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Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital ends productive year with balanced budget

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Theresa Fritz, West Carleton Emc

The 2010-2011 board of directors for the Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital Corporation includes (back row from left to right) CEO Eric Hanna, Hugh Brownlee, Irvin Woermke, Pamela Lemay, Deborah McCorkell-Hoy, Don Nicholas, Tom Melvin, Patricia Glahs, board chair Steve Hudson, Jay Johnston, (front row left to right) Bernice O'Connor, Patricia Titterton, Marlene McRoberts, Gina Pilon, DR. Mark Robson. Absent are Dr. Cindy Morrison and Robert D'Aoust.

EMC News - The past year was one of the busiest and most productive in the recent history of the Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital.

And that year was reviewed during the hospital corporation's Annual General Meeting held June 23 in the auditorium of The Grove Nursing Home.

"The 2009-2010 year has been exceptionally busy. From the beginning of our board year last June to our meeting this evening, we've had plenty of excitement to keep us on our toes," reported outgoing board chair Marlene McRoberts.

She recalled how last June, the hospital secured the funding for emergency department expansion/renovation. The ground breaking for the project took place last October,

"The renovation project totaling almost \$12 million at its completion will modernize our aging emergency department and update equipment, allowing our hospital to provide our community with better access to

emergency care and to provide safe quality treatments for over 24,000 emergency visits each year," said McRoberts, who added that planning for the ER project began 10 years ago. "Currently the project is on time and on budget. I'm especially pleased we will see its completion next spring and if all remains on schedule, I will be able to celebrate with you when we cut the ribbon before I finish my 12th and final year on the board."

The board chair said implementation of the hospital's new Strategic Plan was implemented this year. As well, she said as new hospital CEO Eric Hanna got "comfortable in his new role," he and his senior management team made a number of changes and improvements within the hospital that required board involvement.

"Preparation to participate in accreditation this fall added to an already busy year and the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) made a serious attempt this year to get some of its regional initiatives under way," McRoberts reported. "I have no doubt that accreditation and the LHIN will be real focuses in the year 2010 and 2011."

McRoberts, who is turning over the chair's position to Steve Hudson, thanked everyone for their support during her three years in the post.

"I look forward to working with you in my new position of past chair," she concluded.

While ADMH chief of staff, Dr. Cindy Morrison was absent as she was attending her son's graduation, her report was delivered by Dr. Mark Robson, president of the medical staff.

"The past year was an exciting year for the Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital and The Grove," Robson read. "As a community, we are very lucky to have the breadth and depth of outpatient clinics and programs available that we have."

He noted that in the outpatient department, on any given day there are more than 21 different specialists running clinics at the hospital.

"This past year saw the introduction of an enhanced orthopedic program that helps to further surgical linkages to the Queensway-Carleton Hospital. Also, along with the Queensway-Carleton we are looking to enhance our urological services, allowing even more patients to have treatments closer to home," Robson read. "Our general surgery program continues to run well...as Champlain LHIN runs towards clinical service planning, it is important that we continue to develop and solidify the quality programs and linkages with tertiary care hospitals."

Morrison's report noted one physician left Arnprior but Dr. Jennifer Becker came to town and has opened a halftime general practice and another halftime involved with geriatric assessment services. As well, it was mentioned the Physician Recruitment Committee is active one again working to try and attract new family physicians to the area.

As well, strong connections have been maintained with the University of Ottawa and Queen's University for medical students. This past year there were seven students who were at Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital from those schools.

"It has been shown in many centres that if you highlight your community to learning doctors, you have a good chance of keeping them in your community," Robson read.

Morrison's report noted the addition of the Medi-Tech computerization system, which began in x-ray and is now expanding into clinical services, was a major achievement over the past year.

"The hospital is thriving and looking forward to the future and I think we have a very good staff of medical personnel to look after our community," Robson concluded.

Auxiliary has good year

ADMH auxiliary president Bernice O'Connor reported the auxiliary had a productive year.

She said auxiliary members logged 19,754.3 hours of volunteer service have been document to both the

hospital and The Grove. This represents 18 different service areas.

There were a total of 213 volunteers over the past year, which included seven active youth, 13 men and 193 women. A total of 63 new volunteers joined the auxiliary over the past year.

The Opportunity Shop downtown had total sales of \$138,680.40. Sandra Stamp is the new manager, having taken over the role from Jean Wissing. The hospital gift shop donated \$10,000 to the hospital this year.

The Grove volunteers documented a total of 2,569 hours and that included six special events.

The HELPP Lottery cleared \$15,594 after expenses and the sewing committee made or repaired 7,016 items. This committee is made up of three volunteers. The palliative care committee had 16 volunteers working this year.

She noted the local auxiliary hosted a regional conference for other auxiliary at the Quality Inn in the fall and a bursary was donated to the high school.

"As well as purchasing \$70,000 worth of equipment on behalf of the hospital last December, we presented a cheque for \$250,000 last June to fulfill our initial pledge to the Partners in Caring. We then pledged an additional \$250,000 which we hope to have completed by June 2011," O'Connor noted. "We've had a very busy year. Our hospital's enjoyed success is a reflection of our outstanding volunteers."

CEO's report

Delivering his second report as the hospital's CEO, Eric Hanna highlighted a number of what he referred to "as significant milestones" for the corporation.

"We completed our Strategic Plan and this will guide us as we move forward into the next year," Hanna said. "That will especially help us as we work to establish our role within the LHIN."

He noted the focus continues to be on patient and resident safety, followed by activities that improve the experience by patients and residents. In that vein, he said best practices were implemented for wound care and best practices were reviewed for asthma in the emergency department while a minute of silence was introduced at the hospital prior to each surgical procedure.

"At the Grove, one example of improvement there was the introduction of the new medication administration system which automated several tasks, removing the risk of human error," Hanna noted.

An accountant by training, Hanna was pleased to report the corporation's financial picture remains strong.

"A balanced budget was achieved despite cost pressures such as combating H1N1 and increasing clinical service volumes in our ambulatory care program," Hanna explained. "We can attribute a portion of our solid financial position to the benefits derived from our partnerships. These partnerships - such as regional purchasing, integrated hospital information systems - help us achieve economies of scale that we would not otherwise be able to achieve."

Hanna said clinical partnerships have helped the hospital introduce five new clinical programs over the past year.

He praised the dedication of staff, physicians, board members and volunteers for all their efforts on behalf of the hospital. He also thanked the "veterans", people who have been involved with the hospital for many years.

"It's been a tremendous year. We've increased a number of services locally available to our communities, we've balanced our books and we are, as our vision suggests, becoming recognized for exemplary care - making your health our priority," Hanna concluded.

Along with the annual general meeting, some other business was also conducted. Five hospital board members were honoured as they retired from their positions. Marilyn Werry (2007-2010), Mark Wood (2007-2010), David Moore (2006-2010) and Harold Camblin (12 years on the board including being chair from 2001-

2004) were recognized for their years of service. Moore and Camblin were the only two present to receive their certificates in person.

Retiring staff were also honoured. Director of patient and resident services, Leah Levesque, paid tribute to Christine McLaughlin and Shelley Cardiff. McLaughlin retired in December 2009 after 37 years at the hospital while Cardiff retired after 35 years.

Director of finance and support services, Tim Sonnenburg, recognized long-time employee Sandy Broome for her 38 years of service. She retired in February of this year.

Unable to attend the meeting was retiree Anne Forgiel who retired after 30 years of employment at the hospital.

The final presentation of the evening was made to outgoing board chair Marlene McRoberts by the CAO and incoming board chair Steven Hudson.

He praised her for all her efforts and dedication to the hospital and her most significant achievement, which was getting the shovel in the ground for the emergency renovation/redevelopment project.

McRoberts was presented with a print of the hospital.