

CITY OF KENORA
MINUTES
Committee of the Whole of Council
With Representatives of the Northwestern Health Unit
Tuesday, April 14, 2009
3:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mayor L. Compton, Councillor W. Cuthbert, Councillor C. Drinkwalter, Councillor D. McCann, Councillor R. McMillan, Councillor A. Poirier, Councillor Van Wallegghem, Bill Preisentanz, CAO and Joanne McMillin, City Clerk.

Dr. James Arthurs the new A/Medical Officer of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit attended to introduce himself to Members of Council. He provided some educational background information and history about himself, explaining he is a US citizen from Idaho which lies south of the British Columbia border in an area not unlike Kenora. He went on to explain how his career background eventually led him to Kenora as he is an outdoor enthusiast, and he was interested in a new position where he could apply all the applicable skills he has acquired. Dr. Arthurs mentioned his family is familiar with this area as he has relatives living in Winnipeg and Thunder Bay.

Dr. Arthurs expressed some of the activities taking place at the Health Unit at this time, particularly they are going through a Strategic Plan process, and noting that with the global financial disaster around us, it is unknown what the impact will be to our area. He mentioned it is not known at this time if the Ministry of Health will be able to fund the Health Units as they have in the past, and therefore they have to be a lot more efficient and the Health Unit is looking at changes along those lines.

With his experience in the business field, Dr. Arthurs believes it is vitally important that all staff is aware that they be more transparent and accountable to the public and to work collaboratively with other stakeholders. Councillor Van Wallegghem commended the Board for the invitation to drop in at the April 24 Board of Health meeting taking place at the Lakeside Inn, recognizing this is one example of the Board becoming more transparent and accountable, noting the invitation has been extended more widely to the public and the media.

Councillor McMillan questioned how we can tap into the skills that Dr. Arthurs brings to the job, and he responded that he is enjoying his new job and when everyone comes together with different skill sets to accomplish a goal, it is easily done with the different talents of all involved working towards the same objective.

In response to a query from Councillor Van Wallegghem, Dr. Arthurs indicated he has come across the 'blasto' disease in other areas before coming to Kenora.

Members of Council welcomed Dr. Arthurs and his expertise to the Kenora area, stating they look forward to working with him in the community, and thanked him for attending.

The meeting closed at 4:05 p.m.