



**THUNDER BAY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT  
BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING  
MINUTES**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING:** February 18, 2026

**TIME OF MEETING:** 1:00 PM

**PLACE OF MEETING:** First Floor Boardroom / MS Teams

**CHAIR:** Mr. James McPherson

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Mr. Grant Arnold
- Ms. Lucy Belanger
- Mr. Paul Malashewski
- Mr. James McPherson
- Mr. Jim Moffat
- Mr. Don Smith
- Dr. Mark Thibert
- Ms. Kristine Thompson
- Mr. Todd Wheeler

**REGRETS:**

- Ms. Cindy Brand
- Ms. Kasey Etreni
- Ms. Cynthia Olsen
- Ms. Donna Peacock

**RECORDER:**  
Ms. Lila McNeice, Executive Assistant, Secretary to the Board of Health

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:**

- Dr. Janet DeMille, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer
- Ms. Laura Dennis, Manager – Vaccine Preventable Disease
- Ms. Diana Gowanlock, Director – Health Protection
- Mr. Dan Hrychuk, Director – Corporate Services
- Ms. Shannon Robinson, Director – Health Promotion
- Ms. Dana Wilson, Associate Director – Communications and Strategic Initiatives
- Ms. Shelley Oleksuk, Administrative Assistant – Health Promotion

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

**2. ATTENDANCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Regrets were received from Ms. Kasey Etreni, Ms. Cynthia Olsen, Ms. Donna Peacock, and Ms. Cindy Brand.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**4. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Resolution No. 22-2026

**Moved By:** L. Belanger

**Seconded By:** J. Moffat

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Board of Health Meeting to be held on February 18, 2026, be approved.

CARRIED

**5. INFORMATION SESSION**

**5.1 Quality Improvement (QI) in Public Health**

D. Wilson presented to the Board of Health on Quality Improvement (QI) in public health and responded to questions and comments from the Board.

**6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**6.1 Thunder Bay District Board of Health**

Resolution No. 23-2026

**Moved By:** L. Belanger

**Seconded By:** J. Moffat

THAT the Minutes of the Thunder Bay District Board of Health (Annual, Regular and Closed Session) Meeting held on January 21, 2026, be approved.

CARRIED

**6.2 Board of Health Executive Committee**

The minutes of the Thunder Bay District Board of Health Executive Committee meeting held on January 7, 2026 were provided for information.

**6.3 Board of Health Ad Hoc Search Committee**

The Minutes of six Thunder Bay District Board of Health Ad Hoc Search Committee meetings held between September and December 2025 were provided for information.

## **7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting minutes.

## **8. BOARD OF HEALTH (CLOSED SESSION) MEETING**

Resolution No. 24a-2026

**Moved By:** L. Belanger

**Seconded By:** J. Moffat

THAT the Board of Health move into Closed Session to receive information relative to labour relations or employee negotiations.

CARRIED

At 1:22 PM, the Board of Health moved into Closed Session, and the following individuals left the meeting:

- Dr. Janet DeMille, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer
- Ms. Laura Dennis, Manager – Vaccine Preventable Disease
- Ms. Diana Gowanlock, Director – Health Protection
- Ms. Shannon Robinson, Director of Health Promotion
- Ms. Shelley Oleksuk, Administrative Assistant – Health Promotion
- Ms. Dana Wilson, Associate Director – Communications and Strategic Initiatives
- Ms. Lila McNeice, Executive Assistant and Secretary to the Board of Health

At 1:29 PM, the above noted individuals returned to the meeting.

### **8.1 Closed Session Report**

The Chair reported that during the Closed Session, the Board received information relative to labour relations or employee negotiations.

## **9. DECISIONS OF THE BOARD**

### **9.1 Advocacy Related to Pneumococcal Vaccine Eligibility**

Dr. J. DeMille introduced Ms. Laura Dennis, Manager of Vaccine Preventable Disease, and presented Report No. 06-2026 containing a resolution concerning pneumococcal vaccine eligibility advocacy. Board members recommended engaging media to raise public awareness.

Resolution No. 25-2026

**Moved By:** L. Belanger

**Seconded By:** J. Moffat

WHEREAS invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD) is a serious and potentially life-threatening vaccine-preventable illness that can result in hospitalization, intensive care admission, long-term complications, and death; and

WHEREAS Thunder Bay District Health Unit has observed an increase in reported cases of IPD in recent years, with a significant proportion of cases requiring hospitalization and intensive care; and

WHEREAS local surveillance data indicate that individuals experiencing social and behavioural risk factors are disproportionately affected; and

WHEREAS current publicly funded pneumococcal vaccine eligibility criteria set by the Ontario Ministry of Health are primarily based on age and medical risk, and do not explicitly include certain social and behavioural risk factors associated with increased risk of invasive disease; and

WHEREAS expanding eligibility criteria may reduce morbidity and mortality, decrease health system pressures, and address health inequities among vulnerable populations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit formally request that the Minister of Health and Chief Medical Officer of Health review, in an expeditious manner, the current eligibility criteria for publicly funded pneumococcal vaccination for adults;

AND THAT the review considers the inclusion of individuals with social and behavioural risk factors associated with increased risk of invasive pneumococcal disease;

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be provided to the Minister of Health, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, local Members of Provincial Parliament, and Northern Ontario Boards of Health.

CARRIED

**10. COMMUNICATIONS FOR INFORMATION**

**10.1 Reports Previously Presented in Closed Session: 2025 IPAC Funding and 2025 Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreements**

D. Hrychuk presented two reports that had previously been considered in closed session, following the removal of the Ministry of Health's communications embargo.

**10.2 aIPHa Winter Symposium Report**

J. McPherson opened the floor to comments from Board members who attended the 2026 Winter Symposium, who agreed that the session was informative and beneficial to their roles, and expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to participate.

**10.3 Medical Officer of Health/CEO Update**

Dr. J. DeMille presented an MOH/CEO update memorandum and responded to questions and comments from the Board.

**11. NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will take place on March 18, 2026 at 1:00 PM.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Resolution No. 27-2026

**Moved By:** L. Belanger

**Seconded By:** J. Moffat

THAT the Board of Health meeting held on February 18, 2026, be adjourned at 1:49 PM.

CARRIED