

GRAND ERIE PUBLIC HEALTH

GRAND ERIE BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

Wednesday, November 19, 2025 9:30 AM

Boardroom 422/Hybrid

194 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, ON

Members Present:

Amy Martin, Norfolk County
John Bell, Brant County
Michael Bodnar, Provincial Appointee
Susan Brown, Provincial Appointee
Kim Huffman, Norfolk County (virtual)
Maria Kinkel, Provincial Appointee (virtual)
Joy O'Donnell, Provincial Appointee (virtual)

Members Regrets:

Rose Sicoli, City of Brantford

Guests Present:

Dr. AJ Wray, Exposcape
Braden Dyce, Exposcape

Staff Present:

Dr. Jason Malenfant, Acting Medical Officer of Health
Sarah Page, Chief Executive Officer
Michelle Regan, Chief Nursing Officer
Sarah Titmus, Director, Public Health
Syed Shah, Director, Public Health
Brad Stark, Director, Finance
Katie Greene, Director, Human Resources
Gary Williams, Director, Communications & Strategic Initiatives (virtual)
Alexey Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards
Hilary Wren-Atilola, Director, Healthy Communities
Robyn Mitchell, Manager, Human Resources
Keith Corey, Manager, Environmental Health
Alexis Atkinson, Manager, Environmental Health
Niky Los, Manager, Healthy Growth and Development & Substance Abuse
Terri-Lynn Ovens, Manager, Healthy Growth and Development & Healthy Schools
Kike Ogunsulire, Manager, School Health & Oral Health
Eric Robertson, Manager, Vaccine Preventable Diseases & Oral Health
Nicole Chambers, Board Clerk & Privacy Officer
April Parkinson, Executive Assistant (Recorder)
Mandy Babbey, Executive Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chair A. Martin called the meeting to order at 9:27 a.m. and noted the regrets received from Member Sicoli. She also advised that Member Huffman had a prior commitment and would be arriving late. Chair Martin added that the appointments of two new Members, Mayor Kevin Davis (City of Brantford) and Councillor John Metcalfe (Haldimand County) are expected to be ratified next week.

2. In Camera Session

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member S. Brown

That the Grand Erie Board of Health meeting move In-Camera at 9:28 a.m. to consider the following:

2.1. Conflict of Interest Declarations (In-Camera Items Only)

2.2. Confidential Report: Ontario Public Health Standards

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(h) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them.

2.3. Confidential Report: Updated Policy Framework on Medical Officer of Health Appointments, Reporting and Compensation

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees; and Section 239(2)(d) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to labour relations or employee negotiations.

2.4. Confidential Report: Human Resources

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees; and Section 239(2)(d) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to labour relations or employee negotiations.

2.5. Confidentiality Issue & Reminder (Verbal Report)

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees; and Section 239(2)(f) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.

Carried.

The Board of Health convened in Closed Session at 9:28 a.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 10:36 a.m.

Chair A. Martin noted that staff were to proceed in accordance with the direction provided in Closed Session, and that four motions resulted from Closed Session.

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member J. O'Donnell

That Item 2.2: Confidential Memo, be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

Moved By: Member S. Brown
Seconded by: Member M. Kinkel

That Report 2025-071: Updated Policy Framework on Medical Officer of Health Appointments, Reporting, and Compensation be received for informational purposes; and that the Board of Health provide direction to staff to update the Medical Officer of Health and the Associate Medical Officer of Health's compensation to remain aligned with the Policy Framework.

Carried.

Moved By: Member M. Bodnar
Seconded by: Member J. O'Donnell

That Report 2025-077 be received for informational purposes; and, that staff proceed as directed in Closed Session regarding Item 2.4.

Carried.

Moved By: Member S. Brown
Seconded by: Member J. Bell

That Item 2.5: Confidential Issue & Reminder (Verbal Report), be received for informational purposes; and, that staff proceed as directed in Closed Session.

Carried.

The Board of Health recessed at 10:39 a.m. and reconvened at 10:44 a.m.

3. Conflict of Interest

Chair A. Martin reminded members to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, if applicable.

4. Additions to/Approval of Agenda

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member M. Bodnar

That the November 19, 2025 Board of Health agenda be approved, as amended (letter to Haldimand County); and

That the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health accept the apology dated November 8, 2025 and the formal letter of resignation, dated November 10, 2025, submitted by Member S. Bentley.

Carried.

5. Approval of Minutes

5.1. October 15, 2025 Board of Health Meeting Minutes

5.2. October 15, 2025 Board of Health In-Camera Meeting Minutes – Confidential

Moved By: Member J. Bell

Seconded by: Member O'Donnell

That the following Board of Health minutes, be approved:

- October 15, 2025 Board of Health Meeting Minutes
- October 15, 2025 Board of Health In-Camera Meeting Minutes – Confidential

Carried.

6. Standing Reports & Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1. Verbal Report from the Medical Officer of Health

Dr. J. Malenfant presented his verbal report for the Board's consideration. Key updates included continuing with program harmonization, continuing the draft OPHS review, respiratory vaccine season and GEPH Leadership Charter Development (SLT).

Members inquired about harm prevention program grants and opportunities to collaborate on future applications. Staff were directed to engage with partner agencies and municipal housing services to explore partnership and funding options, and to ensure that municipalities that have not sought support are informed of available opportunities.

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member S. Brown

That Item 6.1, Verbal Report from the Medical Officer of Health, be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

7. Program Reports

7.1. Facilities Master Plan Report

G. Williams introduced consultants, Dr. AJ Wray and B. Dyce from Exposcape Limited. Dr. Wray presented the report as provided in the agenda package. Members inquired about the 45-minute drive criteria, ability to offer mobile programs and support, demographics served and the impact and timing of the new OPHS on programs and administration. Dr. Wray noted that the priority for GEPH is to procure flexible space to adapt to changing needs.

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member S. Brown

That Report 2025-072: Facilities Master Plan Update, be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

A. Wray and B. Dyce, Exposcape left the meeting (virtually) at 11:23 a.m. and did not return.

Member K. Huffman joined the meeting at 11:30 a.m. and left at 11:35 a.m. due to technical difficulties.

7.2. Environmental Health Program Report

K. Corey and A. Atkinson presented the report as provided in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding safe drinking water and the testing of private wells. It was noted that the province has launched an online portal to improve access to water testing services. Public Health Inspectors remain available to support residents with questions and guidance, and a comprehensive communications campaign is underway, including social media outreach and participation in public events to encourage private well testing.

Members also recommended issuing communications related to sell-by and best-before date guidance provided by the provincial government, as well as continuing to promote and share information on radon exposure.

Member J. O'Donnell left the meeting at 11:39 a.m. and did not return.

*Quorum was lost. All unfinished business was carried forward to the next meeting. The Chair confirmed that while discussions were permitted to continue, **no motions were moved, debated, or voted on, and no decisions were made.***

K. Corey left the meeting at 11:40 a.m. and did not return.

7.3. Healthy Growth & Development Program Report

N. Los and T. Ovens presented the report as provided in the agenda package. In response to a Member's inquiry regarding access to formula, staff advised that recent public concerns have centered more on rising costs than on availability. It was also noted that registered dietitians will be developing guidance to support families in navigating formula purchasing, with enhanced public communication planned for 2026.

7.4. Oral Health Program Report

K. Ogunsulire and E. Robertson presented the report included in the agenda package. Members asked about the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP), including its funding model and the capacity to provide services to those accessing the program. It was noted that efforts are underway to increase awareness and communication regarding existing programs.

Discussion also addressed trends and improvements. Staff reported that, overall, progress has been made categorically. Dental screening is conducted in the grades mandated by the Ministry, based on the risk levels identified.

A. Atkinson, N. Los, T. Ovens, K. Ogunsulire and E. Robertson left the meeting at 11:56 a.m. and did not return.

8. Finance Report

8.1. Pro Forma Budget: 2026 to 2028

B. Stark, Director, Finance, presented the report as provided in the agenda package. It was noted that a multi-pronged approach is being undertaken to identify savings to address the significant funding gap projected for 2027-2028. This approach includes advocating for changes to the Ministry's proposed funding model, identifying operational efficiencies, and reviewing staffing models.

Chair A. Martin added that she, along with the CEO, MOH, and Director of Finance, participate in monthly meetings with other merged health units to identify advocacy and lobbying opportunities related to merger issues and funding. She emphasized the importance of communicating to our partner municipalities the potential budgetary increases they would have faced had the health units not merged. A recommendation was provided for B. Stark to develop a Gantt chart to visualize the anticipated progress over time.

9. New Business

Items 9.1 to 9.5 were deferred to the next meeting agenda for discussion and consideration.

10. Correspondence

Member Bodnar noted that he will be submitting a written report regarding yesterday's Brantford Brant Norfolk Ontario Health Team Meeting – this will be included in next agenda package for consideration.

11. Questions/Announcements

Discussion took place regarding the provincial appointments – we have received the Orders in Council for the re-appointments of Members Bodnar and Kinkel. It was noted that the 2026 Orientation may have to be moved to February if the province does not fill all, or most, their five appointments by the end of January.

12. Future Agenda Items

The following items will be considered at the January 28, 2026 Board of Health Meeting:

- Elections: Chair/Vice Chair
- Committees: Nominations & TOR Annual Review
- Meeting Calendars: BOH and Committees
- Priorities/CHP
- Year in Review (2025)
- Appointment of an Auditor
- Code of Conduct Summary
- Board of Health Orientation

13. Next Meeting Date

The next regular Board of Health Meeting will take place on December 17, 2025 (virtual via Zoom). The 2026 inaugural meeting will take place on January 28, 2026.

14. Adjournment

The Board of Health meeting adjourned at 11:39 a.m. Discussion concluded at 12:12 p.m.

 'Original Signed By'
Chair

 'Original Signed By'
Board of Health Clerk

APPROVED