Hamilton 11 Mar to present, was received.

(h) NOTICE OF MOTION (Item 12)

(i) Call for Permanent Inclusion of Paid Sick Leave Provisions Under the Employment Standards Act (Added Item 12.1)

The Rules of Order be waived for the introduction of a motion respecting a Call for Permanent Inclusion of Paid Sick Leave Provisions Under the *Employment Standards Act*.

For further disposition of this matter, refer to Item 4.

(i) ADJOURNMENT (Item 15)

There being no further business, the Board of Health adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor F. Eisenberger
Chair, Board of Health

Loren Kolar
Legislative Coordinator
Office of the City Clerk