

BRANT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
Wednesday, September 9, 2020, 9:00 a.m., Classroom 420/421
MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillor John Bell, Chair
Ms. Susan Brown, Vice-Chair
Mayor David Bailey
Mr. Mario Colombo
Mayor Kevin Davis
Ms. Joy O'Donnell
Councillor Brian Van Tilborg

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

REGRETS: Councillor John Sless

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Alexey Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards
Ms. Lisa DiDonato, Manager, Finances
Mr. Brent Richardson, Director, Human Resources

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

3. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

Moved by: Mayor Bailey
Seconded by: Mr. Colombo

“THAT the Board of Health approve the Agenda as distributed.” **Carried.**

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 Brant County Board of Health Minutes, July 15, 2020

Moved by: Mr. Colombo
Seconded by: Ms. O'Donnell

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health Minutes dated July 15, 2020, be approved as distributed.” **Carried.**

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

5.1 Ministry of Health 2020 Public Health Funding Report

Ms. DiDonato presented the Ministry of Health 2020 Public Health Funding Report, dated September 9, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. Ms. DiDonato reported that the provincial approval of the Health Unit's 2020 budget grant leaves a net funding deficit of \$335,113. The Health Unit has absorbed the shortfall through gapping and cautionary spending.

5.2 Financial Statement ended July 31, 2020

Ms. DiDonato presented the Financial Statement ended July 31, 2020, as distributed at the meeting. Although the statement shows a surplus at that time, there has been and will continue to be an increase in spending as clinics re-open and program services are expanded. The Health Unit is confident that the existing level of funding from the City and County will be sufficient to fund programs, services, and COVID costs for 2020.

5.3 COVID-19 Financial Projections Update

Ms. DiDonato presented the COVID-19 Financial Projections Update, dated September 9, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. As expected, there has been an increase in the use of personal protective equipment, cleaning, disinfecting and hand hygiene supplies. It is anticipated that COVID-related costs, including personnel deployment costs, can be covered within the forecasted surplus.

Ms. DiDonato left the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

6.1 Report from the Chair

Chair Bell reported that Board Members met with employees in three Meet-and-Greet sessions on August 6, 13 and 27, followed by a tour of the building. The Ad Hoc Committee has been in communication with the Ministry, and met with Southwestern Public Health to discuss governance processes. Members also plan to meet with Algoma and Grey-Bruce board members to learn from their governance practices. An audit report-back submission was sent to the Ministry on July 31, with information to the end of June.

Chair Bell stated that it is time for a renewed strategic plan for the Health Unit, recognizing the constraints in time due to COVID, audit responses, and other added responsibilities for the MOH and CEO. Southwestern Public Health completed a strategic planning exercise and will be contacted about the consultant they used.

6.2 Report from the Acting Medical Officer of Health

Dr. Urbantke presented the Medical Officer of Health Report, dated September 9, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. Dr. Urbantke stated that complaints about used needles were responded to along with daily sweeps of specific areas. First responders are not picking up needles. Messaging has increased about methods to dispose of found needles. Staff are working with neighbourhood associations and the People With Lived Experience group. The Eagle Place/East Ward Needle Reporting Investigation and Response Report is included with this report. An evaluation of the Needle Exchange Program (NEP) is awaiting ethics approval to move forward. The majority of NEP clients are aged 30-49 year. With COVID, some needle returns came in batches. With the re-opening of NEP partner agencies, more needles are available for pick-up and returns. The broader program aims at educating parents and school children over the years about not misusing substances.

Members noted complaints from citizens finding needles on private property, fear of walking in some parks, pressure to cancel the NEP, continuing sweeps, and increasing awareness about where to call when used needles are found. Dr. Urbantke explained an awareness campaign blitz was launched through usual media channels plus through neighbourhood groups to reach many people: needle-users on where/how to discard and needle-finders on where/how to report/discard safely. Staff track hotspots where needles are found and are working with the City to install more bins. During four Health Unit sweeps, a total of nine needles were recovered. Members requested additional information and discussion at the next meeting. (See Item 7.1 for the COVID-19 report.)

6.2.1 Medical Officer of Health Short- and Long-Term Plan

Dr. Urbantke presented the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) Short- and Long-Term Plan, dated September 9, 2020, as distributed with the agenda. The MOH Plan is in response to the Ministry of Health audit requesting a specific activity and clinical plan. The Plan is aligned with the Ontario Public Health Standards and also includes leadership and personal development. Some community and stakeholder interactions and integration were accelerated by COVID, while other activities were delayed. The Plan was reviewed by Dr. Joyce Lock, MOH at Southwestern Public Health and Dr. David Mowat, Consultant in Public Health and Preventive Medicine. Dr. Urbantke advised that she has successfully completed her Masters of Public Health degree.

Moved by: Ms. Brown

Seconded by: Ms. O'Donnell

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health approve the Short- and Long-Term Plan of the Medical Officer of Health.”

Carried.

Moved by: Ms. Brown

Seconded by: Ms. O'Donnell

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health express satisfaction with the progress to date and on the status of the objectives achieved and activities completed.”

Carried.

Members commended Dr. Urbantke for her work through COVID and in the community for BCHU and public health issues, and inquired about strategic priority setting. Dr. Urbantke advised that Health Unit staff use a continuous quality improvement process and are constantly assessing strengths and areas for improvement, priorities are reassessed regularly, and the Annual Service Plan is developed based on data for an evidence-based focus in programs. It would be preferable to delay a full strategic planning exercise until early 2021.

Moved by: Ms. Brown
Seconded by: Ms. O'Donnell

“THAT the Board of Health request the Medical Officer of Health to provide quarterly updates to the MOH Short- and Long-Term Plan.” **Carried.**

6.3 Report from the Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Tober presented the Chief Executive Officer Report, dated September 9, 2020, as provided with the agenda. Dr. Tober's report detailed the provincial funding for school-focused nurses; current nursing staff have been redeployed to school assignments to support schools as soon as possible, while recruitment occurs for the new positions. The Ministry of Health consolidated their budget grant approvals into a more global format and also, for the first time, included information for the next fiscal year. Additional provincial funds for COVID costs are available to health units who are in a deficit position; BCHU is not eligible. The draft BCHU budget will be presented at the October Board meeting.

6.4 Food Safety Disclosure Report No report.

Moved by: Mayor Bailey
Seconded by: Mr. Colombo

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health accept reports 6.1 through 6.4 as presented.” **Carried.**

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 COVID-19 Report

Dr. Urbantke and Dr. Tober presented the joint COVID-19 Report, dated September 9, 2020, as provided with the agenda. In addition to the written report, Dr. Urbantke advised that there are currently 3 active cases in Brant and a cumulative total of 166 since March. There is one long-term care home and one child care facility in outbreak. Each outbreak has one lab-confirmed case and no others were identified in either setting. Similar to the Province, in the recent weeks Brant's cases have been in the younger population. Brant's community transmission remains slightly lower than provincial percentage.

On August 20, BCHU transitioned to the Ministry's new Case and Contact Management (CCM) database and case management tool. CCM is currently used only for COVID, but will incorporate all infectious diseases in the future. Staff are working on many levels with school boards and the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit to prepare for school re-opening: Director-to-MOH level, Communications level, and staff-to-staff level. Nurses have been to their schools and met with the principals. Phase one of an evaluation survey has gone to joint EOC members regarding BCHU's initial response to COVID activities and processes. Phase two will focus on outcomes.

Dr. Urbantke responded to Members' questions. Health Canada has not released updated modelling since August 1, and neither have the provinces. Ontario is expected to soon release a document on fall planning in conjunction with seasonal influenza. A main concern is overwhelming the hospital/acute care system by COVID and influenza patients simultaneously. Two COVID cases constitute a school outbreak. Isolation would depend on a number of factors: source of infection (travel, unexplained), cohorts and classes, exclusion of siblings, family self-isolation for confirmed case, household self-isolation/self-monitoring pending test results, etc. BCHU and school boards' Communications staff have a plan their respective messaging responsibilities; schools must post cases on their website, as per the Ministry of Education, and BCHU will continue to post outbreaks on the Health Unit's website.

Moved by: Mr. Colombo
Seconded by: Ms. O'Donnell

“THAT the Board of Health accept the COVID-19 Report.” **Carried.**

Mr. Babayan left the meeting at 9:56 a.m.

7.2 Brantford Brant Ontario Health Team Application

Dr. Tober presented the Brantford Brant Ontario Health Team (OHT) Application Report, dated September 9, 2020, as provided with the agenda, and the draft application was emailed to Members prior to the meeting. Dr. Tober's report provided a summary of OH benefits and local activities. In January the Board committed to support the local OH Team initiative for a future submission. Following a pause due to COVID, the Ministry invited local teams to submit applications by September 18. A governance meeting on September 4 was attended by Chair Bell. The Brantford Brant OHT is requesting BCHU sign on as a partner. Public health's role is focused on information and statistics, evaluations, and decreasing demands on systems (prevention). When OHT approvals are received, the funds will commence; it is expected to take one to two years to get the structures in place. Brant has a robust group of partners who are eager to move forward. Public Health Modernization is not expected to impact OHTs as they report through Ontario Health.

Moved by: Councillor Bell
Seconded by: Mayor Bailey

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health approve the Brant County Health Unit as a signatory to the application for the Brantford Brant Ontario Health Team.” **Carried.**

7.3 Appointment of Medical Officer of Health

Dr. Tober presented the Appointment of Medical Officer of Health Report, dated September 9, 2020, as provided with the agenda. The report outlined the criteria and process for the appointment of a medical officer of health through the Ministry of Health. Dr. Tober reported that Dr. Urbantke has successfully completed her Masters in Public Health and is eligible for appointment. **Moved by: Mayor Davis**

Seconded by: Mayor Bailey

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health direct staff to apply to the Minister of Health and the Chief Medical Officer of Health for the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Urbantke as the full-time Medical Officer of Health for the Brant County Health Unit.” **Carried.**

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

- 8.1** Correspondence received from Renfrew County and District Health Unit, dated July 16, 2020, re basic income.
- 8.2** Correspondence received from Renfrew County and District Health Unit, dated July 16, 2020, re endorsement of alPHa's response to the Public Health Modernization discussion paper.
- 8.3** Correspondence received from Renfrew County and District Health Unit, dated July 16, 2020, re 2020 municipal cost-share of public health funding, COVID, and Public Health Modernization.
- 8.4** Correspondence received from Chatham-Kent Public Health, dated July 27, 2020, re basic income.
- 8.5** Correspondence received from Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, dated August 19, 2020 re COVID/public health funding.
- 8.6** Correspondence received from Ministry of Health, dated August 21, 2020, re approval of one-time funding for 2020-21 and 2021-22 to support public health programs and services.

Moved by: Councillor Van Tilborg
Seconded by: Ms. Brown

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

9. IN-CAMERA MEETING

Moved by: Mayor Bailey
Seconded by: Mr. Colombo

“THAT the meeting move to In-Camera at 11:15 a.m. regarding risk management issues.” **Carried.**

The regular Board of Health meeting resumed.

Motion were passed during the in-camera session for Items 2.1.1 and 2.1.6.

10. QUESTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

11.1 2021 Budget (*October*)

11.2 Strategic Planning (*2021*)

11.3 Needle Exchange Program (*October*)

12. NEXT MEETING DATES

Wednesday, October 21, 2020, at 9:30 a.m.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by:

Mr. Colombo

Seconded by:

Ms. Brown

“THAT the Board of Health meeting be adjourned.”

Carried.

Chair

Date

Secretary

Date