



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

BACKGROUNDER – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Questions and Answers – Governance Process

Northumberland County, Tuesday, JUNE 8, 2010

Question: Will there be an election with votes for different candidates for Board Directors at the Members' Meeting?

The NHH Board will present a slate of candidates to be elected by acclamation to the Annual and Special Meeting of the Members (ASM) on June 17th. For 2010, the slate of candidates equals the number of vacancies, and hence, no voting among multiple candidates will take place at the ASM.

In accordance with Hospital By-laws, which have previously been approved by Hospital Members, only candidates who have been nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board will be considered for election at the ASM.

Question: Why aren't Members being allowed to vote on candidates other than those recommended by the Board's Nominating Committee?

Last year, Hospital Members approved By-law amendments to ensure that we select and maintain a skills-based board.

A skills-based board is widely considered to be a cornerstone of best practice. It is encouraged by the Ontario Hospital Association and confirmed by the Auditor General of Ontario as producing better care for patients and improved financial results for hospitals.

The Board's Nominating Committee carefully considered all potential candidates and made its decisions based on a strict set of requirements including skill, experience, ward representation and effective succession planning.

Only candidates recommended by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board will be presented to Hospital Members for election. For 2010, the slate of candidates equals the number of vacancies, and hence, no voting among multiple candidates will take place at the ASM.



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Question: Why is the process different this year?

Last year, Hospital Members approved By-law amendments to ensure that we select and maintain a skills-based board.

This has been part of the process of renewal at the Hospital that aims to provide the best possible oversight and quality patient care while ensuring the Hospital meets its accountabilities with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Central East Local Health Integration Network and other stakeholders.

Question: The community built this Hospital, why can't the community choose who governs it?

The Nominating Committee consists of members of our community that are serving the Hospital Board as volunteer Directors. The Directors are also Members of the corporation.

The Hospital is fulfilling its obligation to provide the best possible oversight and quality patient care while ensuring the Hospital meets its accountabilities with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Central East Local Health Integration Network and other stakeholders.

Maintaining a skills-based board is widely considered to be a cornerstone of best practice. It is encouraged by the Ontario Hospital Association and confirmed by the Auditor General of Ontario as producing better care for patients and improved financial results for hospitals.

It also prevents the ability of small, special interest groups, which may not represent the best interests of the community as a whole, to push their agenda through a replacement of some or all Directors of the Board.



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Question: Who is on the Board's Nominating Committee and how did they conduct the candidate selection process?

The Board's Nominating Committee is composed of John Farrell (Chair), Bill Gerber, Henry Pankratz, Dean Pepper, and Heather Sculthorpe.

The five existing Directors whose terms are ending, all indicated an interest to continue to serve the Board for another term, declared conflicts of interest and removed themselves from the Board's decisions relating to the nomination process.

During the 2010 nomination process, a number of new nominees were interviewed and considered by the Board's Nominating Committee.

The Board's Nominating Committee carefully considered all potential candidates and made its decisions based on a strict set of requirements including skill, experience, ward representation and effective succession planning.

All candidates must be recommended by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board.

For 2010, the slate of candidates equals the number of vacancies, and hence, no voting among multiple candidates will take place at the Annual and Special Meeting of the Members. On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board, a slate of candidates comprised of the five existing Directors will be elected by acclamation at the ASM.

Question: It looks like the Board just re-appointed itself. How can we know the process was fair?

This is an open and accountable process approved by Hospital Members at last year's Annual General Meeting.

The move to a board comprised of individuals with a range and mix of skills, experience and knowledge is essential to ensure the appropriate balance in decision making and oversight. This is a best practice in governance that is encouraged by the Ontario Hospital Association and confirmed by the Auditor General of Ontario as producing better care for patients and improved financial results for hospitals.