GRAND ERIE
PUBLIC HEALTH

GRAND ERIE BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES
Wednesday, October 15, 2025 9:30 AM
Boardroom 422/Hybrid
194 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, ON

Members Present:
Amy Martin, Norfolk County (virtual)
John Bell, Brant County
Shelley Ann Bentley, Haldimand County
Michael Bodnar, Provincial Appointee
Susan Brown, Provincial Appointee (virtual)
Kim Huffman, Norfolk County (virtual)
Maria Kinkel, Provincial Appointee
Joy O'Donnell, Provincial Appointee (virtual)
Rose Sicoli, City of Brantford

Staff Present:
Dr. Jason Malenfant, Medical Officer of Health
Sarah Page, Chief Executive Officer
Michelle Regan, Chief Nursing Officer
Sarah Titmus, Director, Public Health (virtual)
Brad Stark, Director, Finance
Katie Greene, Director, Human Resources
Robyn Mitchell, Manager, Human Resources
Gary Williams, Director, Communications & Strategic Initiatives
Alexey Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards
Hilary Wren-Atilola, Director, Healthy Communities
April Parkinson, Executive Assistant (Recorder)
Nicole Chambers, Board Clerk & Privacy Officer

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1. Call to Order

Chair A. Martin called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. Conflict of Interest

Chair A. Martin reminded members to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, if applicable. Member S. Bentley declared a conflict of interest regarding in-camera agenda item 8.2: Confidential Investigation Discussion.

3. Additions to/Approval of Agenda

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

That the October 15, 2025 Board of Health agenda be approved, as presented.

Carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. September 17, 2025 Board of Health Meeting Minutes

4.2. September 17, 2025 Board of Health In-Camera Meeting Minutes – Confidential

Moved By: Member J. O'Donnell

Seconded by: Member S. Brown

That the following Board of Health minutes, be approved:

- September 17, 2025 Board of Health Meeting Minutes
- September 17, 2025 Board of Health In-Camera Meeting Minutes – Confidential

Carried.

Member R. Sicoli joined the meeting at 9:32 a.m.

5. Standing Reports & Business Arising from Previous Minutes

5.1. Report from the Medical Officer of Health

Dr. J. Malenfant presented his report, "Building Trust, Openness and a Positive Culture" as provided in the agenda. Key updates included the draft of new Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) effective January 2026 and the declaration of the end of the provincial measles outbreak as of October 6, 2025. The launch of the new Grand Erie Public Health brand is scheduled for November 20, 2025.

Members asked questions regarding the status of the recording of meetings, as well as the effect from the revised OPHS from an organizational perspective. It was noted that the contents are confidential as directed by the Ministry. Direction was provided to the MOH to provide a confidential draft for Board to review in-camera.

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

That Item 5.1, Report from the Medical Officer of Health be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

6. New Business & Program Reports

6.1. Community Health Profile Report

A. Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards, presented the report as outlined in the agenda. He noted that the organization is developing a dashboard to visually summarize the data contained within the report.

Members engaged in discussion and posed questions regarding various health trends and areas of concern, including high rates of lung cancer in non-smokers, tobacco consumption, respiratory illnesses, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), food insecurity and low levels of physical activity. Questions were raised about the relationship between injury rates and workplace safety, as well as the programs offered by GEPH to address issues such as food insecurity.

Discussion also addressed potential opportunities for the Board to collaborate with existing organizations, including the Canadian Mental Health Association's Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) and local Indigenous health units. Members further inquired about possible links between geography and rates of cancer and other adverse health outcomes.

Additional concerns highlighted by Members included maternal mental health, postpartum depression, vaping, Lyme disease, falls and alcohol consumption.

Moved By: Member J. O'Donnell
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That Report 2025-056, Community Profile Report, be received for information; and that staff be directed to reformat the report to include a visual presentation of the data, and to return the revised report to the Board of Health for the purpose of priority setting.

Carried.

Member S. Brown left the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

6.2. Program Harmonization and Balanced Scorecard Report

H. Wren-Atilola, Director, Healthy Communities and A. Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards presented the report as outlined in the agenda. Members inquired about succession planning, staff morale, program and wage harmonization, and the optimization of processes related to fleet, travel and procurement. It was noted that the original intent of the Board was to re-invest any cost savings. Members noted that GEPH should recognize regional differences and adapt programs accordingly.

In response to a Member's inquiry regarding the primary challenge in the harmonization process, H. Wren-Atilola noted that phase one is currently underway. She emphasized that engaging with people is the most significant challenge, as they are central to the process and it must be done right the first time. Meaningful engagement takes time, and transparency and communication remain essential throughout.

Member S. Brown returned to the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Moved By: Member K. Huffman
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That Report 2025-057: Program Harmonization and Balanced Scorecard Report: Progress Update be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

7. Financial Report

7.1. 2026 Operating Budget Report

B. Stark, Director, Finance, presented the 2026 Budget for Grand Erie Public Health for consideration and approval. Members inquired about salary harmonization and merger-funded positions. It was noted that the 2026 budget is contingent on current programming – if the new OPHS may alter our provision of services which may have a result on our staffing level.

Members recommended that B. Stark highlight Schedule D, which presents a valuable summary of the cost savings, to the municipal partners when presenting the budget.

Moved By: Member R. Sicoli
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That that the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health receives Report 2025-057: Grand Erie Public Health 2026 Budget for informational purposes, and approves the 2026 budget for Grand Erie Public Health;

And further that a 3-year pro forma budget for the years 2026 to 2028 that represents the operating position of Grand Erie Public Health, excluding merger or transition supports and levy harmonization funding, and including best predictions for salary harmonization scenarios, be provided to the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health for consideration no later than November 30th, 2025;

And further that staff be directed to identify reoccurring savings on the upside of $500,000, that can take place by fiscal year 2027, to be provided to the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health for consideration no later than March 31st, 2026;

And that staff be directed to table any decisions regarding service level and program additions, enhancements or changes requiring Board approval until the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health has considered the new strategic plan and has set priorities and further direction; and,

And that a copy of this motion be provided to the Councils of the City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County and Norfolk County."

Carried.

The Board of Health recessed at 11:32 a.m. and reconvened at 11:42 a.m.

8. In Camera Session

Moved By: Member K. Huffman
Seconded by: Member M. Bodnar

That the Grand Erie Board of Health meeting move In Camera at 11:42 a.m. to consider the following:

8.1. Confidential Employment Matter
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.

8.2. Confidential Investigation Discussion
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.

8.3. Confidential Legal Matters
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.

8.4. Confidential Legal Matters
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 in accordance with Section 1.6(d) of the Board of Health Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Policy, as the matter pertains to the right to appeal to imposed sanctions.

Carried.

The Board of Health convened in Closed Session at 11:42 a.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 12:36 a.m.

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

Moved By: Member R. Sicoli
Seconded by: Member J. O'Donnell

That staff proceed as directed in Closed Session regarding Item 8.1 Confidential Employment Matter.

Carried.

Moved By: Member R. Sicoli
Seconded by: Member J. Bell

That the Board acknowledge receipt of the Integrity Commissioner's report for Haldimand County, prepared by D.G. Boghosian and dated September 8, 2025;

And that in accordance with Section 1.6(a) of the *Grand Erie Board of Health Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Policy*, the Board issue a formal written

reprimand and request that Member S. Bentley provide a written apology to the Grand Erie Board of Health, to be received prior to November 19, 2025;

And that the Integrity Commissioner's report be published on the Grand Erie Public Health website for public access.

Carried.

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

That Report 2025-053: Confidential Legal Matters (Employment) be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

Members J. O'Donnell and K. Huffman left the meeting at 12:24 p.m. and did not return.

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member R. Sicoli

That following a review of an investigation concerning a breach of the Grand Erie Board of Health Code of Conduct, the Board of Health affirms its decision of July 16, 2025, to bar Member D. McCreary from participating in all Board of Health and committee meetings until further notice, and to request that Member McCreary submit his resignation in writing within thirty (30) days; and, should the Board not receive his resignation within that timeframe, staff be directed to prepare and issue correspondence to the City of Brantford requesting the recall and replacement of the appointment;

And further that the Board direct staff to formally notify the Member's appointing body, the City of Brantford, of this decision and to provide all official correspondence and relevant documentation pertaining to the matter.

Carried.

9. Correspondence

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

That the Board receive Member Bodnar's report dated Sept 16, 2025 for informational purposes;

And that staff be directed to assist in the completion of the Board Skills Matrix questionnaire.

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

That the remainder of the correspondence included in the agenda package be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

10. Questions/Announcements

Nothing to report.

11. Future Agenda Items

The following items will be considered at the November 19, 2025 Board of Health Meeting:

- Facilities Master Plan
- Oral Health Program Update
- Environmental Health Program Update
- Healthy Growth & Development Program Update
- Board of Health Procedural By-law

12. Next Meeting Date

The next regular Board of Health meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2025. The following meeting scheduled for December 17, 2025, will take place at the Call of the Chair.

13. Adjournment

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

That the Board of Health meeting be adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

Carried.

Amy Martin
Chair

L. Chambers
Board of Health Clerk