

Virtual Annual Meeting concludes hospital's 2020-21 fiscal year

The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) Board of Directors hosted its Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 17th. Held virtually on Zoom, the meeting was chaired by NHH Board Chair **Pam Went**, and opened with a look back at the three waves of the global pandemic, narrated by **President and CEO Linda Davis**. Staff, physicians and patient/family advisor representatives each shared their unique experiences, the lessons learned and the positive learnings that will be carried forward with community partners as vaccines gain hold and we emerge, together, from COVID-19.

Tom McLean, Chair of the Board's Finance and Audit Committee, presented the financial statements for the year ended March 31st, 2021, reporting that NHH finished the year in a positive position with a net surplus of \$3.1 million, 3.5 per cent of total revenues and realization of a goal—identified through the 2016-17 Hospital Improvement Plan process—to maintain a modest annual surplus.

Praising President and CEO Linda Davis for her diligent advocacy to successfully highlight the unique challenges of community hospitals, McLean reflected on the challenging financial situation of years past and thanked Davis for her efforts on behalf of the community.

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 2021/22.

The Board Chair's report followed the appointment of the auditors. In addition to her written remarks, provided in NHH's **2020-21 Annual Report to the Community**, also released at the meeting, **Pam Went** emphasized the contribution of the NHH Foundation over the past year.

"In the past year alone, the NHH Foundation has raised more than \$3 million to support the purchase of lifesaving medical equipment to help keep quality patient care close to home," said Went. "You have now accepted the biggest challenge of your history, a new capital campaign, led by an exceptional choice in campaign chair, **Hank Vandermeer**. 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."

Likewise, Went also acknowledged the important volunteer role performed by the NHH Auxiliary, led by President **Marg Hilborn**.

"COVID restrictions meant volunteers could not be onsite as they would be normally. NHH has greatly missed the contribution of the NHH Auxiliary to the patient and staff experience," said Went. "...the team looks forward to the return of the Auxiliary volunteers in their burgundy tabards when the lifting of COVID precautions permits. The care provided at NHH is better for your contributions and we look forward to the renewed relationship with the Auxiliary as restrictions lift and your new governance structure rolls out in the year ahead."

Also recognized for their commitment to NHH over the past year were the Board Directors and community members. "You made the transition to virtual without missing a beat, and I know NHH is grateful for that. Likewise, NHH's Patient and Family Advisory Council volunteers did the same," said Went, referring the audience to the **Annual Report** for more on the PFAC's ongoing work at NHH.

Two Board directors left the Board table following the Annual Meeting. **Ann Logan** was thanked for dedicating over 13 years of service to the hospital, through service on the NHH Foundation and, most recently, hospital Board. **Bob Carman** was also recognized for almost a decade of service on the NHH Board and wise counsel.

Dr. Mukesh Bhargava, NHH Chief of Staff, was thanked for his leadership in the past year, both at NHH and in the community. Dr. Bhargava concludes his first four-year term at the end of June, 2021. Pam Went confirmed at the meeting that he has agreed to a second term, noting: "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 outgoing President and CEO **Linda Davis**, who will retire after more than seven years at NHH at the end of July, Went said: "Linda's achievements are many: financial stability, enhanced services to meet the needs of our growing and diverse population, strategic capital improvements, the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N)—an innovative model of care delivery that she championed from the start—and, finally, a culture of teamwork that is inclusive of health- and social-care providers and the patients and families we serve."

"Linda, the Board is extremely grateful for the expertise you brought to this role, the vision you have had for continuously building on NHH's rich history, and your tireless—and I do mean tireless—dedication. We thank you for your service. You go with our sincere best wishes for a long and healthy retirement, and our gratitude for leaving NHH the strong and resilient hospital it is today."

Linda Davis also delivered personal remarks at the meeting, in addition to written highlights published in the **Annual Report**. Beginning with a thank you to the staff and physicians of NHH, Davis said: "you are truly my heroes. You have been steadfast through the past 15 months of the pandemic—always providing excellent, compassionate care. And all the while, coping with your own home/life challenges. Through everything you have put NHH first and for that I am deeply appreciative." Also recognized by Davis were the many partners NHH has worked with in the community as well as the Board of Directors, the leadership team and the community at large. "We are truly stronger together!"

Elizabeth Selby delivered the report of the Board's Nominating Committee. The Board endorsed the Committee's recommendation that **Bree Nixon** (Ward 1), **Sharon Anderson** (Ward 3) and **Ross Stevenson** (Ward 3) be elected to the Board for a three-year term. Three re-appointments were also approved, all for three-year terms: **Cyndi Gilmer**, Ward 1; **Starr Olsen**, Ward 2; and **Pam Went**, Ward 3.

At the Board meeting immediately following the Annual Meeting, Board Directors unanimously appointed **Pam Went** as the Board's Chair for 2021/22 fiscal year. Also appointed unanimously were **Elizabeth Selby**, First Vice-Chair, and **David Slater**, Second Vice-Chair. Two new community members were welcomed: **Myles Noel** and **Laurel Savoy**.

For more on the NHH Board please see the Accountability tab of nhh.ca. NHH's **2020/21 Annual Report to the Community** will be found on the hospital's website. Copies are available in alternate formats on request from the hospital's Public Affairs office (905-377-7757).

Northumberland Hills Hospital Board of Directors announces appointment of new President and CEO



Susan Walsh has been announced as NHH's next President and CEO, effective August 3rd, 2021.

"Following a thorough recruitment process supported by an external search firm, the Board's CEO Recruitment Committee—and entire Board of Directors—unanimously endorsed Susan as our successful candidate," said Pam Went, Chair, NHH Board of Directors, in an internal announcement to staff and key partners on Friday, June 25th. "An integral member of NHH's Senior Management Team since November, 2017, Susan Walsh has proven herself to be a skilled senior healthcare leader committed to quality patient- and family-centred care, collaborative multi-disciplinary teams and organizational excellence grounded in evidence."

A resident of Port Hope since 2017, Susan Walsh's work at NHH as Vice President, Patient Services, Chief Nursing Executive and Chief Clinical Information Officer has built on her previous expertise which spans an acute academic hospital, a national community care organization and a leading social sector agency.

"Passionate about Northumberland Hills Hospital, Susan will build on the legacy of our outgoing CEO, Linda Davis," said Went. "I am confident she will continue to lead Northumberland Hills Hospital toward the vision of *exceptional patient care, every time* for every patient and family we serve. When she moves into the President and CEO position on August 3rd, Susan will bring with her not only a strong knowledge of the organization but also a unique combination of community and hospital expertise. Please join me in congratulating Susan Walsh on her appointment and, again, thanking Linda Davis for her exceptional service to NHH and the community we exist to serve."

Susan Walsh will begin her new role at NHH on August 3rd, 2021. For the full announcement, please see the related media release at nhh.ca and on NHH's social media channels.

