POLICY STATEMENT
The Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit has a significant geographical area to serve. Members of the Board of Health may use technology to provide opportunities for fulfilling their commitment to the Board in carrying out their responsibilities. Members of the public have access to meetings of the Board to ensure community awareness of Board activities.

This policy serves to consolidate measures for Electronic (Virtual) meetings of the Board of Health as permitted under the Municipal Act.

APPLICATION
This policy applies to meetings of the Board of Health, including permanent or ad hoc subcommittees of the Board.

DEFINITIONS
Electronic meeting means a Board meeting where all members attending the meeting are not physically in the same room, but are joining the meeting through distance communication technology such as teleconferencing and/or videoconferencing.

Member means a member of the Board of Health or subcommittee of the Board of Health.

Quorum means a majority of the members of the Board of Health subject to the provisions of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, 1990 as amended.

Committee means any permanent or ad-hoc committee or subcommittee of the Board of Health.

SUPPORTING DETAILS
The Board of Health may use electronic meetings as an enabling tool for all aspects of business operations, and:

i. Meetings of the Board or a Committee of the Board utilizing electronic means may be held when and where such meetings are organized and consistent with the guidelines set out within this policy and related procedure(s).

ii. Members, staff, and public participating in these meetings are governed and regulated according to the procedures and parameters set forth within the guidelines and procedures set out within in this policy, related procedure(s), and the Municipal Act.

iii. The Equipment necessary to enable meetings to take place is operated and controlled in the manner set forth within the guidelines as set out within this policy and related procedure(s).
GUIDELINES

1.0 Attendance – Members of the Board of Health

1.1 A member who participates in a meeting through electronic means in accordance with the Board policy and the Municipal Act will be deemed to be present at the meeting, and will count in determining quorum as permitted in accordance with section 238 (3.3) of the Municipal Act.

1.2 In accordance with section 238 (3.1) of the Municipal Act, as amended, a member can participate electronically in a meeting to the extent and in the manner set out in this policy.

1.3 Members who participate through electronic means participate under the Procedural Guidelines as set out in Appendix A.

1.4 NWHU will provide the appropriate technology ensuring the electronic participation in a meeting as permitted.

   i. NWHU may also refuse to provide the electronic means of participation where to do so is in compliance with the Municipal Act.

1.5 From time to time, by motion of the Board, meetings of the Board, open or closed (in camera), may be scheduled as face-to-face meetings. A face-to-face meeting is defined as a meeting where members are required to attend in person at the designated meeting room.

2.0 Attendance – Staff and Members of the Public

2.1 Staff who are required to attend meetings of the Board of Health will do so as outlined in Bylaw #1: Constitution of the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit.

2.2 NWHU shall provide electronic means for members of the public to participate in meetings open to the public. Their participation shall be limited to:

   i. Observing/listening to the proceedings of the Board.

   ii. Responding to Board activities and/or providing input during the period of the Board agenda “Observer Comments”, as permitted.

   iii. Open session. The Chief Executive Officer or designate will disconnect members of the public from the meeting for any closed (in camera) sessions of the meeting, in accordance with the Municipal Act.

3.0 Electronic Meetings – Procedure for Meetings of the Board

3.1 Meetings of the Board of Health held under the provisions set out within this policy are held with the same requirements as face-to-face meetings of the Board wherein the public is notified, provided access to observe the open session(s) of the meeting, and will have access to approved minutes.
3.2 All members are provided with an electronic copy of the Board package, including the agenda, prior to the meeting for reference during an electronic meeting.

3.3 All members of a committee are provided a copy of the committee’s agenda prior to the meeting for reference during an electronic meeting.

3.4 The Chair of the Board shall ensure that declarations of conflict of interest are heard by all members, staff and public in attendance, and that those participating by electronic means have the opportunity to verbally declare any conflict.

3.5 Broadcasting technology is disabled for members of the public during closed (in camera) sessions to remove access to meeting deliberations.

REFERENCES

- By-law #1: Constitution of the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit
- Municipal Act (as current)
- COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020, S.O. 2020 c.18 – Bill 197
- Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, 1990 (as current)

MONITORING

This policy will be monitored and updated as applicable legislation requires and per the Board’s direction.

Version approved by Resolution #108-2020

Original signature on file.

Chair, Board of Health

Original signature on file.

Chief Executive Officer
APPENDIX A – Procedural Guidelines

1. Electronic Means
   1.1 Electronic means shall include teleconferencing and videoconferencing.

   1.2 Teleconferencing and videoconferencing methods will be provided by Northwestern Health Unit and may include use of telephones, video monitors, tablets, or communications centres at designated sites.

   1.3 During meeting proceedings, the audio guidelines developed by the Board will be followed.

   1.4 Operational guidelines will be developed to ensure that, where applicable, the meetings have trained site monitors with clearly defined responsibilities.

2. Electronic Meetings
   2.1 In Camera Board meetings and committee meetings are closed to the public; the individuals who have been designated by the Chief Executive Officer under paragraph 2.2 of the Policy, operate and monitor the electronic means and will open and close the meeting’s electronic means according to:

      i. The requirements of the Municipal Act, and

      ii. Directions of the Chair.

   2.2 In the event that a Board meeting that is being accessed electronically is encountering interference and/or disruption by electronic participants, the Chair shall warn the participants the first time, advise them a second time that any further disturbance/interference continues, and on further disturbance/interference, direct the site monitor to shut off their electronic access.

   2.3 No member of the Board will be denied access at any time under section 2.2.

3. Attendance
   3.1 Roll call for all meetings shall be taken verbally and duly recorded to ensure members of the Board of Health are recognized as in attendance and are able to hear and be heard.

   3.2 In accordance with section 238 (3.3) of the Municipal Act, as amended, a member of the Board of Health who participates in a meeting through electronic means is counted in determining quorum.

   3.3 Members participating electronically must notify the Chair of their departure (either temporary or permanent) from the meeting before absenting themselves.
4. Voting at Electronic Meetings
   4.1 In accordance with section 238 (3.1 and 3.3) of the Municipal Act, members participating electronically are counted in determining quorum and may vote on issues.

   4.2 In preparation of Board motions, members must indicate their willingness to let their name stand as mover and/or seconder. Prior to the vote, the Chair will read each motion and indicate the member who has moved the motion and the member who has seconded.

   4.3 The Chair will call the vote for:
   i. Those in favour of the motion; and
   ii. Those opposed to the motion.

   The Chair will make the decision whether the motion was carried or defeated.

   4.4 The ruling of the Chair may be appealed by any member.

   4.5 When a ruling is appealed, the Chair will poll the members alphabetically by their last name to verify the decision. It should be noted that this is not a recorded vote as per the procedural guidelines of Board meetings.

   4.6 If subsequent rulings are appealed during the meeting, the Chair will poll the members as set out in 4.5 beginning at the second name on the next appeal, the third name on the next appeal, and so on, until all members have had the opportunity to vote first.

5. Per Diems for Electronic Meetings
   Board of Health members participating in a Board of Health or committee meeting will receive $50 for a meeting of two (2) hours or less, and are paid at the per diem rate as outlined in Bylaw #1: Constitution of the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit for meetings longer than two (2) hours.