

**BRANT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Wednesday, September 15, 2021, 9:30 a.m., Zoom**  
**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** John Bell (County), Chair  
Susan Brown (Province), Vice-Chair  
David Bailey (County)  
Nancy Church (Province)  
John Sless (City)

Dr. Rebecca Comley ((A)MOH)  
Jo Ann Tober (CEO)  
Brent Richardson (Director, HR)  
Lisa DiDonato (Director, Finance)  
Alexey Babayan, (Director, Foundations)  
Lorraine Johnson (Exec. Asst.) (recorder)

**REGRETS:** Kevin Davis (City)  
Joy O'Donnell (Province)  
Brian Van Tilborg (City)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Gerry Moniz, Manager, Chronic Disease Prevention and Injury Prevention

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 9:30 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**

Moved by: **John Sless**  
Seconded by: **David Bailey**

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

**Carried.**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**4.1 Brant County Board of Health Minutes of June 16, August 18, and August 23, 2021**

Moved by: **John Sless**  
Seconded by: **Nancy Church**

**“THAT the Brant County Board of Health Minutes dated June 16, 2021, August 18, 2021, and August 23, 2021, be approved.”**

**Carried.**

Members requested an update from the August 18 minutes regarding the hiring of a public relations firm for COVID-19 messaging.

**5. FINANCIAL REPORT**

**5.1 Financial Position Report ended July 31, 2021**

Lisa DiDonato presented the Financial Position Report ended July 31, 2021, as distributed with the agenda. The Brant County Health Unit (BCHU) spent \$4.9 million on COVID response and vaccine program expenditures. To date, the Ministry of Health has approved only 49% of submitted COVID funding requests which places BCHU in a deficit. Ministry approval for the remaining 2021 funding is expected, based on actual COVID expenditures, following submission of 2021 Q2 Standards Activity Report (financial and program) and Q2 COVID Expenses Report to the Ministry on September 17.

Inquiry was made of Correspondence Item 8.7 regarding Ministry funding approval. There have been past instances where the Ministry of Health has not approved a funding request. Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, the responsibility lies with the municipalities to make up that shortfall.

Inquiry was made of Correspondence Item 8.6 regarding Millards 2020 financial audit letter to Management. Nancy noted issues raised in the letter which were not raised by Millards when they presented the audited financial statements at the April and June Board meetings. Lisa advised that the letter was received from Millards on July 19. Errors in the letter pertain to no journal entries being viewed during the audit, and application of vacation policy and accrual to part-time staff and staff on leave of absence. BCHU practices will be adjusted in working with the auditors for 2021. Members asked for a written report to the Finance & Audit Committee about the content of the Millards letter to management.

Chair Bell commented on Correspondence Item 8.13 from the City of Brantford regarding guidelines for 2022 budgets. The Board of Health is an autonomous body whose Board approves the annual budget which is forwarded to the municipalities. Lisa noted this guideline document is provided annually by the City to all funded boards and agencies and is received by BCHU as operational information.

## **6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

### **6.1 Report from the Chair**

Chair Bell formally welcomed Dr. Rebecca Comley to the BCHU as Acting Medical Officer of Health (MOH). Chair Bell also thanked Dr. Malcolm Lock for filling the Interim Acting MOH position following the departure of Dr. Urbantke, and faced a number of intense challenges during that time.

The work of BCHU employees in COVID-19 response was recognized twice recently. On July 28, MPP Bouma presented provincial recognition for successful work in the local COVID vaccination program. On September 14, the Brantford Rotary—Sunrise presented BCHU with a Certificate of Appreciation for COVID response work, and awarded individual Rotary Paul Harris Fellowships to seven staff and managers for their outstanding work in COVID and as representatives of the entire BCHU agency. Chair Bell added that he continues to hear nothing but positive feedback about the Health Unit's COVID response and clinics.

### **6.2 Report from the Acting Medical Officer of Health**

The Medical Officer of Health's (MOH) report was provided to Members in the agenda package. The report provided an overview of activities from the summer and ongoing work.

### **6.3 Report from the Chief Executive Officer**

Jo Ann Tober presented the Chief Executive Officer Report as distributed with the agenda. The report included dates for upcoming Association of Local Public Health Agencies events, and the appointment of five regional Associate Chief Medical Officers of Health (ACMOH) under Dr. Kieran Moore. The Brantford-Brant Ontario Health Team (OHT) is in exploratory discussions with the Norfolk OHT to fold it into one Team.

### **6.4 Food Safety Disclosure Report**

No report.

## **6.5 COVID-19 Reports**

### **6.5.1 COVID-19 Case Management Report**

Jo Ann Tober presented information for the COVID-19 Case Management Report at the meeting. As of September 12, all numbers are up. Brant has 69 active cases with 5 hospitalizations. The incidence rate is 51.4/100,000, the reproductive number is 1.24, and positivity is 3%. There were 14 new cases yesterday. The increase in rates was predictable. Staff continue with contact and case management.

BCHU staff follow up on reports of complications from vaccines that meet Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI) criteria, including myocarditis and endocarditis. AEFI reports are reviewed and classified by the local MOH and submitted to Public Health Ontario for review.

An Addendum Report on COVID-19 and the Paris Fair was provided by Dr. Lock to Members with the agenda. The Paris Fair safety plan was reviewed by the Health Unit; it exceeded Ministry requirements and Fair capacity limits were set below maximums. Masking outdoors was not required. More local events are anticipated, e.g., Burford Fair, AppleFest, etc. These private events have COVID safety plans as well as routine applications and inspections for food safety, education, etc.

### 6.5.2 COVID-19 Immunization Report

Jo Ann Tober presented the COVID-19 Immunization Report at the meeting. Current coverage rates were 78% for Dose 1 and 73% for Dose 2 for those aged 12+ years. Half of those attending clinics are seeking a first dose. The Ministry conducted data cleansing to remove postal codes assigned in error to Brant. Many postal codes cross municipal boundaries. BCHU coverage statistics had already filtered out those postal codes.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) approved Dose 3 boosters for a small number of immune-compromised people and those living in long-term care or high-risk retirement homes. Those eligible for Dose 3 will be contacted by their physicians who will provide a referral letter. No attestations will be accepted. Twenty-two Dose 3 vaccinations have been administered to date. Further expansion of Dose 3 is unknown at this time. Approvals are anticipated to immunize children ages 5-11 years. Trials are underway for children ages 0-2 years, 2-5 years, and 5-11 years. People who had COVID-19 should be vaccinated as their immunity will wane.

Proof of vaccination will be required as of September 22 to enter some premises. Individuals can download their Dose 2 vaccination proof from the provincial portal and show it with accompanying identification. As of October 22, a QR code will be available for download. The Ministry directed that premises are required to conduct their own screening and enforcement, and to contact the police if customers don't comply. It is recognized that this will increase businesses' workloads, and falsified documents are already in circulation. An increase in complaints is anticipated.

Letter M Marketing has been hired to produce COVID vaccination messaging targeted at young adults. The marketing firm stated that celebrity spokespeople are not the most effective strategy, but rather to use relevant social media platforms including paid advertising. This approach continues in the formats in place by BCHU. The cost for this marketing remains within budget.

*Gerry Moniz joined the meeting at 10:37 a.m.*

### 6.5.3 BCHU COVID-19 Vaccine Policies

Brent Richardson presented the BCHU COVID-19 Vaccine Policies Report as provided with the agenda. The COVID policy was launched to employees requiring that they provide Human Resources (HR) with evidence of vaccination; 95% of active BCHU employees are fully vaccinated. HR staff are following up on exemptions. Un-immunized employees will need to complete regular testing with negative results, and wear appropriate personal protective equipment. New staff will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

**Moved by:**

**John Sless**

**Seconded by:**

**David Bailey**

**“THAT the Brant County Board of Health accept Report 5.1 Financial Report ended July 31, 2021, and Business Arising reports 6.1 through 6.5.3 as presented.”**

**Carried.**

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

### 7.1 Substance Use Program Report

Gerry Moniz presented the Substance Use Program Report, as distributed with the agenda. The report provided an update on activities from June through August, and included the Needle Return Incentive (NRI) Pilot Project Report. The final needle disposal bin is slated for installation at St. Andrew's Church. The Drugs Strategy survey indicated the following topics of interest: harm reduction, anti-stigma, and safe consumption site. This information will guide planning for an education session and the Fall Forum.

The NRI pilot saw more needles returned. Needle users were found to hoard their used needles for return for incentive which only increases the risk of re-using needles. No change in the number of needles found in the community was found. There is no advantage to continuing with the NRI project. Staff will continue with education and the needle bins will remain in place. From a City perspective, John Sless advised that the hot topic of used needles has gone quiet.

### **7.2 Mental Health Plan Report**

Gerry Moniz presented the Mental Health Plan Report, as distributed with the agenda. The work plan outlines activities for this year and projects for 2022, and identifies partnerships with community agencies. These are in line with the public health mandate regarding mental health and are in conjunction with local agencies. A Mental Health Additions Work Group specifically addresses addictions and mental health services in Brant. Mental health is a major mandate of the Brantford-Brant OHT; they are actively working on this issue. Members asked for a report on the OHT's work in mental health.

Statistics show that mental health concerns cross age and socio-economic groups. No specific group stands out during the pandemic. Staff promote general mental health in specific and in daily public health interactions. BCHU works with associations (e.g., Business Improvement Association, Chamber of Commerce) to reach as many agencies, businesses, and workplaces as possible.

*Gerry Moniz left the meeting at 11:07 a.m.*

### **7.3 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Report**

Brent Richardson presented information on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30. The federal government designated this a statutory holiday. Many Ontario health units have committed to recognizing this day to honour the Indigenous community. BCHU works closely with our Indigenous neighbours; supports truth and reconciliation; and acknowledges the tragedy and impact of residential schools on this community. Members were asked to make a decision about closing BCHU on September 30, 2021, for this holiday.

Brent advised there are fewer provincial statutory holidays than federal days. There is no requirement within current collective agreements to award this day to staff. Clinics are scheduled for that date, similar to other statutory holidays during 2021. Members considered decisions made by the County, other health agencies, etc. The Board determined that this year it is not appropriate for BCHU to stand down from operations, but stated the importance for Health Unit staff to recognize the day.

### **7.4 Provincial Appointee Re-Appointment**

Chair Bell stated that the one-year provincial appointment for Nancy Church will expire on November 25, 2021. Nancy confirmed her intention to seek re-appointment. The Board recommended her re-appointment and will submit a letter of support to the Public Appointments office.

**Moved by: David Bailey**  
**Seconded by: John Sless**

**“THAT the Brant County Board of Health recommend the re-appointment of Provincial Appointee, Nancy Church.”**

**Carried.**

### **7.5 Disbandment of the Medical Officer of Health Selection Committee**

Nancy Church reported that the Selection Committee fulfilled its purpose and the Terms of Reference are completed. A final meeting was held on September 10 with LLH Knightsbridge. Nancy and Brent will meet to review the process.

**Moved by: David Bailey**  
**Seconded by: Nancy Church**

**“THAT the Brant County Board of Health accept reports 7.1 through 7.5 as presented.”**

**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 Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, dated June 21, 2021, re mitigation funding.
- 8.2** Correspondence received from Peterborough Public Health, dated June 23, 2021, re public health funding.
- 8.3** Correspondence received from Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, dated June 17, 2021, re public health funding.
- 8.4** Correspondence received from North Bay-Parry-Sound District Health Unit, dated June 24, 2021, re public health funding for 2022.
- 8.5** Correspondence received from Southwestern Public Health, dated July 20, 2021, re public health funding.

- 8.6 Correspondence received from Millards, re Report to the Members of the Board of Health for 2020.
- 8.7 Correspondence received from Ministry of Health, dated July 22, 2021, re funding approval for 2021.
- 8.8 Correspondence received from Peterborough Public Health, dated August 6, 2021, re public health funding.
- 8.9 Correspondence received from Toronto Public Health, dated August 15, 2021, re COVID et al matters.
- 8.10 Correspondence received to Premier Ford, dated August 24, 2021, re COVID vaccine certification and policies.
- 8.11 Correspondence received from Northwestern Health Unit, dated August 27, 2021, re mitigation funding.
- 8.12 Correspondence received from Northwestern Health Unit, dated August 27, 2021, re ongoing IPAC Hub Model.
- 8.13 City of Brantford 2022 Budget Guidelines: Local Boards & Agencies, dated August 30, 2021.

Moved by: **John Sless**  
Seconded by: **Nancy Church**

**“THAT the Brant County Board of Health receive the correspondence for information.”** **Carried.**

**9. IN-CAMERA MEETING**

Moved by: **David Bailey**  
Seconded by: **Nancy Church**

**“THAT the meeting move to In-Camera at 11:18 a.m. regarding personal matters about risk management issues.”** **Carried.**

*The regular Board of Health meeting resumed at 11:19 a.m.*

During the Incamera session, motions were passed to accept reports 2.1 and 3.1.

**10. QUESTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**12. NEXT MEETING DATES**

Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 9:30 a.m.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by: **David Bailey**

**“THAT the Board of Health meeting be adjourned at 11:49 a.m.”** **Carried.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date