
Board of Health

Meeting No. 10 **Contact** Candy Davidovits, Committee Administrator
Meeting Date Tuesday, December 4, 2007 **Phone** 416-392-8032
Start Time 1:00 PM **E-mail** boh@toronto.ca
Location Committee Room 1, City Hall

Board of Health		
Councillor John Filion (Chair) Councillor Janet Davis (Vice-Chair) Councillor Raymond Cho Councillor Paula Fletcher Councillor Chin Lee	Councillor Gord Perks Trustee Soo Wong Alejandra Bravo Vaijayanthi Chari	Wangari Muriuki Fiona Nelson Lisa O'Brien Valerie Sterling

Members of the Board and Staff: Please keep this agenda and the accompanying material until the City Council meeting dealing with these matters has ended. **The City Clerk's Office will not provide additional copies.**

Special Assistance for Members of the Public: City staff can arrange for special assistance with some advance notice. If you need special assistance, please call 416-397-7767, TTY 416- 338-0889 or e-mail boh@toronto.ca.

Closed Meeting Requirements: If the Board of Health wants to meet in closed session (privately), a member of the Board must make a motion to do so and give the reason why the Board has to meet privately. (City of Toronto Act, 2006)

Notice to People Writing to the Board: The City of Toronto collects any personal information in your communication to Toronto City Council or its committees under the City of Toronto Act, 2006 and the City of Toronto Municipal Code.

The City collects this information to enable it to make informed decisions on the relevant issue(s). Individuals who submit letters and other information should be aware that any personal information in their communication will become part of the public record. The City will make it available to the public, unless the individual expressly requests the City to remove the personal information.

Direct any questions about this collection to the City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto, ON M5H 2N2 or calling 416-392-8032.

Declarations of Interest under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

Confirmation of Minutes - November 12, 2007**Speakers/Presentations – A complete list will be distributed at the meeting.****Communications/Reports**

HL10.1	ACTION			
--------	--------	--	--	--

Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness**(Staff Presentation)**

(November 16, 2007) Report from Auditor General

Recommendations

The Auditor General recommends that:

1. the City Manager define in writing the lines of authority and roles of the Pandemic Influenza Steering Committee, and establish a regular reporting relationship for the Steering Committee to report to the Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee on pandemic planning and preparedness;
2. the City Manager amend the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 59 “Emergency Planning” to reflect the replacement of the former Community Services Committee with the Executive Committee;
3. the Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee consider providing periodic reports on the progress of emergency management activities and/or emerging issues to City Council;
4. the City Manager ensure that the operational support functions listed in the City of Toronto Emergency Plan are finalized and authorized by responsible agencies before December 2008;
5. Toronto Public Health develop timelines for completion of specific pandemic planning and preparedness activities, monitor the completion of these activities, and report progress to the Board of Health;
6. the City Manager undertake a detailed review of the proposed actions to sustain critical City functions in a pandemic emergency to ensure that the proposed actions represent the most effective and appropriate options. Such a review should include, but not be limited to, an examination of the viability, effectiveness, and resource requirements of the proposed preparedness actions;
7. the City Manager take the necessary steps to ensure a coordinated corporate process to prioritize and implement the proposed preparatory actions to sustain critical City services in a pandemic emergency;

8. the City Manager take the necessary steps to develop a corporate procurement policy and plan for infection control supplies, personal protective equipment, and critical operational supplies, in preparation for a pandemic emergency. Such steps should include, but not be limited to, a review, prioritization, and alignment of purchasing requirements with the World Health Organization pandemic alert phases;
9. the City Manager set a timeline for completion of the corporate pandemic response plan and the corporate pandemic communications strategy, and ensure that both documents contain essential details facilitating a timely and effective City response to the World Health Organization's pandemic alert phases;
10. the City Manager undertake a review of the City's Human Resources related pandemic planning assumptions and preparedness actions to ensure they are adequate and sufficient. Such a review should include, but not be limited to, an examination of Human Resources related pandemic planning issues and criteria, a review of other cities' employee support actions in preparation for a pandemic, and consultation with employee unions and management association; and
11. the City Manager take the necessary steps to develop and implement a process to systematically track and monitor costs associated with pandemic preparedness.

Financial Impact

The implementation of Recommendation number 7, 8 and 11 in this report will improve financial controls over spending related to pandemic planning and preparedness. The extent of any resources required or potential cost savings resulting from implementing the recommendations in this report is not determinable at this time.

Summary

Because the City's pandemic planning is still in progress, the purpose of the audit was to provide a snapshot of what the City has accomplished and what work remains to be completed in preparing for a pandemic emergency. The overall audit question is: "To the extent possible, how prepared is the City for a potentially severe pandemic?" We are cognizant that this should only be answered within the context of what the City can realistically achieve as a municipal government in pandemic planning, in particular considering the City's current fiscal constraints and the need for provincial and federal guidance and coordination. In addition, the substantial degree of uncertainty surrounding a possible pandemic influenza makes planning for a pandemic emergency a complex and difficult task.

The City has undertaken a number of planning activities, and is working towards implementing key actions such as stockpiling personal protective equipment and essential operational supplies. Certain important pandemic public health measures remain to be completed, some of which are dependent upon federal or provincial guidance. The City has established a framework for pandemic planning and preparedness in which public health related planning is led by Toronto Public Health, and corporate planning for continuity of operations is led by the Pandemic Influenza Steering Committee. Our audit noted certain challenges and gaps in the pandemic planning and preparedness process, and as a result our report includes a number of recommendations to help strengthen the existing accountability framework and corporate coordination, as well as enhancing the completion of pandemic public health planning.

Background Information

Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8892.pdf>)

Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness - Appendix 1

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8893.pdf>)

Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness - Appendix 2

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8894.pdf>)

Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness - Appendix 3

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8895.pdf>)

HL10.2	Information			
--------	-------------	--	--	--

Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Update

Summary

Verbal update by the Medical Officer of Health

HL10.3	ACTION			
--------	--------	--	--	--

Prudent Avoidance Policy on Siting Telecommunication Towers and Antennas

(Staff Presentation)

(November 20, 2007) Report from Medical Officer of Health

Recommendations

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. the Board of Health reaffirm the Prudent Avoidance Policy approach for radiofrequencies (RF) that would keep levels in areas where people normally spend time at least 100 times lower than Health Canada's Safety Code 6 limits when siting new telecommunication towers and antennas in the City of Toronto;
2. the Board of Health recommend that City Council endorse a Prudent Avoidance Policy and use the new City of Toronto Telecommunication Tower and Antenna Protocol as a mechanism for collecting information on the estimated levels of radiofrequencies around cell phone towers and antennas in areas where people normally spend time;
3. the Board of Health recommend to Health Canada that public exposure limits for radiofrequency fields under Safety Code 6 be made 100 times more strict as previously recommended by the Board of Health;

4. the Board of Health recommend to cell phone carrier proponents to consider voluntary adoption of the Prudent Avoidance Policy when proposing sites for new telecommunication towers and antennas, including considering proposed alternative sites when the City's review identifies potential concerns; and
5. the Board of Health encourage Industry Canada to conduct regular monitoring for radiofrequencies arising from telecommunications structures in Toronto, and to make that information publicly available.

Financial Impact

These recommendations will have no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

Summary

This report responds to the Board of Health's request to include its Prudent Avoidance Policy for cell phone base stations into the City's proposed harmonized Telecommunication Tower and Antenna Protocol. The Board of Health also asked for comments on health risks arising from the concentration of telecommunication towers.

Many telecommunication devices use radiofrequency (RF) waves. Health Canada's guidelines for exposure to RFs (known as Safety Code 6) protect the public from short-term, high exposure effects of RFs. Citing concerns that existing guidelines may not be health protective for continuous lifetime exposures, several jurisdictions have adopted stricter limits than those in Canada. In 1999, the Board of Health recommended a prudent avoidance policy that RF waves from telecommunication towers and antennas be 100 times below Safety Code 6 in areas where people normally spend time. Industry Canada monitoring data shows that this level is readily met.

Recent scientific literature indicates that uncertainties in the science remain. Health Canada has not revised its guidelines to address the concerns raised in 1999. Authority for regulating telecommunications towers rests with Industry Canada, whose "Client Procedure Circular" allows local planning authorities, such as the City of Toronto to comment. The Medical Officer of Health recommends that the City continue with a prudent avoidance approach and use its harmonized Telecommunication Tower and Antenna Protocol to collect data from cell phone carriers on predicted RF levels of proposed towers and antennas. This will allow the City to monitor the potential impact of proposed telecommunications facilities in Toronto and to encourage voluntary adoption of the Prudent Avoidance Policy.

Background Information

Prudent Avoidance Policy on Siting Telecommunication Towers and Antennas
(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8919.pdf>)

HL10.4	Information			
--------	-------------	--	--	--

Hot Weather Response Plan Update

(November 20, 2007) Report from Medical Officer of Health

Summary

This report provides an update on the City of Toronto's Hot Weather Response Plan, including the experience of Summer 2007.

The primary challenge in implementing the Hot Weather Response Plan continues to be reaching those who are most vulnerable and at-risk. In 2008, Toronto Public Health will intensify its public education campaign that encourages family, friends and neighbours to check on isolated adults and seniors. Toronto Public Health will continue to work collaboratively with community agencies and organizations serving vulnerable populations, educate landlords that provide housing to at-risk groups and provide outreach to vulnerable clients through the collective efforts of the Hot Weather Response partnership during alerts.

Background Information

Hot Weather Response Plan Update

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8918.pdf>)

HL10.5	Information			Ward: 36
--------	-------------	--	--	----------

Recreational Water Quality at Bluffer's Park Beach

(November 20, 2007) Report from Medical Officer of Health

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information on recreational water quality improvements at Bluffer's Park Beach and the measures taken in achieving these improvements.

Background Information

Recreational Water Quality at Bluffer's Park Beach

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8917.pdf>)

HL10.6	ACTION			
--------	--------	--	--	--

Diabetes in Toronto

(November 26, 2007) Letter from Councillor John Filion, Chair, Board of Health

Summary

Diabetes is a major health problem for an ever-increasing number of Toronto residents. While rates for some chronic diseases are going down, those for diabetes continue to rise.

Toronto Public Health currently delivers a number of programs and services which address diabetes risk factors, including obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition. However, increasing diabetes rates, particularly in some neighbourhoods with lower socio-economic status, points to a need to examine whether we could be doing more to reverse these trends.

Accordingly, I am asking the Toronto Board of Health to adopt the following motions:

1. That the Chair of the Board of Health and the Medical Officer of Health meet with the Ontario Minister of Health Promotion to explore collaborative strategies to address the risk factors for diabetes in Toronto.
2. That the Medical Officer of Health report to the Board on the current status of diabetes and its risk factors in Toronto, current public health programs and services which address these risk factors, and further opportunities for prevention.

Background Information

Diabetes in Toronto

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-9033.pdf>)

HL10.7	Information			
--------	-------------	--	--	--

Etobicoke/York Local Health Committee Minutes

Summary

Minutes of the Etobicoke/York Local Health Committee meeting held on October 11, 2007.

Background Information

Etobicoke/York Local Health Committee Minutes

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-8916.pdf>)