



CANADIAN  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE DE  
SANTÉ PUBLIQUE

The Voice of Public Health  
La voix de la santé publique

## 2024 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 23 April 2024 | 12:00-13:45 (ADT)  
Argyle 1-2 Room, Halifax Convention Centre

### MINUTES

*Chair: Vamini Selvanandan*

*Parliamentarian: Lynn McIntyre*

*In attendance: 36 members*

#### 1.0 Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order and quorum was confirmed. Vamini Selvanandan, Chair, greeted members in both official languages and acknowledged the traditional lands on which the meeting was being held and where CPHA's office is located.

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 current CPHA Board Members:

- Jason Cabaj, CPHA Chair-Elect, and Chair of the Nominating Committee;
- Yipeng Ge; Chair of the Finance Committee;
- Caitlin Johnston;
- Ashley Joyce;
- Amy Nahwegahbow
- Alex Petiquan;
- Japteg Singh, our Student Director;
- Laura Taylor, Chair of the Awards Committee; and
- Bilqis Williams.

Dr. Selvanandan noted that the Board of Directors is supported by five Standing Committees that do the pre-work of the Board of Directors: Finance Committee; Honorary Awards Committee, Indigenous Advisory Council; Nominating Committee, and Public Policy Committee. They analyze issues and present options and recommendations to the Board. The Board is grateful for the volunteer members of the standing committees and the hours of work they provided to support CPHA.

Lynn McIntyre was introduced as the official Parliamentarian for the meeting.

The Rules of Order were included in the meeting information package.

#### 2.0 Adoption of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 14 May 2023

**Motion:** *Samantha Salter/Marjorie MacDonald*  
That the minutes of the 14 May 2023 Annual General Meeting be accepted as circulated.  
*.../CARRIED*

#### 3.0 Adoption of the 2023 Audited Financial Statements

Yipeng Ge, Chair of the Finance Committee, presented the 2023 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. The three-year budget cycle ending in 2024 was in a surplus position, at \$176,936.

The letter from the auditors to the Board of Directors detailed the terms of reference and specific conditions of the audit. CPHA once again received a 'clean' audit as is indicated in the Opinion section.

The Statement of Financial Position showed that at the end of 2023, CPHA's assets were \$1.5 million compared to \$2.3 million at the end of 2022. Liabilities were similarly lower at \$664,000 vs. \$1.4 million at the end of 2022.

The Statement of Changes in Net Assets showed that the Association's net assets at the end of 2023 were almost \$852,000, which is the total reserve available to the Association.

The Statement of Operations reflected a revenue decrease from 2022 of just over \$1.1 million and net expense or a loss of \$77,000 for the year. While we would prefer not to have a deficit, this amount represents a significant positive variance from the original budget for 2023 which included a forecast deficit of just over \$318,000.

The Statement of Cash Flows showed the change in the amount of cash available for operations between the start and end of the year. Since most of the federal contribution agreements managed by CPHA are now on a reimbursement model, a larger amount of cash is required to cover the operating costs of those projects over a longer period.

There were no new accounting policies in 2023 and the remainder of the notes provides on what is included in the financial statements. There was nothing in the notes to which the auditor needed to draw members' attention.

Due to the end of four of the funded projects managed by CPHA, we are forecasting a significant deficit of \$468,000 for 2024. Staff is working diligently to identify sources of project funding and expenses are being limited to the greatest extent possible. While we remain optimistic for the future, the Board of Directors along with our qualified and dedicated Finance Committee will continue to monitor the Association's fiscal well-being very closely.

Samantha Salter asked for elaboration on the projected deficit.

*Four of CPHA's five funded projects ended at almost the same time. CPHA had five proposals submitted for either renewals or new projects; four of the five were unsuccessful. The funding landscape is more competitive than ever. CPHA depends on funding from projects to support its core activities. New revenue streams have been explored so that CPHA is not as dependant on federally-funded projects.*

**Motion:**

**Wanda Martin/Louise Potvin**

That the 2023 Audited Financial Statements of the Canadian Public Health Association be accepted.

**.../CARRIED**

**4.0 Appointment of the CPHA Auditor for 2024**

CPHA continues to receive excellent service and 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 2024.

**Motion:**

**Cordell Neudorf/Penny Sutcliffe**

That the firm of Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP (OHCD LLP) be appointed as CPHA's Auditors for 2024.

**.../CARRIED**

**5.0 Annual Report to the AGM**

Jason Cabaj, Chair-elect and Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the Nominating Committee report. 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.

Effective 1 January 2024, three new Directors began their first two-year term on our Board of Directors:

- Amy Nahwegahbow and Alexandre Petiquan both from Ontario, and
- Japteg Singh, our student director who is currently going to school in Québec.

Nashreen Dhalla, Monica Emode, and Camisha Rahmatian, whose Board terms ended 31 December 2023, were recognized for their contributions to the Association.

The formal Call for Nominations for the 2024 election will be circulated to all members at the end of June with a closing date of 4 September 2024. There are five vacancies that will need to be filled for this year. Elections will take place in October and November. Candidates should collectively possess a mix of knowledge, experience and expertise. This Association will be seeking Directors with experience in developing, leading and implementing an equity, diversity and inclusion strategy, advocacy, finance and business, or communications and membership engagement. To enhance the geographic diversity on the Board, candidates from individuals residing in provinces/territories not currently reflected on the Board of Directors are particularly encouraged. Members were encouraged to consider this call, for themselves, or to nominate a colleague. Members were encouraged to contact a member of the Nominating Committee or the Board if they are interested in standing for election.

Vamini Selvanandan, whose term as Chair will end on 31 December 2024, was recognized for her contributions to the Association.

The Chair presented [CPHA's 2023 Annual Report](#). A variety of papers and documents were referred to throughout the report that are available on CPHA's website.

#### **Public Health Approach to Psychedelics**

In June of 2023, CPHA hosted a virtual forum on a public health approach to psychedelics. A summary report was published in September and will be the basis for a discussion document to be published later this year on the same topic intended to increase the awareness of the broader public health community of the issues related to psychedelics.

#### **A Public Health Approach to Sex Work**

In February 2023, the Board approved work to begin on a position statement on a public health approach to sex work. This statement was approved by the Board in December 2023 and published early in 2024.

#### **Public Health Approach to Substance Use**

Building on work developed as part of CPHA's funded project on substance use, a policy statement on a public health approach to substance use was also approved by the Board in December 2023 and published earlier this year.

#### **Policy Brief: Strengthening Public Health Systems in Canada**

With the support of an editorial committee, and reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors, eight targeted recommendations were developed and published in the policy brief entitled *Strengthening Public Health Systems in Canada*. Endorsements were received from 11 public health and allied health organizations, and meetings were held with Parliamentarians, political staff, and senior civil servants. While those with whom we met acknowledge the importance of strengthening our public health system, there was, unfortunately, a lack of interest in expending political capital on the issue at this time. Staff, however, continue to look for opportunities to pursue the conversation with decision-makers at the federal level.

### **Truth and Reconciliation**

The Indigenous Advisory Council met regularly throughout the year and its members provided feedback on CPHA's work. An interim policy on Indigenous identity was agreed to so that work can proceed on establishing a paid practicum placement for an Indigenous masters of public health student as well as an online 'gathering' for Indigenous public health workers. Earlier in 2024, CPHA engaged an Indigenous consultant to review the Association's progress on Truth and Reconciliation to date and to map out a path forward.

### **EDI Progress**

As reported at last year's AGM, CPHA engaged Strat-ology Consulting in January 2023 to help develop an equity, diversity and inclusion strategy. A summary of the consultant's report was presented to members and work continues on implementation. Starting with next year's AGM, an annual progress report will be submitted to the membership so that we can track progress in this important area.

### **Population Mental Wellness**

Recommendations for a national strategy for population mental wellness and for surveillance and research activities were developed as part of CPHA's 2021 position statement and staff have reached out to national organizations to arrange meetings to discuss joint advocacy.

### **Health and Climate Change**

CPHA has been involved with the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change since 2017 and we once again co-published with CMA and CNA the Policy Brief for Canada in 2023.

With funding from the McConnell Foundation, CPHA collaborated with the Canadian Health Association for Sustainability and Equity and the Ontario Public Health Association to produce series of 14 case studies, four webinars, and a final report that explores strategies, policies and programs that public health agencies can employ to advance climate action, population health and health equity in their communities. CPHA has endorsed or otherwise supported various advocacy efforts including the:

- Green Buildings Strategy to address energy poverty and health inequities;
- 2024 Budget Solution for Electric Vehicle Readiness in Multi-Family Buildings;
- Energy Affordability through Energy Efficiency Programs;
- Accelerated, just and equitable phase-out of fossil fuels;
- Sustainable Health Systems; and
- Proposed Clean Electricity Regulations.

CPHA also walks the green walk, and our offices are located in the Gold LEED certified building and are entirely Bullfrog powered. CPHA will begin to alternate between in-person and virtual conferences to reduce the carbon footprint of our events and the Board of Directors has been using technology to meet virtually in order to reduce its footprint.

### **Engagement with CPHA Members and Ensuring CPHA Sustainability**

In 2023, we facilitated the second Canadian Public Health Week in collaboration with the provincial public health associations as well as hosting quarterly meetings of the Canadian Network of Public Health Associations.

CPHA continued to support the independent Editorial Board of the *Canadian Journal of Public Health* that published six regular issues in 2023 and continued work on two supplementary issues. 2023 also saw the successful recruitment of Dr. Laura Rosella as the new Editor-in-Chief of the Journal as Dr. Louise Potvin stepped down from that role after two five-year terms.

## 6.0 Question and Discussion Period

Denish Mier asked for clarification regarding upcoming CPHA Board positions and the focus on recruitment from under-represented provinces. She asked for elaboration on which provinces are well represented on the CPHA Board and which are not.

*Atlantic Canada, Quebec and the territories have been consistently under-represented.*

Ashraf Amlani asked for insights about the work CPHA has done or is planning to do with other federal partners who help do the health promotion work in public health.

*Late in 2023, CPHA signed a memorandum of understanding with Health Promotion Canada (HPC) establishing CPHA as its new “home”. CPHA will provide support to HPC’s activities.*

*CPHA’s outreach efforts to organizations that are engaged in health promotion (but do not necessarily recognize it as such) have been relatively unsuccessful. Suggestions for specific organizations to approach will be readily accepted.*

Pemma Muzumdar asked if CPHA wants to consider working in a policy area or signing on to a larger coalition like Bill-C226 (*An Act respecting the development of a national strategy to assess, prevent and address environmental racism and to advance environmental justice*). If CPHA members want the Association to join coalitions, what is the process for this recommendation? It was noted that signing on to a coalition does not mean CPHA will be dedicating its resources to writing a policy statement or holding a forum.

*Members can email the Executive Director with their recommendations or submit a policy using the [online form](#).*

Janet Gordon mentioned that the Sioux Lookout First Nations encounter barriers to providing public health systems for their community (as a jurisdictional issue). She requested advocacy and support for Indigenous communities and organizations to be recognized as public health agencies and for those agencies to be allowed to do the entire scope of public health in their communities. She noted this would be the most appropriate path so that Indigenous public health organizations would be recognized as being the experts for providing public health to their communities. She asked for CPHA and its members to explore options for supporting strong Indigenous communities.

*CPHA is committed to advocating for the needs of Indigenous communities; it wants to be an effective ally and establish strong partnerships. Ms. Gordon was encouraged to reach out to the Executive Director to see how CPHA can support her community.*

Isaac Sobol noted that, worldwide, war is the biggest threat to public health. He asked if CPHA had a public health statement about the negative public health effects of war or if CPHA’s public health statement work is restricted to Canada.

*In 2001, CPHA published a [statement on Peace, Security and Public Health](#) and the previous day, the Board of Directors approved the drafting of an updated that should be released within 30 days.*

Ashraf Amlani stated that in light of the demographics of Canada’s public health work force, she questioned whether CPHA has the right skills and tools to have inter-cultural health conversations. She asked CPHA to consider going beyond simply translating discussions that occur around anti-racism in the public health sphere noting there is a lot of work CPHA could champion in this area (i.e., inter-cultural anti-racism conversations).

*CPHA’s Executive Director is on the executive committee of the [National Newcomer Navigation Network](#) (N4) that supports advocacy efforts in this area. It was acknowledged that more work is needed in this area as is noted in CPHA’s policy brief on [Strengthening Health Systems in Canada](#). That brief discusses the competencies Canadian public health workers need.*

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

The next Annual General Meeting will take place on Tuesday 29 April 2025 in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

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