



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2014/15 concluded with an unexpected operating surplus due to one-time, non-recurring funding – Ongoing financial challenges forecast for 2015/16

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Wednesday, June 23, 2015—NHH’s Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday, June 18th in the hospital’s Education Centre. Approximately 60 people attended the evening event chaired by Board Chair Jack Russell, including Board Directors, community committee volunteers, hospital staff and area residents.

The Financial Statements for the year ended March 31, 2015, were presented by Bill Gerber, Chair of the Board’s Finance and Audit Committee. Gerber’s report confirmed that NHH concluded the 2014/15 fiscal year with an operating surplus of \$896,151, thus meeting its Hospital Service Accountability Agreement with the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN) and the requirements necessary to receive a second funding installment under the province’s Working Funds Deficit Initiative.

With the \$422,900 in Working Funds Deficit Initiative dollars (funds applicable only to paying down existing debt), NHH’s total operating surplus at year end was \$1,319,051.

“This operating surplus was not anticipated in the fall of 2014,” explained Gerber. In the fall of last year NHH was forecasting an operating deficit as large as \$800,000.

“Our surplus was achieved as a result of over \$2 million in one-time, non-recurring funding and revenue received in the very last quarter of the fiscal year,” he noted, adding that the one-time funding included unplanned revenue from the Central East LHIN—to alleviate eligible operating pressures such as surge and non-urgent patient transportation—as well as unexpected revenue related to our hospital’s satellite dialysis program.

Without these dollars, NHH would have incurred an operating deficit of \$771,024. Though NHH continues to be an efficient provider of high quality health care with good wait time performance, low administrative costs and cost-efficient delivery of care, the significant one-time funding received in 2014/15 will not continue for fiscal 2015/16. As a result, NHH is facing an operating shortfall against expenses of approximately \$1.1 million for 2015/16, based on continued operating pressures, salary and wage escalation, and inflation assumptions.

“NHH will continue to implement strategies to increase revenues and reduce our costs where practical without negatively affecting quality patient care in our programs and services,” said Gerber. “We will also welcome the LHIN-led external Operational Review, expected to begin this summer. The purpose of this Review will be to facilitate the development of a satisfactory Improvement Plan to resolve our financial challenges not just for 2015/16 but for the long-term as well.”

KPMG's Vicki Leakey presented the Auditors' Report; members approved the firm's re-appointment as NHH's external auditors for fiscal year 2015/16.

Jack Russell opened his remarks with a special tribute to the "dedicated service and gentle, wise counsel" of the late Christine Stewart, whose eldest son Doug, and granddaughter Meredith, attended the meeting.

Chair of the hospital's Quality and Safety Committee and NHH Board representative on the NHH Foundation Board at the time of her death in April, 2015, Christine was widely respected for her local, national and international community service. The Board presented her family with a token of appreciation that would have been presented to her at the end of her term of service. With the NHH Foundation's help, a lilac tree has been planted in the new front garden at NHH in her memory.

Also recognized for their service to the Board were Ed Meurbis and Tom Sears.

Meurbis, who joined the Board as a Director in April 2014, resigned for personal reasons in March.

"On behalf of the Board, I thank Ed for his dedicated service," said Russell.

Tom Sears, who joined the NHH Board as a Director in 2012, was also recognized for his service.

"While some may find board governance dry stuff, Tom—who brought 34 years of senior banking sector experience and a PhD in corporate governance—does not! Unfortunately for NHH, others are also after his unique expertise and he has recently accepted a new volunteer role with Golf Canada."

Thanking his fellow Board members, community committee volunteers and medical staff leaders for their work this past year, Russell recognized the exceptional support NHH receives from its community via its two largest volunteer organizations: the NHH Auxiliary and the NHH Foundation.

Russell also recognized the volunteers who support patient care as well as those involved in Board governance, noting: "Service on a hospital Board is no small commitment, but this year has been particularly demanding as, together with our funders, we have wrestled with continued financial challenges. We have an exceptionally strong team here at NHH. I thank you in advance for your commitment and your skills, as we work together to ensure a strong, stable and sustainable hospital that efficiently provides the highest quality patient care, close to home."

President and CEO Linda Davis echoed Russell's comments regarding the strength of NHH's team.

Reflecting on the almost two years she has been with NHH, Davis observed: "The time has gone quickly and it has been busy! Staff and physicians who have been part of this hospital for a number of years have told me they cannot recall when it has been as busy in the hospital. And the data would support this feeling as we registered an average occupancy of 102 per cent in 2014/15, frequently stretching resources as the number of patients was greater than budgeted capacity.

"Throughout this year of increased activity, frequent surges and even an internal code orange, our team has come together, adapting to the rising activity and acuity, and providing excellent, compassionate care," said Davis, citing the Critical Care Support Team and the many new

Montessori techniques, such as music therapy, introduced to better support those patients experiencing dementia.

Northumberland PATH was a key focus of the CEO's remarks. "The enthusiasm shown by seniors, their caregivers and the providers involved in this unique project has been remarkable. It is not a wonder that the project has to date received a number of awards and I am proud to be a part of this innovative work with The Change Foundation."

While The Change Foundation funding concludes this month, NHH and the PATH partners are seeking opportunities to sustain the advances made in the community through PATH. "Discussions with the Central East LHIN and the Ministry of Health regarding the next steps for PATH have been very encouraging," said Davis. "Stay tuned for more in the coming weeks."

To the continued financial challenges, and the upcoming External Operational Review, Davis voiced confidence in the team of committed, caring and competent staff, physicians and volunteers. "We will find a path through this uncertainty," she promised. "We must remain focused on the things we can control, providing the best possible patient care, every time."

Examples of that care were shared first-hand by the evening's guest speakers.

Former patient Jennifer Sinker traveled from the Hamilton area to share the story of her son's birth at NHH just over a year ago.

A normal pregnancy by all accounts, the situation changed suddenly. What she had anticipated as a midwife-assisted birth transitioned very rapidly into emergency surgery.

"In minutes, a team was assembled here and my son was out. Everything happened so quickly. Having a hospital so close is a great thing and I am so thankful for the quick reaction of everyone on the team who stabilized him and worked with [urgent patient transportation service ORNG] to transport him to Sick Kids in Toronto.

"The collaboration between NHH and Sick Kids saved my son, absolutely saved my son," said Striker. "He's doing great now! Thank you!"

Colleen Hadwen-Parnell shared a story of her own journey through many of NHH's services, beginning when she found a lump in her breast and had a feeling something wasn't right. A biopsy was completed soon after in NHH's Diagnostic Imaging department, confirming cancer. In two weeks, she was in surgery for a lumpectomy and lymph node removal. Chemotherapy followed, also here at NHH, and, ultimately, radiation, delivered at the Central East Regional Cancer Centre in Durham but, thanks to an expanded partnership, with the consultation components delivered here, close to home.

"I can't say enough about Dr. [Andrew] Stratford, the chemotherapy team and all the departments I dealt with during my treatments," said Hadwen-Parnell. "They were so great with me. [Cancer] treatments are amazing today and I never stopped working! Thank you, NHH."

The final story shared at the meeting was that of 93-year-old Janet Pearson, who, in the past two months, has been an inpatient on both NHH's Restorative Care and medical unit. Told by her caregivers, daughter Dorothy Davidson and son-in-law John Davidson, her story illustrated a situation many find themselves in, when an aging parent with multiple chronic conditions goes into a health crisis.

Beginning with their arrival in the NHH Emergency Department, John Davidson said: “The care has been excellent. It has been a long journey...but everybody here is like family. Referencing NHH nurse practitioners, several physicians and the Central East CCAC, as well as the many nursing staff who have cared for her mom, daughter Dorothy concurred. “It has been a wonderful, wonderful experience. We truly appreciate all NHH has done.”

Lynda Kay, Committee Chair, delivered the Report of the Board’s Nominating Committee.

“Our Committee received a very good response to the open call for Community Members issued in March of this year,” said Kay. “Following the call our Committee met to review the upcoming vacancies on NHH’s skills-based Board and to review candidates who had expressed an interest in those vacant positions.”

Three individuals have since been recommended as Community Committee Members. They will sit on Board Committees for two-year terms with full Committee voting privileges. Kay introduced all three at the Annual Meeting.

David Slater, from Ward 3 (Grafton) brings senior human resources expertise including performance and succession management, and employee relations gained during more than 20 years with the Government of Ontario in the Ministry of Government Services and the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Michael McAllister, from Ward 2 (Cobourg) is a Certified Professional Accountant. “Michael brings added financial expertise to the Board,” said Kay, “as well as a range of other skills relevant to hospital governance including strategic planning, facilities management and information technology.

Mary Ann Peek is the third new Community Committee volunteer. A resident of Alnwick-Haldimand (Ward 3), Mary Ann is a business professional and management consultant. She brings valuable expertise in customer relationship management and process design, as well as knowledge of hospitals and the healthcare system acquired in her time as a consultant with IBM and through personal experience, navigating assisting and supporting two aging parents.

With regard to the three Board Director vacancies in 2015/16, the Nominating Committee recommended the following:

- **Starr Olsen** (Cobourg, Ward 2) was most recently a Community Committee volunteer with the Board’s Finance and Audit Committee, Olsen is an experienced executive well-versed in community agency leadership, strategic planning and mediation/negotiation. The Executive Director of Community Living Quinte West since 2007, Starr held the same position with Community Living Dufferin from 2000 to 2006. She is a resident of Cobourg.
- **Pamela Went** (Hamilton Township, Ward 3) brings a deep experience with private sector leadership gathered over a 30-plus-year career with Bell Canada as well as extensive not-for-profit expertise. As an executive with Bell, Went had responsibility for a wide variety of departments including operations and marketing. As a volunteer Went has been giving back to her community as a director and board member of not-for-profit organizations since 1994, including terms with Junior Achievement of Metro Toronto, Ability on Line, Dawson College (Montreal), Kids Help Phone (National Board) and, most recently, Northumberland United Way. Pam has most recently served on the NHH Board as a volunteer Community Committee member on the Board’s Quality and Safety Committee
- **Cyndi Gilmer** (Port Hope, Ward 1) brings impressive health-care system expertise gathered through her experience as a front-line health-care provider and a senior

administrator. Well versed in the full spectrum of health care within Ontario's health-care system, including community, hospital, long-term care, public health and primary care, Cyndi is a program coordinator with the Trent/Fleming School of Nursing.

The Nominating Committee further recommended three re-appointments: **Jack Russell** – Ward 3; **Doug Mann** – Ward 3; and **Bob Carmen** (Ward 3). Endorsed at the Board's June 4th 2015 meeting, these recommendations, in accordance with the By-Laws, were approved for three-year terms at the Annual Meeting.

The final order of business at the June Annual Meeting was the ratification of By-Law Amendments. Tom Sears, Chair of the Board's Governance Committee, reviewed the black-lined version of the proposed edits distributed to Members and the general public in advance, noting that this year's amendments were, without exception, of "the housekeeping variety." The amended By-laws, reflecting minor amendments approved by Members June 18th, will be found in the Document Archive at nhh.ca.

At the Board meeting immediately following the Annual Meeting, Board Directors unanimously appointed Jack Russell as the Board's Chair for the next year. Also appointed unanimously were Elizabeth Selby, First Vice-Chair, and Catharine Tozer, Second Vice-Chair.

Updates to the NHH Board's full membership listing will be published on nhh.ca in the coming weeks. The hospital's 2014/15 Annual Report to the Community, also released at the Meeting, will be [found here](#), in the Document Archive at nhh.ca, in local copies of *Northumberland News* on Thursday, June 25th, or on request from hospital Administration.

Questions? Please contact Jennifer Gillard at jgillard@nhh.ca or 905-377-7757.

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, palliative care and obstetrical care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care and inpatient 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 the Central East Local Health Integration Network. For more information, please visit nhh.ca or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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