

June 13, 2022



Dear Council,

Typically the appointments of municipal representatives on the Board of Health have been for one year. During the Covid19 emergency, the Board requested from Bruce and Grey Counties the ability to extend the appointments to two years to ensure continuity during the emergency response.

As the emergency was declared over locally and provincially, Bruce County staff made a request to our Board to provide suggestions on the Board's recommendations on the length of a BOH appointment.

In its May 27 2022 meeting, the Board had passed a motion suggesting to the Counties that a two-year term is preferred as it would allow for turnover that appropriately balances the board continuity and new contributions. The Board acknowledges that each county has the authority to make the decision as per its procedural by-laws.

In the best interests of our collective mission to better the health of the public in Grey Bruce, and our dedication to continuous quality improvement, the Board has identified this as an advantageous opportunity to provide county councils with its unique perspective on what is required of a member when they join the Board of Health. Being a Board of Health member is a high-demand role with an engaging portfolio that requires the most serious consideration from members, such as term, attendance, and foundational pieces in our policies and orientation. We trust these insights will be useful when councillors consider their time commitments and skill set competencies that would best serve the Board of Health as a unique governing body working to protect the health of communities within of Grey and Bruce.

To that end, please find key considerations for municipal councillors to reflect on the process of applying for membership in the Board of Health. The Board suggests the following to the two counties:

Key considerations about the Board of Health (BOH) membership:

- *Attendance* - attend meetings on a regular and punctual basis. Members must be prepared to commit to a number of meetings as per Board policies; dedication of personal time, and a minimum of eight (8) hours a month to Board and committee meetings on behalf of the Grey Bruce Health Unit.
- *Accountability* – Accountability to exercise the powers and discharges the duties of Board members honestly, in good faith, and in the best interests of the Board of Health and the Health Unit. This accountability supersedes the personal interest of any member acting as an individual, or acting as a member of another organization, including as a councillor or other representative of a municipality.
- *Disclosure of Interest* - Actual or potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed. Conflicts of interest are situations in which a Board member's personal considerations may affect, or have the appearance of affecting, required loyalty and ability to fulfill one's responsibilities to the Grey Bruce Board of Health and Health Unit.

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- *Hierarchy* - All business of the Board, including new business, emails, questions, and comments are vetted through the Chair, who shall decide how all business of the Board shall be dealt with including whether it should be put on the Board agenda or directed to the Medical Officer of Health to be addressed in operations.
- *Acceptance* – BOH members must accept the responsibilities of their governance role. This means reading and making efforts to understand applicable background documents (legislations, policies, etc.) and knowing the business and performance of the Health Unit.
- *Commitment* – BOH members should be committed individually and as a group to the Health Unit’s mission, mandate, goals, and processes to achieve them. They should have the necessary knowledge, abilities, and the commitment to fulfil their duties.
- *Planning* – The Board of Health focuses on strategic issues by engaging in the strategic planning process and avoiding involvement in operational management affairs of the Health Unit.
- *Board Orientation and Development* – Beyond the initial orientation program, the Board of Health will provide ongoing professional development to ensure that its members maintain or improve their skills, and that they continue to deepen their understanding of the Health Unit’s services, and the role of the Board of Health including differentiation between:
 - o governance and management
 - o the role of municipal councillor and role of a Board of Health member
 - o the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) and the Municipal Act. The Board’s responsibilities are outlined in the HPPA and its regulations of Health. Ontario’s HPPA gives Boards of Health their mandate.
- *Communication* – The BOH has internal and external communications processes that ensure access to relevant timely information, advice, and resources.
- *Outcomes* – The board of health evaluates its impact in the community by systematically reviewing its policies, monitoring progress in achieving strategic goals, and undertaking evaluations of itself, its members, and the Medical Officer of Health.
- *Reporting* – The BOH should report on its activities and outcomes to various stakeholders and in accordance with any legislative requirements.

Sincerely,



Sue Paterson
Chair of the Board of Health