

A meeting of the Board of Health for Oxford Elgin St. Thomas Health Unit was held on Thursday, May 22, 2025, commencing at 1:05 p.m.

PRESENT:

Ms. C. Agar	Board Member
Mr. J. Couckuyt	Board Member
Mr. G. Jones	Board Member (Vice Chair)
Mr. J. Herbert	Board Member
Ms. B. Martin	Board Member (Chair)
Mr. D. Mayberry	Board Member
Mr. S. Molnar	Board Member
Mr. M. Peterson	Board Member
Mr. L. Rowden	Board Member
Mr. M. Ryan	Board Member
Mr. D. Warden	Board Member
Dr. N. Tran	Medical Officer of Health (ex officio)
Ms. C. St. John	Chief Executive Officer (ex officio)
Ms. W. Lee	Executive Assistant

GUESTS:

Ms. J. Buchanan	CPA, Graham Scott Enns
Ms. L. Crandall*	Health Promoter
Ms. J. Gordon	Administrative Assistant
Mr. P. Heywood	Program Director
Ms. E. Kyriakopoulos	Tobacco Enforcement Officer
Ms. S. MacIsaac	Program Director
Mr. D. McDonald	Director, Corporate Services and Human Resources
Ms. M. Nusink	Director, Finance
Ms. C. Richards	Manager, Foundation Standards
Ms. N. Rowe*	Manager, Communications
Mr. I. Santos	Manager, Information Technology
Mr. D. Smith	Program Director
Mr. C. Trafagander	Tobacco Enforcement Officer
Ms. K. Vanderhoeven*	Health Promoter
Ms. M. Van Wylie	Manager, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention

REGRETS:

Mr. D. Shinedling

Board Member

Mr. E. Taylor

Board Member

**Represents virtual participation*

**REMINDER OF DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF
WHEN ITEM ARISES**

1.1 CALL TO ORDER, RECOGNITION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m.

1.2 AGENDA

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-1.2)

Moved by D. Warden

Seconded by D. Mayberry

That the agenda for the Southwestern Public Health Board of Health meeting for May 22, 2025, be approved.

Carried.

1.3 Reminder to disclose Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof when Item Arises.

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-2.1)

Moved by J. Herbert

Seconded by M. Peterson

That the minutes for the Southwestern Public Health Board of Health meeting for April 24, 2025, be approved.

Carried.

3.0 CONSENT AGENDA

No Items.

4.0 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED REQUIRING ACTION

No items.

5.0 AGENDA ITEMS FOR INFORMATION.DISCUSSION.DECISION

5.1 SWPH SFOA Progressive Enforcement Report for May 22, 2025

E. Kyriakopoulos, C. Trafagander, and M. Van Wylie reviewed the report.

M. Peterson raised concerns about local youth vaping rates, which appear nearly double those in other jurisdictions. He referenced a recent Police Services Board meeting that noted a rise in impaired charges, potentially linked to increased accessibility of substances like tobacco, vaping products, and alcohol. He asked what might be driving these differences locally and what could be done to address them. M. Van Wylie agreed the rates are concerning and said while some risk and protective factors are known, more local data is needed. Marcia emphasized the potential of the Icelandic prevention model, noting that additional data will be obtained through its implementation and that other rural jurisdictions are seeing similar rates.

J. Herbert asked whether most charges stem from high schools. C. Trafagander clarified that while schools generate many reports, most charges are against retailers. J. Herbert asked about the authority of Tobacco Enforcement Officers (TEOs), warning levels, and the use of progressive enforcement. C. Trafagander explained that there is a one-strike policy, with a different enforcement approach for youth under 16 years old. Parents are usually involved, and while youth can be fined \$350, no cases have gone to court yet. C. Agar raised the question of whether part-time TEO should be expanded to full-time, suggesting it as something for consideration. She also referred to a 2016 report on smoking on beaches and asked whether the Board could encourage municipalities to revisit such measures and prioritize licensing discussions. M. Van Wylie confirmed that SWPH is in the early planning stages of exploring municipal policy changes and would welcome opportunities to pursue local policy solutions. C. St. John added that staffing capacity is regularly considered during the budget process and encouraged municipal representatives to speak out on advocacy opportunities.

S. Molnar praised the report's authors for their courage and conviction. He asked for clarification regarding the sale of vaping products by underage store staff. C. Trafagander explained that staff are trained to request ID and ensure proper sales practices. S. Molnar noted that the transaction rate was relatively low and asked whether the legal purchasing age differed for tobacco and vape products. C. Trafagander confirmed the age limit is the same. S. Molnar then asked if the only identifiable penalty applies to retailers and not purchasers. C. Trafagander confirmed that the SFOA governs sales but not possession. It is not an offence for a youth to be in possession of cannabis or tobacco under the Act.

J. Couckuyt noted the lack of municipal funding for tobacco enforcement at public beaches and pointed out that the report relied on data from 2019, hoping for more recent statistics. He also asked whether schools issue their own consequences when enforcement occurs on-site.

B. Martin clarified that schools may issue disciplinary actions, but possession by youth is not an offence under the SFOA. C. Trafagander confirmed that TEOs only act under the legislation and cannot impose school-based penalties and that the SFOA focuses on enforcement at the point of sale.

M. Ryan questioned if the Board should send formal letters to municipal councils, urging them to take action against smoking on public beaches. M. Van Wylie said SWPH is open to further engagement and continues to build relationships with municipalities.

D. Mayberry raised questions about the reported percentages, asking if those figures represented all youth or all retailers. C. Trafagander acknowledged the complexity of interpreting those figures and attributed the high rate of youth access to various factors. M. Van Wylie noted that the goal remains to reduce youth access. The reported percentage is based on a youth survey on purchasing behaviours. D. Mayberry expressed concern that the report could be misread as indicating 10% of all youth obtain vape products. P. Heywood noted that compliance rates are a snapshot in time and may vary across enforcement cycles. D. Mayberry agreed and emphasized the importance of municipalities understanding that context.

M. Peterson added that his municipality prohibits smoking in parks and stressed that enforcement ultimately falls to local governments. He asked about the fine for businesses found supplying to youth. C. Trafagander replied that the certificate of offence carries a \$490 fine for first-time violations, with the possibility of increased fines or license suspension for repeat offences.

S. Molnar asked whether there were reports of illegal tobacco sales outside retail environments, such as through informal channels like gas stations. C. Trafagander confirmed that such sales are prohibited and monitored under different legislation enforced by Tobacco and Fuel Inspectors.

D. Warden asked about distance regulations for smoking near buildings. C. Trafagander responded that the SFOA outlines restrictions only for specific facilities, such as hospitals and schools, while most public distance regulations fall under municipal bylaws. Municipalities are responsible for signage and enforcement in these cases.

M. Ryan moved to amend the original motion from “receive and file” to “adopt the report,” and D. Mayberry seconded the amendment. D. Warden asked whether this change in wording would assist staff in their efforts. C. St. John acknowledged the team’s work and stated that while the language shift may not alter operations significantly, it would not hurt to share the report with municipalities as part of ongoing conversations. The motion to amend was carried.

J. Herbert requested a recorded vote on the amended resolution to adopt the report. D. Warden noted the motion is a recommendation for municipalities to review their bylaws and that while the Board can make the request, municipalities are not obligated to act. S. Molnar inquired whether the recommendation would go to all municipalities or only the three obligated ones. C. St. John advised that it be sent to all municipalities. S. Molnar expressed hope that municipalities would be supportive, particularly as the issue affects areas beyond Elgin County, including beaches elsewhere. D. Warden asked whether municipalities could be asked to respond, and C. St. John confirmed that staff would report back on municipal uptake. B. Martin added that the process will unfold gradually, with staff following the next steps outlined in the adopted report.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.1-1)

Moved by M. Ryan

Seconded by D. Mayberry

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health amend the proposed resolution with the following statements:

...adopt the SWPH Report...

...And further that this report be circulated to area municipalities asking and encouraging their support in reviewing their bylaws.

Carried.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.1)

Moved by M. Ryan

Seconded by D. Mayberry

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health adopt the SWPH Report on Progressive Enforcement Activities Supporting the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA) in 2024 for May 22, 2025.

And further that this report be circulated to area municipalities asking and encouraging their support in reviewing their bylaws.

Carried.

Agar, Catherine	Yea
Couckuyt, Jack	Yea
Herbert, Jim	Yea
Jones, Grant	Yea
Martin, Bernia	Yea
Mayberry, David	Yea
Molnar, Stephen	Yea
Peterson, Mark	Yea
Rowden, Lee	Yea
Ryan, Marcus	Yea
Warden, David	Yea

The Chair thanked the Tobacco Enforcement Officers, who left the meeting at 2:04 p.m.

5.2 Graham Scott Enns: SWPH Audited Financial Statements Report for May 22, 2025

Jennifer Buchanan CPA for Graham Scott Enns reviewed the report.

C. Agar raised questions regarding the clarity of Note 8 on page 16, specifically the description of the April 8, 2024, loan amendment. She noted that the terminology should reflect that the banker's acceptance (BA) was converted to a CORRA-based loan rather than referring to it as a restructured construction loan, which had been in place since 2013. J. Buchanan agreed and indicated she would revise the language accordingly. C. Agar also flagged that the amortization period is actually 19 years rather than the 30 years suggested in the draft. M. Nusink confirmed that although the term extends to 2044, the amortization is indeed 19 years. J. Buchanan

committed to clarifying both the remaining maturity and related terminology in the finalized note.

J. Couckuyt directed attention to page 5, questioning the significant increase—over 30%—in operating grants from municipalities between 2022 and 2023, asking whether this was attributable to the “move the needle” funding initiative. M. Nusink confirmed that a large portion of the increase was due to the \$736,000 levy to municipalities for this initiative and noted that it has since been annualized.

J. Buchanan then summarized the contents of the audit findings letter, noting that no issues were identified during the audit. She reported no significant difficulties with management, no changes to accounting policies apart from the required adoption of PS 3400, no significant internal control deficiencies, no uncorrected misstatements, and no other matters of concern.

B. Martin acknowledged that motions regarding the audited financial statements would be brought forward during the CEO’s report. She appreciated the thoroughness of the audit and the positive relationship with Graham Scott Enns. C. St. John echoed this, commending J. Buchanan and her team for their ongoing professionalism and guidance throughout the year, not just during the audit process.

5.3 Medical Officer of Health’s Report

Dr. N. Tran reviewed the report.

G. Jones inquired whether the Ministry of Natural Resources continues to conduct rabies baiting through aerial distribution. Dr. N. Tran confirmed that the program is still active, targeting wildlife in specific areas by using vaccine-laced bait to reduce the risk of rabies.

B. Martin asked whether there are any free or subsidized rabies vaccination programs available for pet owners. Dr. N. Tran indicated that while there is currently no formal program, SWPH is actively working with local veterinarians to generate interest in offering low-cost rabies vaccinations, ideally at least once annually. S. MacIsaac added that while there is no confirmed partner at this time, some local veterinarians have previously provided the service, and planning is ongoing.

B. Martin concluded the discussion by reminding the group that tick-borne diseases affect not only humans but also pets and can also serve as a vector for transmission.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.3)

Moved by G. Jones

Seconded by D. Warden

That Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health accept the Medical Officer of Health’s report for May 22, 2025.

Carried.

5.4 Chief Executive Officer’s Report

C. St. John reviewed the report.

C. Agar inquired about the availability of in-person prenatal classes, referencing the Baby Bump program. C. St. John responded that this is connected to the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program and invited D. Smith to elaborate. D. Smith explained that while in-person prenatal classes were previously offered, they typically attracted individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds, rather than the vulnerable populations the health unit aims to support. As a result, the health unit pivoted to an online prenatal education model to increase accessibility. However, in-person options are still available through the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital (STEGH), contingent on completion of the online module. Since in-person sessions are not currently offered at hospitals in Oxford County, SWPH has begun offering similar content internally at its Woodstock site and is working with local hospitals to expand access to in-person sessions. Additionally, one-on-one prenatal support is available for vulnerable individuals through the Healthy Growth and Development team. The NFP program remains a key in-person initiative, targeting first-time pregnancies in individuals aged 15 to 24. Nurses meet clients in locations of their choosing, including homes and coffee shops, offering weekly support through pregnancy and beyond. The program is made possible by additional funding approved by the Board of Health.

C. Agar raised a question regarding the first quarter budget, noting that immunization spending appeared underutilized despite the increased workload related to measles vaccinations. C. St. John acknowledged that there have been extra costs and deferred to M. Nusink for more details. M. Nusink explained that SWPH received unexpected one-time funding in the first quarter for COVID-19 and RSV response, which helped offset other expenditures. These funds had not been anticipated during the budgeting process and are not expected to recur. She noted that measles-related expenditures are being tracked in the event the Ministry requests a funding submission.

C. Agar asked about the HeatAdapt project, seeking clarification on whether existing Canadian research was being used to avoid duplication. She also voiced concern that the funding might not directly benefit vulnerable populations in the region, but instead fund external research students. S. MacIsaac responded that while there is national research on heat adaptation, this initiative provides an opportunity for SWPH to contribute local data and insights that will inform federal-level strategies. The University of Waterloo was engaged due to its specialized expertise in climate change and public health. Importantly, the research will use local data from municipalities in the SWPH region to identify and address the needs of those most vulnerable to extreme heat.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.4-2.1)

Moved by G. Jones

Seconded by C. Agar

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health approve the audited financial statements as amended for the period ending December 31, 2024.

Carried.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.4-2.2)

Moved by D. Warden

Seconded by M. Ryan

That the Board of Health appoint Graham Scott Enns as the auditing firm for the year ending December 31, 2025.

Carried.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.4-2.3)

Moved by M. Ryan

Seconded by M. Peterson

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health approve the sewage inspection program deferred revenues in the amount of \$17,175 be moved to the Board of Health reserve fund.

Carried.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.4-2.4)

Moved by M. Peterson

Seconded by D. Warden

That the Board of Health approve the first quarter financial statements for Southwestern Public Health.

Carried.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-5.4)

Moved by D. Mayberry

Seconded by S. Molnar

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health accept the Chief Executive Officer's report for May 22, 2025.

Carried.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

J. Herbert thanked Dr. N. Tran for his delegation to St. Thomas and B. Martin thanked Dr. N. Tran for his presentation to Oxford County. M. Peterson thought Dr. N. Tran's presentation was leaderful.

S. Molnar left at 3:02 p.m.

7.0 TO CLOSED SESSION

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-C7)

Moved by J. Couckuyt

Seconded by D. Mayberry

That the Board of Health move to closed session in order to consider one or more of the following, as outlined in the Ontario Municipal Act:

- (a) the security of the property of the municipality or local board;
- (b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees;
- (c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board;
- (d) labour relations or employee negotiations;
- (e) litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board;
- (f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
- (g) a matter in respect of which a council, board, committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another Act;
- (h) information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them;
- (i) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization;
- (j) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial or financial information that belongs to the municipality or local board and has monetary value or potential monetary value; or
- (k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board. 2001, c. 25, s. 239 (2); 2017, c. 10, Sched. 1, s. 26.

Other Criteria:

- (a) a request under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, if the council, board, commission or other body is the head of an institution for the purposes of that Act; or
- (b) an ongoing investigation respecting the municipality, a local board or a municipally controlled corporation by the Ombudsman appointed under the Ombudsman Act, an Ombudsman referred to in subsection 223.13 (1) of this Act, or the investigator referred to in subsection 239.2 (1). 2014, c. 13, Sched. 9, s. 22.

Carried.

8.0 RISING AND REPORTING OF CLOSED SESSION

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-C8)

Moved by D. Warden

Seconded by G. Jones

That the Board of Health rise with a report.

Carried.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-C3.1)

Moved by M. Peterson

Seconded by J. Couckuyt

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health accept the Chief Executive Officer's Report for May 22, 2025.

Carried.

9.0 FUTURE MEETING & EVENTS

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

Resolution # (2025-BOH-0522-9.0)

Moved by M. Peterson

Seconded by D. Warden

That the meeting adjourn to meet again on Thursday, June 26, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

Carried.

Confirmed: _____

