

BRANT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 9:00 a.m., Zoom (Classroom 420/421)
MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillor John Bell, Chair
Ms. Susan Brown, Vice-Chair
Mayor David Bailey
Ms. Nancy Church
Mr. Mario Colombo
Mayor Kevin Davis
Ms. Joy O'Donnell
Councillor John Sless
Dr. Elizabeth Urbantke
Dr. Jo Ann Tober
Ms. Lorraine Johnson (recorder)

REGRETS: Councillor Brian Van Tilborg

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Alexey Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards
Ms. Lisa DiDonato, Director, Finance
Ms. Janet Kwansah, Director, Program Standards
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

7.3 Re-Appointment of Provincial Appointees (*Chair Bell*)

Moved by: Ms. Church
Seconded by: Mayor Bailey

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

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 Brant County Board of Health Minutes, December 8, 2020

Moved by: Councillor Sless
Seconded by: Mr. Colombo

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health Minutes dated December 8, 2020, be approved as distributed.” **Carried.**

Members questioned the return rate of used needles in Item 7.2. Dr. Urbantke will speak to this in her report. Members discussed and confirmed that the three-part motion under Item 7.2 was carried. The Board does not usually record the names of Members with dissenting votes.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

5.1 Motion re Appointment of Auditors

Ms. DiDonato stated that the Municipal Act requires that boards of health appoint the same financial auditor as is used by their largest municipal funder. The City of Brantford currently holds a contract for auditor services with the firm of Millards; therefore, the Brant County Health Unit will use the services of Millards for the financial period from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

6.1 Report from the Chair

Chair Bell reported that the Board of Health Members' self-evaluation for 2020 was delayed until Board training sessions were held in December. The self-evaluation, in its current format, will be sent to Members for completion and return to Chair Bell and Vice-Chair Brown for compilation. Results will be discussed at the February Board meeting. Chair Bell stated that a communication from the Chief Medical Officer of Health indicated that health units who incur COVID expenses in excess of their approved municipal budget and provincial grants may apply for additional funds, with similar terms of engagement as in 2020. The annual performance appraisals for the Medical Officer of Health and the Chief Executive Officer will be conducted by the Chair and Vice-Chair following this Board meeting.

6.2 Report from the Acting Medical Officer of Health

Dr. Urbantke presented the Medical Officer of Health Report, dated January 20, 2021, as distributed with the agenda. The report focused on harm reduction. In response to the City's motion regarding the Needle Syringe Program (NSP), a plan to increase needle return rates was provided to the City. The matter will be on the Committee of the Whole agenda for February 2, with a Health Unit delegation available to respond to questions. A number of metrics are already in place. The NSP evaluation is awaiting ethics review by Public Health Ontario before it can commence. The priority is to hire the Drugs Strategy Coordinator.

Mr. Richardson advised that recruitment for the Brant County Health Unit position of Drugs Strategy Coordinator is underway, with the position potentially being filled by the end of February. The Health Unit engaged with other agencies leading harm reduction activities in preparation for recruitment.

Members noted a 50% decrease in opioid overdose deaths in 2020 and an increase in overdose events. While the 2020 mortality number is not finalized to date, Dr. Urbantke confirmed Emergency Department visits were up 25% and Emergency Management Services calls increased by 21%, which seems to indicate more people are calling 911 and using Naloxone. City staff are being trained to use Naloxone.

Members discussed the variance between used needle return rates of 80% vs 30%. The Health Unit's overall return rate of 80% is based on data from distribution sites, community boxes, needle sweeps, and pick-up calls. More detailed statistics on the return rate will be sent to Members following this meeting.

6.3 Report from the Chief Executive Officer See Item 7.1 COVID-19 Report.

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 presented the joint COVID-19 Report, dated December 8, 2020, as provided with the agenda. Dr. Urbantke advised that the weekly emails keep Members up to date on case numbers and incidence and positivity rates, and indicates improvement over the previous week. There are currently 5 patients in hospital. Case management continues within 24 hours using the expedited protocol. The increase in transmission and outbreaks seemed to coincide with holiday social gatherings. Case numbers are lower this week and Brant has 2 active outbreaks. Vaccination directives and plans evolve quickly. Mobile clinics are immunizing eligible residents at long-term care (LTC) and retirements homes (RH), plus some staff and essential caregivers. Several central catch-up clinics were held. To date 2,067 doses were administered. LTC and RH resident first doses will be completed by January 21, well ahead of the Provincial deadline of February 15. Clinics are operating in conjunction with hospital staff and paramedics, and LTC and RH staff at the homes.

Following LTC and RHs, vaccination sequencing of priority groups will be for healthcare workers, congregate living for seniors, Indigenous adults, and adults on chronic home care. Phase 2 will prioritize a more general, age-specific population, and phase 3 will be open to all. The vaccination target is 75% of the eligible population. Community clinics will be held at large City and County locations. Immunizations must be administered by registered professionals, and dedicated Ministry software must be used for all stages of record-keeping. Under provincial directive, vaccine shipment details must be kept confidential to ensure security. All planning depends upon the availability and timing of vaccines. Municipal support could be available from the City if needed.

Dr. Urbantke reported that no confirmed cases of influenza have been reported in Brant to date this season, and there are very few cases in Ontario. A similar pattern was noted in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere. COVID protocols also prevent the transmission of influenza.

Mr. Babayan left the meeting at 9:52 a.m.

7.2 Annual Declarations: Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and Confidentiality

Chair Bell stated that the annual signing of declarations of Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality are required of Board of Health Members. Eight of nine sets of 2021 declarations have been returned to date.

7.3 Re-Appointment of Provincial Appointees

Chair Bell stated that the one-year provincial appointments for Ms. Susan Brown, Ms. Joy O'Donnell, and Mr. Mario Colombo will expire on April 8/2021, April 23/2021, and June 3/2021, respectively. Following confirmation from the three appointees of their intentions to seek re-appointment, the Board recommended their re-appointments and will submit letters of support to the Public Appointments office.

Moved by:

Mayor Davis

Seconded by:

Mayor Bailey

“THAT the Brant County Board of Health recommend the re-appointments of Provincial Appointees, Ms. Susan Brown, Ms. Joy O'Donnell, and Mr. Mario Colombo.”

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 Timiskaming Health Unit, dated December 10, 2020, re food literacy for students.
- 8.2 Correspondence received from City of Toronto, dated December 20, 2020, re opioid crisis in Toronto. The letter sets out multiple requests for funding or reinstated funding. Mayor Davis requested a copy of the letter.
- 8.3 Correspondence received from Grey Bruce Public Health, dated December 4, 2020, re extra-legislative development of undefined regional initiatives.
- 8.4 Correspondence received from City of Brantford, dated November 30, 2020, re City motion re unsafe needle disposal.
- 8.5 Correspondence received to the Chief Medical Officer of Health, dated December 14, 2020, re BCHU Needle Exchange Program.
- 8.6 Correspondence received to City of Brantford, dated January 6, 2021, re BCHU Needle Exchange Program.
- 8.7 Correspondence received to City of Brantford, dated January 5, 2021, re needle disposal bins. Members inquired if there is a delay by the City in getting the bins installed. Dr. Urbantke responded that Health Unit staff continue to work with City staff to have the bins installed within City sidewalk parameters. City staff referred discussion to City Council for approval; it is on the February 2 Committee of the Whole agenda.

9. IN-CAMERA MEETING

Moved by:

Mayor Bailey

Seconded by:

Councillor Sless

“THAT the meeting move to In-Camera at 10:08 a.m. regarding personal matters about an identifiable individual(s).”

Carried.

The regular Board of Health meeting resumed.

The following motions were passed during the in-camera session regarding MOH recruitment:

“THAT the Board of Health establish a Medical Officer of Health Selection Committee, with the following members: Chair Bell, Vice-Chair Brown, Ms. Church, Ms. O’Donnell, and Mayor Davis.”

“THAT the Board of Health approve the Terms of Reference for the MOH Selection Committee, with the identified amendments being made by Ms. Church.”

“THAT the Board of Health appoint Ms. Church to chair the MOH Selection Committee.”

“THAT the Board of Health ratify an agreement with LHH Knightsbridge for the recruitment of a Medical Officer of Health.”

10. ELECTIONS

Chair Bell vacated the Chair and turned the floor over to Dr. Tober. All positions were declared vacant.

12.1 Chair

Dr. Tober declared that nominations were open for the position of Chair of the Brant County Board of Health for 2021.

Moved by: Mayor Davis

Seconded by: Mayor Bailey

“THAT Councillor Bell be nominated for the position of Chair of the Brant County Board of Health for 2021.”
Carried.

Nominations were closed.

Councillor Bell accepted the position of Chair.

12.2 Vice-Chair

Chair Bell declared that nominations were open for the position of Vice-Chair of the Brant County Board of Health for 2021.

Moved by: Mayor Davis

Seconded by: Ms. O’Donnell

“THAT Ms. Brown be nominated for the position of Vice-Chair of the Brant County Board of Health for 2021.”
Carried.

Nominations were closed.

Ms. Brown accepted the position of Vice-Chair. This concluded the elections.

12.3 Signing Officers

Dr. Tober presented the renewal motion for signing offices of the Brant County Health Unit.

Moved by: Mayor Bailey

Seconded by: Mr. Colombo

“THAT the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources, Medical Officer of Health, Chair, and Vice-Chair be appointed signing officers for the Brant County Health Unit;

AND THAT two appointees be authorized signing officers for cheques with a value greater than \$1,000.00.”
Carried.

11. QUESTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS None.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

12.1 Needle Exchange Program (*Q1 2021*)

12.2 Brant Brantford Community Drugs Strategy (*Q1 2021*)

13. NEXT MEETING DATES

Wednesday, February 17, 2021, at 9:30 a.m.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: **Mr. Colombo**

“THAT the Board of Health meeting be adjourned at 10:58 a.m.”

Carried.

Chair

Date

Secretary

Date