

BRANT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
Wednesday, May 20, 2020, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference/Rm 322-323
MINUTES

PRESENT: Ms. Helen Mulligan, Chair
Councillor John Bell, Vice-Chair (via Zoom)
Ms. Susan Brown (via Zoom)
Councillor Robert Chambers (via Zoom)
Mayor Kevin Davis (via Zoom)
Ms. Joy O'Donnell (via Zoom)
Councillor John Sless (via Zoom)

Dr. Elizabeth Urbantke
Dr. Jo Ann Tober
Ms. Lorraine Johnson (recorder)

ABSENT: Councillor Brian Van Tilborg

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Robert Hall, Manager, Environmental Health & Infectious Diseases
Mr. Brent Richardson, Director, Human Resources
Mr. Glenn Roach, Interim Director, Finances (via Zoom)
Ms. Rabia Tharani, Manager, Environmental Health & Infectious Diseases

The meeting was held by videoconference due to COVID-19 physical distancing.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mulligan called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., and welcomed Ms. Susan Brown and Ms. Joy O'Donnell to the Board of Health. Both have one-year provincial appointments to the Board and attended an orientation meeting with Chair Mulligan, Dr. Urbantke and Dr. Tober.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Chair Mulligan reminded Members to declare a conflict of interest, if one so arises, at the time the item is discussed.

3. IN-CAMERA MEETING

4. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

- 7.1 Chair's Report will be taken by Vice-Chair Bell.
- 11.1 Announcement from Councillor Chambers.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5.1 Brant County Board of Health Minutes, April 15, 2020

Moved by:

Mayor Davis

Seconded by:

Councillor Bell

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health Minutes, dated April 15, 2020, for both the regular Board meeting and the Special Board meeting, be approved as presented.”

Carried.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

6.1 Report from the Finance and Audit Committee

A Finance and Audit Committee meeting was held on May 20, 2020 at 8:45 a.m. Councillor Sless reported that, in addition reports 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 below, the Committee approved reimbursement of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario 2020 registration for Dr. Urbantke.

6.2 Financial Statements ending March 31, 2020 and April 30, 2020

Mr. Roach presented the Financial Statement ending March 31, 2020 and the draft Financial Statement ending April 30, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. Dr. Roach reported a surplus due to planned staff vacancies and gapping to accommodate expected reductions in funding. The surplus applies to both mandatory cost-shared and 100%-funded budgets. The reserve funds are from many years ago and are held for major capital expenditures. The supplies line encompasses more than COVID-19 items. The majority of program materials are purchased in Q2 to Q4 and personal protective equipment (PPE) has offset that annual trend. Several 100%-fund programs are not operating at this time, for example Oral Health programs, and staff were re-deployed to COVID-19 activities. As COVID work abates, services will begin to re-open in a gradual and flexible manner.

Moved by:

Councillor Sless

Seconded by:

Mayor Davis

“THAT the Board of Health approved the Financial Statement ending March 31, 2020, and the draft Financial Statement ending April 30, 2020, as presented.” **Carried.**

6.3 COVID-19 Financial Projections Report

Mr. Roach presented the COVID-19 Financial Projections Report, dated May 20, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. The report outlines expenses for staff to carry out public health objectives and an increase in PPE supplies. Staff time increased particularly at the onset before evening and weekend shifts were implemented; 70 staff in COVID at 2,400 hours/week declined to 50 staff at 2,000 hours weekly. There was also extended management time. All staffing costs were covered within the base budget due to the surplus. Supplies expenses increased in April and May, and will need to be continually replenished as used. The projection chart set out April expenses, and projected year-to-date excluding COVID, year-end if COVID expenses cease in June, and year-end with COVID expenses carrying into December. The surplus decreases with each scenario but endures to year-end. It is usual for the Ministry to approve public health unit budgets later in the year. Cashflow has not been negatively affected. There has been a cost savings from the benefits carrier as access to dental and other services was restricted. At this time and based on COVID expenses incurred to date, the Health Unit is not forecasting a change in the funding level from the City or County due to COVID-19 response.

The Ministry announced specific funding for COVID response; however, it is contingent on needing those funds above budget to meet expenses. As well, a \$4/hour wage subsidy was announced. It would seem that these funds are also only available when the base budget is inadequate to cover the expenses. To date, insufficient details are available for either funding source and all health units are awaiting clarification.

6.4 Discretionary Expenses Report

Mr. Roach presented the Discretionary Expenses Report, dated May 20, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. The report was prepared at the Board’s request to ensure the Health Unit is able to meet COVID-19 expenses. The list did not identify staff gapping and vacancies. Recruitments are proceeding for essential positions. If COVID demands lessen throughout the year, any or all of these planned expenditures could proceed.

Mr. Roach left the meeting at 11:44 am.

7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

7.1 Report from the Chair

Vice-Chair Bell reported on the May 15 meeting of the Board of Health Ad Hoc Committee on the Ministry of Health Audit and their preparations for a full-Board in-camera teleconference. The Committee considered the many internal and external changes that have occurred since the time of the audit’s scope. An additional Board Member is needed to fill the upcoming departure of Ms. Mulligan; Ms. Brown agreed to serve.

At 10:00 am, the Board meeting adjourned for Members to attend a Ministry of Health conference call.

7.2 Report from the Acting Medical Officer of Health

Dr. Urbantke presented the Medical Officer of Health Report, dated May 20, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. Dr. Urbantke provided an update on opioid and methamphetamine statistics in 2020. Methamphetamine use in Brant

appears to be low in comparison to other drugs. Health Unit staff are working with AIDS Network staff in the community van to advance harm reduction education. (See Item 8.1 for COVID-19 update.)

Ms. Tharani and Mr. Hall joined the meeting at 11:48 am.

7.3 Report from the Executive Director

Dr. Tober presented the Chief Executive Officer Report, dated May 20, 2020, as provided with the agenda.

Dr. Tober's report included updates on extraordinary expenses associated with COVID-19, pandemic pay, provincial approvals for 2020 public health budgets, status of Ministry of Health reports, capital funding for the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program, and resumption of public health programs.

7.4 Food Safety Disclosure Report No report.

Moved by: Mayor Davis
Seconded by: Ms. O'Donnell

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health accept reports 7.1 through 7.4 as presented.” Carried.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 COVID-19 Report

Dr. Urbantke and Dr. Tober presented the joint COVID-19 Report, dated May 20, 2020, as provided with the agenda. In addition to the written report, Dr. Urbantke provided up-to-date numbers: Brant has 103 positive cases with 93 resolved and 4 people in hospital. Total tests completed locally are 6,837 including the assessment centre plus swabbing of residents and staff in long-term care and retirement homes. Brant's rate is 50 tests per 1,000 people compared to the provincial average of 41 tests per 1,000 people. Enforcement staff responded to 169 complaints, mostly related to social distancing. Dr. Urbantke responded to Members' questions: It is unclear why there are more positive cases in the female population; it could be affected by primary caregiver or healthcare roles. Health Unit staff have been actively linked with local shelters from the beginning. The Ministry of Health guidance document on congregate living groups includes shelters. All congregate facilities have a public health point person to ensure direct access to information and they receive regular check-in calls. Shelter staff participate in the crisis response meetings with the hospital. Dr. Ubrantke is unaware of concerns about virus transmission via private swimming pools; good hygiene by users is always encouraged.

8.2 Safe Water Program Report

Ms. Tharani presented the Safe Water Program Report, dated May 20, 2020, as provided with the agenda. The report provided highlights of 2019 activities for the Small Drinking Water Systems (SDWS) program, recreational water program, and private well water initiative. Inspection results are posted to the BCHU website. Recreational water sites are currently closed and will be inspected prior to re-opening. A number of community events that would usually involve Public Health Inspectors have been cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19. Ms. Tharani responded to questions: The exact number of private wells in the County is unknown; however, a survey in Burford several years ago identified many wells and Health Unit staff actively promote well water testing and education. SDWS are tested for E. coli and total coliforms at the Public Health Lab. The Health Unit works closely with City Water Department staff to receive adverse water reports, and monthly and as-needed fluoridation reports.

8.3 Infectious and Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control Program Report

Ms. Tharani presented the Infectious and Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control Program Report, dated May 20, 2020, as provided with the agenda. The report provided highlights of 2019 activities for the Infectious Disease Program and the Infection Prevention and Control Program. Ms. Tharani reported that Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea, Hepatitis C, and Influenza remain the most frequently-reported communicable diseases. Five-year comparison numbers were provided. Responses to Members' questions: When the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, infection prevention measures will be ongoing. Facilities are inspected for compliance with provincial regulations; staff carry out regular inspections based on established risk-levels and respond to complaints as they arise. Throughout the pandemic, Health Unit Enforcement Officers attended many sites proactively to ensure public health

measures and social distancing. The West Nile virus program will commence next week with activities similar to other years including education, trapping, responding to standing water complaints, and arranging for larviciding.

Ms. Tharani and Mr. Hall left the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

8.4 alPHa 2020 Annual Conference

Dr. Tober reported that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) postponed their Annual Conference which was to be held in June.

Moved by: Councillor Bell
Seconded by: Ms. Brown

“THAT the Board of Health accept reports 8.1 and 8.4 as information.”

Carried.

9. CORRESPONDENCE *(Board members may request a copy of items that are not attached from Board of Health Secretary)*

- 9.1** Order in Council from Province of Ontario, dated April 24, 2020, re Provincial Appointment to the Board of Health for Joy O’Donnell.
- 9.2** Correspondence received from Ministry of Health, dated April 23, 2020, re extraordinary expenses associated with COVID-19.
- 9.3** Correspondence received from Peterborough Public Health, dated April 30, 2020, re provincial leadership in the monitoring of food affordability and food insecurity.
- 9.4** Correspondence received from Timiskaming Health Unit, dated April 30, 2020, re consultation for a new Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Moved by: Councillor Sless
Seconded by: Councillor Bell

“THAT the Board of Health receive the correspondence as listed.”

Carried.

10. ELECTIONS

10.1 Chair

Mayor Davis requested a point of order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, and similar to requirements of the Police Services Board, that an election may not take place until the current Chair has vacated. Chair Mulligan’s provincial appointment and chairmanship remain in effect until and including May 30, 2020. The elections for Chair and Vice-Chair will be moved to the June meeting. Members expressed their appreciation to Ms. Mulligan for her leadership.

10.2 Vice-Chair See Item 10.1.

10.3 Appointment of Member to the Finance and Audit Committee

With Ms. Mulligan’s term ending on May 30, another member is required for the Board’s Finance and Audit Committee.

Moved by: Councillor Bell
Seconded by: Mayor Davis

“THAT Joy O’Donnell be appointed to the Finance and Audit Sub-Committee nominations be closed.”

Carried.

11. QUESTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

11.1 Councillor Chambers announced that he will be stepping down from the Board of Health at end of May. A replacement will be appointed by the County of Brant at their next Council meeting. Councillor Chambers expressed his appreciation for serving on the Board of Health; his tenure saw five Medical Officers of Health. Chair Mulligan thanked Councillor Chambers for many years of dedication to the Board.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

13. NEXT MEETING DATES

Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 9:30 a.m.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m.

Chair

Date

Secretary

Date