



**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
(Formerly the Board of Health)  
REPORT 24-009**

**9:30 a.m.**

**Monday, November 4, 2024**

Council Chambers (Hybrid)

71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

---

**Present:** Mayor A. Horwath (Chair)  
Councillor M. Wilson (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors J. Beattie (Virtual), C. Cassar, B. Clark, J.P. Danko,  
M. Francis (Virtual), T. Hwang, T. Jackson, C. Kroetsch,  
T. McMeekin, N. Nann, E. Pauls, M. Tadeson and A. Wilson

**Absent with  
Regrets:** Councillor M. Spadafora – Personal

---

**THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE PRESENTS REPORT 24-009 AND  
RESPECTFULLY RECOMMENDS:**

- 1. Regional Municipality of Waterloo requesting support for their resolution respecting the Closure of Safe Consumption Sites (Referred from Council on October 9, 2024) (Item 5.1)**

That the correspondence from the Regional Municipality of Waterloo requesting support for their resolution respecting the Closure of Safe Consumption Sites, be endorsed.

- 2. Hamilton Community Health Status Report 2024 (BOH24024) (City Wide) (Item 8.1)**

That Report BOH24024 respecting Hamilton Community Health Status Report 2024, be received.

**FOR INFORMATION:**

**(a) APPROVAL OF AGENDA (Item 2)**

The Committee Clerk advised the Committee of the following changes to the agenda:

**6. DELEGATION REQUESTS**

6.1 Delegation Requests respecting Item 11.1 Unsupervised Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia for Illegal Drug use including Needles and Crack Pipes, for today's meeting, from the following individuals:

(d) Mary Vaccaro, YWCA Hamilton

**11. MOTIONS**

11.1 Unsupervised Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia for Illegal Drug Use Including Needles and Crack Pipes - REVISED

The agenda for the November 4, 2024, Public Health Committee was approved, as amended.

**(b) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**(c) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)**

**(i) September 30, 2024 (Item 4.1)**

The Minutes of the September 30, 2024, meeting of the Public Health Committee were approved, as presented.

**(d) COMMUNICATIONS (Item 5)**

**(i)**

**(a)** The Communications were approved, as presented, as follows:

**(a)** Correspondence from the Regional Municipality of Waterloo requesting support for their resolution respecting the Closure of Safe Consumption Sites (Referred from Council on October 9, 2024) (Item 5.1)

Recommendation: Be endorsed.

- (b) Correspondence from Mohawk College, respecting the Installation of Harm-Reduction Vending Machines at Mohawk College (Item 5.2)

Recommendation: Be received and referred to the consideration of Item 11.1.

- (c) Correspondence from Health Canada, respecting the Public Health Committee's Endorsement of Call for Federal Government to Take Immediate Action on Nicotine Pouches (Item 5.3)

Recommendation: Be received.

- (d) Correspondence from Anna Hulskramer, respecting an Urgent Concern regarding Air Quality Impact from Dofasco Emissions (Item 5.4)

Recommendation: Be received.

- (e) Correspondence from Northwestern Health Unit respecting Perspectives from Northern Ontario for the Public Health Funding Review (Item 5.5)

Recommendation: Be received.

- (f) Correspondence from Northwestern Health Unit respecting Support for Ontario to continue to protect the safety of private drinking water (Item 5.6)

Recommendation: Be received.

- (b) Item 5.1 was voted on separately, for disposition of this matter, refer to Item 1.

**(e) DELEGATION REQUESTS (Item 6)**

- (i) The following Delegation Requests respecting Item 11.1, Unsupervised Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia for Illegal Drug Use Including Needles and Crack Pipes, were approved, for today's meeting, (Item 6.1):

- (a) Robin Lennox (Item 6.1(a))
- (b) Kailey Cutillo (Item 6.1(b))
- (c) Sean Rourke, MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, St. Michael's Hospital (Unity Health Toronto) (Item 6.1(c))
- (d) Mary Vaccaro, YWCA Hamilton (Added Item 6.1(d))

**(f) DELEGATIONS (Item 7)**

**(i) Delegations respecting Item 11.1, Unsupervised Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia for Illegal Drug Use Including Needles and Crack Pipes (Added Item 7.1)**

**(a)** The delegate, Robin Lennox, was provided an additional 2 minutes to complete their delegation.

**(b) The following delegates addressed the Committee respecting Item 11.1, Unsupervised Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia for Illegal Drug Use Including Needles and Crack Pipes:**

- (i) Robin Lennox (Added Item 7.1(a))
- (ii) Kailey Cutillo (Added Item 7.1(b))
- (iii) Sean Rourke, MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, St. Michael's Hospital (Unity Health Toronto) (Added Item 7.1(c))
- (iv) Mary Vaccaro, YWCA Hamilton (Added Item 7.1(d))

**(c)** The following delegations respecting Item 11.1, Unsupervised Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia for Illegal Drug Use Including Needles and Crack Pipes, were received and referred to the consideration of Item 11.1:

- (i) Robin Lennox (Added Item 7.1(a))
- (ii) Kailey Cutillo (Added Item 7.1(b))
- (iii) Sean Rourke, MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, St. Michael's Hospital (Unity Health Toronto) (Added Item 7.1(c))
- (iv) Mary Vaccaro, YMCA Hamilton (Added Item 7.1(d))

**(g) STAFF PRESENTATION (Item 8)**

**(i) Hamilton Community Health Status Report 2024 (BOH24024) (City Wide) (Item 8.1)**

Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, Medical Officer of Health, Catherine Holtz, Manager, Epidemiology & Evaluation, and Mackenzie Slifierz, Epidemiologist addressed Committee respecting Report BOH24024, Hamilton Community Health Status Report 2024, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

The presentation from Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, Medical Officer of Health, Catherine Holtz, Manager, Epidemiology & Evaluation, and Mackenzie Slifierz, Epidemiologist, respecting Report BOH24024, Hamilton Community Health Status Report 2024, was received.

For disposition of this matter, refer to Item 2.

**(h) MOTIONS (Item 11)**

The following Motion was DEFEATED:

**(i) Unsupervised Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia for Illegal Drug Use Including Needles and Crackpipes (Item 11.1)**

WHEREAS, the Greater Hamilton Health Network is initiating a pilot program where paraphernalia for illegal drug use including needles, crack pipes and meth bowls will be distributed without supervision through automated vending machines called “HealthBoxes”;

WHEREAS, the Greater Hamilton Health Network is funded and regulated by the Province of Ontario;

WHEREAS, discarded paraphernalia for illegal drug use is a direct public health risk to families and children utilizing City parks, greenspace, and other public space; and

WHEREAS, cleaning up discarded needles, crack pipes and other paraphernalia for illegal drug use is a significant taxpayer expense and a direct public health risk to City of Hamilton staff who have the task of cleaning up after illegal drug users.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) That staff be directed to write to Ontario's Minister of Health to:

- (i) Request that the Ministry end funding for the unsupervised distribution of paraphernalia for illegal drug use, including needles, crack pipes and meth bowls as part of “Healthboxes”;
- (ii) Advise that Hamilton's Board of Health does not support the unsupervised distribution of paraphernalia for illegal drug use in the City of Hamilton; and
- (iii) Advise that Hamilton's Board of Health supports best practices for paraphernalia for illegal drug use distribution under the supervision of a registered healthcare professional, support worker or other qualified individual where opportunities for education and referral to appropriate addictions treatment, health and social services are available.

(i) **NOTICES OF MOTION (Item 12)**

Councillor Hwang introduced the following Notice of Motion:

(i) **Public Health Impacts of Black Soot Residue in Lower City**

WHEREAS, Wards 3 and 4 residents have raised concerns about their mental and physiological health due to black soot residue deposits on their properties and on city properties and assets such as local parks and play structures;

WHEREAS, children and pets are coming in contact with this black soot residue when playing outside, putting them at risk of exposure through inhalation, absorption, and ingestion, and acting as vectors by inadvertently bringing the residue indoors;

WHEREAS, the black soot residue is affecting residents' enjoyment of their properties because they must clean their outdoor furniture before every use, keep their windows closed at all times to prevent the residue from entering their homes, and clean indoor surfaces like carpets, window sills and counters when the residue gets inside;

WHEREAS, the black soot residue is affecting residents' enjoyment of City properties and assets;

WHEREAS, the residents of Hamilton reported the black soot residue to the environmental pollution regulator (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)), who in turn, in some cases, took samples of the residue and tested these;

WHEREAS, Wards 3 and 4 are receiving an increasing number of complaints, therefore referring an increasing number of complaints to MECP, but with no improvement to quality of life for residents nor indication from MECP that they are addressing the issue, and this gap in MECP's response to the issue is why we need Public Health to intervene;

WHEREAS, soot is usually black carbon. It is a component of fine particulate air pollution (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). It comes from the incomplete combustion of wood and fossil fuels (a process that also creates carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), and volatile organic compounds). Black carbon warms the atmosphere because it is very good at absorbing light. It warms the air and surfaces in regions where it is concentrated and can cause weather patterns and ecosystem cycles to change. Even though black carbon can stay in the atmosphere from days to weeks, it has significant direct and indirect impacts on the climate, snow and ice, agriculture, and human health.

WHEREAS, according to Health Canada, fine particulate matter is associated with negative health outcomes, including eye, nose, throat and lung irritation, decreased lung function, and aggravated lung and heart conditions, and according to a 2024 study of airborne nanoparticles in Toronto and Montreal by Marshall Lloyd et al., “long-term exposure to outdoor ultrafine particles was associated with increased risk of mortality;” and

WHEREAS, investigating and addressing, within municipal jurisdiction, the health impacts of this black soot residue aligns with this Council’s priority 2 of “Safe and Thriving Neighbourhoods,” including vibrant parks, recreation, and public spaces.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That staff be directed to request the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks provide the results of samples taken in 2024 of the black soot residue in the lower city to the City of Hamilton and report back to the Public Health Committee with a description of the composition of the residue, with the goal of promoting information-sharing across governmental jurisdictions and interacting directly with the public through transparency and while maintaining privacy requirements;
- (b) That staff be directed to report back to the Public Health Committee by Q2 2025 with the following:
  - (i) The City of Hamilton’s responsibility to its residents for addressing air quality impacts;
  - (ii) The impact of the black soot residue on public health (i.e. mental, physiological, and environmental health) and other associated impacts experienced by residents (i.e. safety outdoors, food growing gardens);
  - (iii) The impact of the black soot residue on climate change and environmental health; and
  - (iv) The financial and other impacts of the black soot residue on the City of Hamilton, including its public assets (e.g. playground structures, Tim Horton Field Stadium).
- (c) That staff bring forward recommendations on sampling and testing black soot residue on the City’s assets, including associated costs.

**(j) GENERAL INFORMATION / OTHER BUSINESS (Item 13)**

**(i) Amendments to the Outstanding Business List (Item 13.1)**

The Amendments to the Outstanding Business List, were approved, as follows:

**(a) Items to be Referred to the Public Health Sub-Committee (Item 13.1(a))**

- (i) Municipal Actions to Reduce Harms Associated with Alcohol Use (Item 13.1(a)(a))  
Added: December 2, 2019 (BOH Report 19-012, Item 1)
- (ii) Hamilton Opioid Action Plan (Item 13.1(a)(b))  
Added: June 12, 2023, (PHC Report 23-007, Item 2)
- (iii) Alcohol Drug and Gambling Services Program and Peter Boris Centre for Addiction Research Knowledge Translation Projects Funding (Item 13.1(a)(c))  
Added: October 2, 2023 (PHC Report 23-010, Item 3)
- (iv) Blue Flag Beach Program (Item 13.1(a)(d))  
Added: November 13, 2023 (PHC Report 23-011, Item 3)
- (v) Options for the City of Hamilton's Board of Health Governance  
Added: January 15, 2024 (PHC Report 24-001, Item 1)
- (vi) Heat Response Strategy  
Added: June 3, 2024 (PHC Report 24-005, Item 6)
- (vii) Historical Overview of Relevant Mental Health Policy and its Implications for the City of Hamilton  
Added: September 30, 2024 (PHC Report 24-008, Item 2)

**(j) ADJOURNMENT (Item 15)**

There being no further business, the Public Health Committee adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Andrea Horwath  
Chair, Public Health Committee

Matt Gauthier  
Legislative Coordinator  
Office of the City Clerk