

NEWS RELEASE/FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Annual Meeting concludes hospital's 2023-2024 fiscal year— Outgoing Board Chair Elizabeth Selby recognized, incoming Chair Cyndi Gilmer and Vice Chair Michael McAllister welcomed

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Wednesday, June 26, 2024—The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) Board of Directors hosted their Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 26th. Held in person at the Peter B. & Mary T. Smith Community Education Centre on the second floor of NHH, the meeting was chaired by **Elizabeth Selby**, who formally completed her final year as a returning Board Chair at the June meeting.

Opening remarks commenced with a territorial acknowledgement delivered by Hospital President and CEO, **Susan Walsh**. **Elizabeth Selby** called the meeting to order pursuant to the By-Laws, welcoming Board Directors and Community Committee members, hospital staff and physicians, and guests.

Following approval of the minutes of the June 2023 Annual Meeting, **Michael McAllister**, Chair of the Board's Finance and Audit Committee, presented the NHH Financial Statements for the year ended March 31st, 2024.

Despite closing the fiscal year in a deficit position, due in large part to provincial arbitration awards honoured earlier in the year, Michael McAllister confirmed NHH is in a strong position to lean into growth in 2024-2025. Planned investments in capital and infrastructure combined with ongoing collaboration with our community partners will ensure the hospital is able to successfully balance the growing needs of the community while maintaining quality care and experience for staff and patients.

Anoop Michael, representing NHH's auditor KPMG, presented a positive Auditor's Report and the audited financial statements were accepted.

The Board Chair's report followed as **Elizabeth Selby** began her address reflecting on how, despite its financial challenges, NHH continues to find innovative ways to uphold its four strategic pillars: Connected care close to home, Accountable care, Responsive and healthy work environment and Exceptional patient care, every time, for every person.

In addition to her written message, which will be found on page 1 in the [2023-2024 Annual Report to the Community](#), Selby expressed gratitude and admiration for the community spirit upheld by the many volunteer partner organizations and Board members who support the hospital, saying, "It is often said: Board volunteering is not for the faint of heart – but this hospital has an exceptional team of Board volunteers, and it is extremely inspiring and rewarding work to participate

in hospital governance. I would also like to extend gratitude to the commitment shown by the NHH Foundation, NHH Auxiliary, our Patient and Family Advisory Council and other volunteer partners.”

Selby also took an opportunity to thank two outgoing Board members, **Starr Olsen** and **Pamela Went**, who have both served, tirelessly, three, three-year terms.

Starr Olsen, of Ward 2* served the Board for nine years and was most recently the Chair of the Quality and Safety Committee.

Pamela Went, of Ward 3*, also served for nine years and was Chair during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to her steady leadership through that time she chaired several committees and played a critical role with our CEO in some very innovative joint strategic planning with our community partners.

Selby closed her report, her last as outgoing Board Chair, by thanking **Susan Thivierge**, Executive Assistant, **Susan Walsh**, President and CEO, Chief of Staff **Dr. Mukesh Bhargava**, and the NHH Senior Leadership Team for their support during her second tenure as Board Chair.

She also expressed gratitude for her peers on the Board of Directors, saying “I am equally grateful to the Board Directors and Community Members for their continued dedication and commitment to service excellence. It has been a pleasure to be part of this collaborative community spirit. It has been my honour and privilege to serve as Chair of the NHH Board for two terms (2017-2019 and 2022 through 2024). I will watch with keen interest from the sidelines as our hospital continues to grow and evolve with our community.”

Following her address, Selby introduced **Susan Walsh**, President and CEO, to deliver personal remarks.

Walsh spoke to many key highlights published in the Annual Report, including several growth milestones that the hospital experienced over the last year, stating, “Our community is growing rapidly, as is the need for care. In the last year alone, we saw a rise in volumes in nearly all services. Emergency Department visits significantly increased by over 2,403 to exceed 40,000 annual visits for the first time. Total admissions jumped from 5,027 to 5,493 and we saw additional increases in chemotherapy visits and out-patient ambulatory care visits to name a few.”

Speaking to the Health Human Resources shortages that have impacted many hospitals across the country, Walsh shared a positive update on the success of NHH’s recruitment efforts and continued growth, saying, “I am pleased to share that we are moving towards stabilization. We currently have 885 full- and part-time staff, and 168 medical practitioners at NHH, and we continue to onboard new members for a variety of roles across the hospital.”

Walsh noted that despite being in its 20th anniversary year, NHH is on a continued path of evolution and growth, which has been guided by the hospital’s multi-year Strategic Plan.

“Although we are in our 20th anniversary year as a hospital, NHH is continuing to grow and gain new competencies,” said Susan Walsh, President and CEO. “We are currently in the third year of our multi-year Strategic Plan. This Plan is becoming more ambitious and vibrant as time goes on. Guided by our Strategic Plan Framework we are continuing to strengthen our Shared Purpose, *People First*, with the completion this past spring of our first Experience Framework, exploring new and innovative ways to support the community of west Northumberland County.”

In addition to moving a motion related to the temporary ‘red lining’ of necessary updates to the Corporate Bylaws to accommodate recent legislative changes pending the cyclical review planned for 2025, **Cyndi Gilmer**, Vice Chair and Chair of NHH’s Governance and Nominating Committees, delivered the report of the Board’s Nominating Committee.

The Board endorsed the Committee’s recommendation that Community members **Myles Noel**, Ward 2, **Leslie Orpana**, Ward 2, **Carol Anne Bell-Smith**, Ward 2 and **Randall Freeborn**, Ward 3 be elected for a three-year term.

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

- **Dr. Mukesh Bhargava**, Chief of Staff
- **Susan Walsh**, President and CEO

The Board also welcomed **Dr. Paul Ketov**, incoming President of the General Medical Staff Association (GMSA), while recognizing and thanking **Dr. Jude Obomighie**, outgoing President of the GMSA, who has completed his two-year term.

Dr. Kate Everdell who will move into the Vice President GMSA role and, in this capacity, an ex officio role, was also welcomed by the Board.

Jennifer Gillard, Vice President, Patient Experience, Public Affairs and Strategic Partnerships, presented the Experience Partner Award for Exceptional Service. The **Award** was introduced by NHH in 2023 to recognize an individual Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) partner who has demonstrated exemplary volunteer service and contribution to enhancing the care experience at NHH.

The recipient of the 2024 Experience Partner Award for Exceptional Service was **Ann Dobby**, of Cobourg.

A member of NHH’s PFAC since September 2021, Ann brings the patient and caregiver voice to a number of clinical and corporate tables at NHH.

Ann served on the Integrated Stroke Advisory Committee that supported the opening of that unit last year, and she is an active supporter of NHH’s Human Resource team’s recruitment efforts, bringing the patient and caregiver perspective to the hiring committees of many clinical and administrative roles.

On the clinical side, Ann is the PFAC representative on our Medicine Quality and Practice Committee and NHH's Skin Health Best Practice Working Group.

"Ann, on behalf of NHH, and with the strong support of your PFAC peers, and a glowing endorsement from PFAC Chair Bonnie McKee, congratulations on this well-deserved recognition," said Jennifer Gillard. "You are a true champion for the voice of the patient and their caregivers and a very strong example of what we mean when we say patient and family partner. Thank you for your service, we look forward to working together in the year ahead as we continue our journey to an integrated experience program here at NHH."

Prior to the meeting's termination, a special presentation was made by President and CEO Susan Walsh to outgoing Chair, Elizabeth Selby.

Recognizing Selby for her tireless service of the hospital through two terms in the Chair role, Walsh's presentation was followed by applause and a standing ovation by the members and guests in attendance.

At the first meeting of the 2024-2025 Board, held immediately following the Annual Meeting, Cyndi Gilmer was welcomed as NHH's incoming Board Chair, commencing a two-year term, together with Michael McAllister who will serve as Vice Chair.

[***NHH's 2023-2024 Annual Report to the Community***](#) is available now on the hospital's website. Copies are available in alternate formats on request from the hospital's Public Affairs office (905-377-7757).

For more information on the NHH Board of Directors, please see the Accountability tab of nhh.ca. Information reflecting the 2024-2025 Board will be updated in the coming weeks.

*Ward 1 is the Municipality of Port Hope

*Ward 2 is the Town of Cobourg

*Ward 3 is all other townships within the Hospital's West Northumberland catchment area (Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand) as well as Alderville First Nation.

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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, cancer and supportive care, dialysis and 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 63,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope, Alderville First Nation and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs more than 700 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians, midwives and volunteers. NHH is an active member of Ontario Health (East)—formerly the Central East Local Health Integration Network—and the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland. For more information, please visit nhh.ca or follow us on Facebook [@northumberlandhillshosp](https://www.facebook.com/northumberlandhillshosp) or Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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