



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Niagara
Mental health for all

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 16, 2023

IN PERSON – 264 Welland Ave, St. Catharines
(Zoom link provided for special circumstances)

CALL TO ORDER

- At 6:00 p.m. the Chair advised that the Board did not currently meet quorum. The Chair announced that an informal meeting could take place in the interest of hearing informational items from present guests until quorum was achieved, however official business could not be transacted in the absence of quorum.

PRESENTATION

- Overlap Consultants – Strategic Plan 2024-2029 – Rachel Hofstetter provided an overview of the Strategic Plan for 2024-2029. The plan is human-centred design. There were a couple of word changes that the board members all agreed to have changed and/or removed. Overlap Consultants will adjust to the document to accommodate the recommendations and then finalize the document. The Strategic plan will be available to the staff and public in early 2024.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

- At 6:53 pm, the Chair advised that the Board had now achieved quorum.

Present: Andrew Bassingthwaighte (joined AT 6:15 pm), Timothy Nelles, Peter Fraser, Chris Ventura, Tara McKendrick (ex officio), Christopher Yendt (via zoom joined at 7:13pm), Heather Gillespie

Regrets: Faith Scott, Kelly Pilato

Recorder: Sherry Riddick

CALL TO ORDER

- Chris Ventura called the meeting to order at 6:53pm.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- The land acknowledgement was read by Chris Ventura.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT

- No conflict of interest was declared.

AGENDA

- The agenda was approved by all.

Moved by: Tim Nelles

Seconded by: Peter Fraser

That the Agenda for the Board Meeting of November 16, 2023 be adopted as circulated.

Carried.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING

- The minutes were approved by all.

Moved by: Andrew Bassingthwaighte

Seconded by: Peter Fraser

That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held Thursday October 26, 2023 be adopted as circulated.

Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

- There are no items to be ratified from the Committee Agenda items at this time.

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- **ED and Vice Chair Chris Ventura attended the Governance Symposium on November 5 and 6, 2023 in Toronto.** Vice Chair Chris Ventura will provide a report back of experience and learnings at the November 16th Board meeting, see below.
- The second phase of the **Trauma Informed Care Collaborative** was held November 2, 2023, led by Armstrong Strategy Group. This event brought the experts from University at Buffalo Institute on Trauma and Trauma Informed Care, who provided a morning of Trauma Informed Care training to public representatives such as municipal and regional councillors, business improvement association members and was supported by the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce. The intent was to share concepts, principles and approaches of Trauma Informed Care for increased understanding when interacting with or experiencing individuals in community. ED participated on a panel discussion

after the training session and the information was well received and appreciated by approximately 50 attendees representing businesses, elected officials and service providers in Niagara.

- In response to the Niagara Region's Homelessness Service System Request for Proposals, and a proposal that was submitted by CMHA Niagara related to continued funding for our Glendale Home Supportive Housing program, we have received an **invitation to enter into negotiation** to finalize the agreement. This meeting is scheduled for November 14, and will be attended by Heather Gillespie (Director Clinical Operations) and Tara McKendrick (Executive Director). Tara shared verbally that the meeting was held and it looks promising that CMHA Niagara will receive the funding.
- Executive Director is participating in **IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) training** throughout November, which is being provided by the Niagara Ontario Health Team. The aim of the training is to promote and improve the practice of public participation, or community engagement, that affect the public interest, and is based on a core value that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. This training supports Accreditation Standards and is directly relevant to the work of CMHA Niagara to ensure that client, family and caregiver voices are included in our decision making where relevant to impact. The concepts are also applicable to the continued practice of staff engagement and participation in decisions that impact them at CMHA Niagara.
- Advance notice for the Board regarding a **pending news release, highlighting partnership between Brock University and CMHA Niagara, and awareness of special event at Brock University on November 16, 2023, for those who are able to attend on campus.** Andrew B and Chris V attended. ***"Brock University partners with CMHA Niagara to pilot and evaluate their sports mental health program, Talk Today.*** (St. Catharines, Nov. 16, 2023) – Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Niagara and Brock University have established a new partnership to pilot and evaluate CMHA's Talk Today program – one of the most comprehensive mental health programs for amateur sports in Canada – with varsity student athletes. During the fall semester, more than 50 Brock athletes from the women's rugby and men's soccer teams participated in the pilot. As part of this Talk Today pilot, the teams received mental health and suicide prevention education and were paired with mental health coaches to provide support to any of the athletes in need of additional help throughout the season. Support from a mental health coach comes from two sources, one on-campus from the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre (SWAC) and off-campus from a CMHA Niagara staff member. CMHA Ontario and CMHA Niagara are also working with Dr. Philip Sullivan, chair of the department of kinesiology and the Centre for Healthy Youth Development through Sport, as well as graduate students Mishka Blacker and Joshua Celebre, to evaluate the program's effectiveness. Their research focuses on the impact the program has on mental health literacy and help seeking behaviour. This research is generously supported by grant funding from Mitacs and the Brock Research Centre. In addition to supporting athletes, CMHA Niagara, SWAC and

Brock Athletics are using their platforms during digital health week Nov. 13-19 to promote mental health services available to all students on and off campus. Students wanting to learn more about services can visit a dedicated kiosk in [insert facility] on campus on Nov. 16 from [insert times]. They can also learn more at brocku.ca/health-wellness-accessibility or niagara.cmha.ca. Originally launched by CMHA Ontario in partnership with the Ontario Hockey League in 2014, Talk Today provides an important opportunity to address the mental health needs of athletes across the province and across Canada. Since its inception, Talk Today has grown to support the two highest levels of junior hockey, the Canadian Hockey League and Canadian Junior Hockey League, while continuing to see expansion in post-secondary institutions and minor sports organizations.”

- Strategic Planning is on track, with planned presentation to the Board in November for adoption of the **2024-2029 Strategic Plan for CMHA Niagara**. In the meantime, the agency continues to operate guided by the current Strategic Plan which concludes its cycle in March 2024.

Moved by: Peter Fraser

Seconded by: Tim Nelles

That the ED Report for November 2023 be accepted.

Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- Chris Ventura – Report back from CMHA Ontario Governance Symposium – Chris V shared his report along with some recommendations. The board discussed the recommendation of cost sharing of a lawyer with CMHA Hamilton & CMHA Haldiman Norfolk to support all three organizations in this compliance project (to save costs and closer align our core governance components). Tim will reach out to some local law firms to get 3 quotes. There is now a lead at CMHA Ontario to support CMHA branches with Governance that the board can reach out to assist. Peter requested a presentation at a future board meeting about cyber security and the policies for the agency.

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Link to Meeting survey:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FYRSVZ3>

ADJOURNMENT

Chris Ventura moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:09pm.