



## NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Virtual Annual Meeting concludes hospital's 2019/20 fiscal year – *Pam Went elected for second consecutive year as Board Chair***

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020**—The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) Board of Directors hosted its Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 18th.

For the first time in hospital history the Annual Meeting, chaired by **Pam Went**, NHH Board Chair, was conducted virtually, in light of the pandemic restrictions on in-person gatherings.

Opening remarks commenced with a formal territorial acknowledgement, delivered by Hospital President and CEO Linda Davis. Pam Went called the meeting to order pursuant to the By-Laws, welcoming Board Directors and Community Committee members, hospital senior staff, as well as **Lori Huber**, the representative from NHH auditor KPMG. As the first item of business, the minutes of the June 2020 Annual Meeting were approved as presented.

**Tom McLean**, Chair of the Board's Finance and Audit Committee, presented the NHH Financial Statements for the year ended March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, referencing in the course of his remarks the [detailed financial statements](#) available as of June 11<sup>th</sup>, per public notice, on the hospital website.

"NHH finished the year in a positive position with a net surplus of \$1.7 million, 2.2 per cent of total revenues, due in part to cost savings initiatives and base and one-time funding adjustments from the Ministry of Health," McLean noted. "Looking forward to the significant future investment required to support NHH's share of the regional procurement of a Clinical Information System (CIS), the Board granted approval to set aside \$1 million from the surplus for this high priority investment." This will be added to the funds (\$500,000) set aside for the CIS in 2018/19.

"There are uncertainties going into fiscal year 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation," said McLean. "NHH will continue to work cooperatively with its partners within the community and the Ministry in an ongoing effort to achieve long-term financial sustainability while also maintaining, or enhancing, vital patient care services for the benefit of the community that we are honoured to serve."

KPMG's **Lori Huber** presented a positive Auditors' Report. The audited financial statements were accepted as presented and auditors KPMG LLP were appointed again as auditors for fiscal year 2020/21—year five of a five-year engagement.

The next item of business was the consideration of amendments to the NHH By-Laws. **Lynda Kay**, Chair of the Board's Governance Committee, summarized the proposed amendments.

"By-Laws are reviewed on a regular basis," Kay noted, "to ensure we are meeting current governance best practices and our local requirements as a hospital. A draft version of the proposed revisions had been distributed to members in the pre-meeting package. At meetings

held earlier in the year, the members of the Governance Committee reviewed and approved the proposed By-Law amendments. Without exception, this year's amendments are of the housekeeping variety," noted Kay. They were accepted as presented and are available for the public under the [Accountability tab](#) of the hospital website, [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca).

The Board Chair's report followed the approval of the amended By-Laws. **Pam Went** referred attendees to her written message, available in a special abbreviated edition of NHH's Annual Report published today in electronic form, on [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca).

In addition to her written remarks, Went recognized the contribution of the [NHH Foundation](#) over the past year. "Our hospital receives exceptional support from its community through the Foundation's efforts and creativity," she noted. "I want to take this opportunity to directly thank **Tyler Hathway**, past President of the NHH Foundation, for his many, many hours of volunteer effort on behalf of the NHH Foundation and the Hospital. Tyler joined our Board in June 2017 and has, like the Foundation chairs who preceded him, taken a very active and engaged role in the capital needs of this hospital. All told, in the past year alone, the NHH Foundation raised \$3.6 million to go toward the purchase of capital equipment priorities and related supports. I understand the dollars raised for NHH from the NHH Foundation since this hospital opened in 2003 now total just over \$57 million. Without a doubt -- a wonderful achievement."

"We simply couldn't be the hospital we are today, or strive to be tomorrow, without the NHH Foundation's ongoing support, and the support of all the donors you rally," said Went. "We have given the Foundation a tall order for the coming years, and we thank you, personally, for all you have done and continue to do for NHH. We are grateful to the members of your Foundation Board, your network of volunteers, your Executive Director **Rhonda Cunningham**, and the Foundation staff, for their tireless efforts."

Likewise, Went also acknowledged the important volunteer role performed by the members of the NHH Auxiliary, led by President **Marg Hilborn**, who—until the declaration of the pandemic, and the temporary pause on in-hospital volunteers—support NHH in almost every corner, be it in the delivery of patient and family-centred care, or through fund raising for capital equipment priorities.

"Through their retail operations, Petticoat Lane and the Little Treasure Shop, their Crafter events and more, the Auxiliary volunteers know how to make a dollar, and they turn each and every one back to NHH while providing wonderfully enriching volunteer opportunities for their 350+ members," said Went.

Underscoring the Auxiliary's contribution to the patient experience, Went added: "We know that it is often the small gestures that make the biggest difference to patients and their loved ones. On behalf of the Board, Marg, I thank you and your team for your exceptional volunteer work once again this past year."

Also recognized for their commitment over the past year were the Board Directors and community members. "Service on a hospital Board, while extremely rewarding, is no small commitment," said Went. "Together we have faced financial challenges, increased local patient needs and a pandemic... in the midst of a healthcare landscape which is transforming, significantly and rapidly."

In the context of that transformation, Went pointed to NHH's implementation over the past year of a Corporate Balanced Scorecard. "The number of indicators has been reduced, allowing a more focused approach to quality improvement and better results for our patients," said Went, recognizing that continuous quality improvement is supported at NHH by the members of the [Patient and Family Advisory Council](#) who Went recognized for "their patience and sound advice."

Concluding with thanks to the NHH staff and medical professionals, Went specifically thanked **Dr. Mukesh Bhargava**, NHH Chief of Staff, for his leadership in the past year, both at NHH and in the community, saying: “You have certainly been tested over the past few months. We are very fortunate to have you at our table and we look forward to your counsel in the years ahead.”

Recognizing the work of President and CEO **Linda Davis**, Went said: “We are equally fortunate that our President and CEO decided to join our organization seven years ago this fall. With Linda at the helm the first three quarters of the 2019/20 year saw strong operational and financial performance underpinned by a solid risk management plan. Being in such a strong position was a big reason why NHH has weathered and keeps weathering the subsequent months of COVID-19. The other big reason is the cadre of leaders, managers and staff that Linda has assembled and developed into a high performance team. We appreciate all you do.”

**Linda Davis** also delivered personal remarks at the meeting, in addition to written highlights published in the *Annual Report*.

“Healthcare and hospital activity rarely stand still, and the past year has been no exception -- in fact, in 2019/20 NHH has seen several unprecedented events,” said Davis.

Speaking to the in-year funding injection received in November 2019, Davis said: “In November NHH received an historic in-year funding injection of \$3.79 million. The funding was proof of the government’s commitment to fix inequities that have long challenged NHH and many medium-sized hospitals. This was a truly memorable day for the Hospital as it finally opened the door to long-term stability for our operations and the opportunity to protect and better plan for the core service needs in this growing community.”

Also highlighted by Davis was the “once-in-a-century journey” which began on March 11, 2020 when the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

“The next weeks, and now months, have been spent ensuring the Hospital was prepared, with health care partners in the community, to support a potential influx of COVID-19 positive patients. I am extremely grateful for the amazing work done by NHH staff and physicians who literally overnight put in place the structures and processes to support NHH’s COVID-19 Assessment Centre and, just a few short weeks after that, developed a pandemic patient pathway which painstakingly mapped out safe pathways to support the needs of patients who may have contracted the virus and those who rely on us for other urgent services while also keeping our team safe,” said Davis.

The work done from March to December 2019 to strengthen NHH’s relationships across the local health and social care sectors and, together, form the [Ontario Health Team of Northumberland](#)—one of the province’s first Ontario Health Teams (OHTs)—was also highlighted by Davis as a key achievement of the past year. “[The OHT-N] proved to be solid ground on which NHH and our OHT-N partners could come together to quickly support local patient needs during the very unusual times created by the pandemic,” she said, underscoring the benefit of weekly conference calls with Public Health and members of the OHT-N as key channels for the sharing supplies, resources information and support in Northumberland, including outreach to the broader network of long-term care and retirement residences to offer assistance and support. “The OHT-N proved to be the perfect vehicle through which this critical collaboration could occur across our County, and I want to extend my gratitude to the Ministry of Health for supporting our local efforts.”

Concluding with a thank you to the community, Davis said: “The pandemic has highlighted some of the weaknesses within our health and social care infrastructure. It has also highlighted the amazing support NHH has from this community. There are so many examples of acts of kindness and generous donations that have been provided. It is with deep appreciation that I say thank you

to each and every one of you for all the support you have provided., We are in this together and together we will get through.”

**Elizabeth Selby and Cyndi Gilmer** delivered the report of the Board's Nominating Committee. The Board endorsed the Committee's recommendation that Don Morrison, Ward 2 (Cobourg), be elected for a three-year term. Most recently a Community Committee member since 2017, Morrison accepted an interim appointment to the Board [in December 2019](#) to fill a vacancy.

Five re-appointments were approved for the following Directors, all for three-year terms:

- **Lynda Kay**, Ward 2
- **Michael McAllister**, Ward 2
- **Elizabeth Selby**, Ward 3
- **Tom McLean**, Ward 3
- **Dave Slater**, Ward 3

Finally, three re-appointments of ex officio Board members were approved, all for one-year terms:

- **Linda Davis**, President and CEO
- **Dr. Mukesh Bhargava**, Chief of Staff
- **Susan Walsh**, VP, Patient Services and Chief Nursing Executive

Biographies for all will be found on the Board pages of the hospital website.

At the Board meeting immediately following the Annual Meeting, Board Directors unanimously appointed **Pam Went** as the Board's Chair for 2020/21 fiscal year. Also appointed unanimously were **Lynda Kay**, First Vice-Chair, and David Slater, Second Vice-Chair.

For more information on the NHH Board of Directors please see the Accountability tab of [nhh.ca](http://nhh.ca). NHH's *2019/20 Annual Report to the Community* is also available on the hospital's website, under About NHH. Printed copies are available on request from the hospital's Public Affairs office (905-377-7757).

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**About Northumberland Hills Hospital** – Located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto, NHH delivers a broad range of acute, post-acute, outpatient and diagnostic services. Acute services include emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, obstetrical care and palliative care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care and rehabilitation. Mental health care, chemotherapy, dialysis and 16 other ambulatory care clinics are offered on an outpatient basis through partnerships with regional centres and nearby specialists. NHH offers a full range of diagnostic services, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT) and mammography. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 60,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs approximately 600 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians and volunteers. NHH is an active member of Ontario Health (East) – formerly the Central East Local Health Integration Network. For more information, please visit [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca) or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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