



Fort Erie Healthcare SOS – Minutes – August 11, 2026

Present: Orma Bleeks, Mary Cooper, Jane Seabourne Davies, Ardyth Fitzgerald, Heather Kelley, Cassandra Ryerson (candidate for Town Council, Ward 5, Crystal Beach) Josephine Lavalley, Jim Wilkinson, Barbara Wilkinson, Russ Young.

Regrets: Dave & Donanne Rogers, Rick Ross, Frank Flake, Sandra Flake, Ellinor Bulmer, Nick Redekop, Zane Scott

1. Orma moved to approve the minutes of the previous, July 14th meeting, seconded by Ardyth. Motion carried.

2. Executive Board on Activity to Date:

a. Heather welcomed two new members: Cassandra Ryerson and Josephine LaValley

b. Santos Health, appointed by the Town to do a study on the viability of Douglas Memorial, have met with 16 organizations. We believe they have not yet made a final report to the Town although they have made an interim report to the Town Council and Committee. Stucor consultants checked the physical building and have made their initial report. The newest part was added in 1981 and updates in 2013. That part is viable for the town plan to have alternative level of care beds and palliative care. Council is working on putting together a proposal for the upcoming AMO meeting with the Province.

The Town doesn't own the building, and negotiations are still taking place between the town and Niagara Health.

The Town of Fort Erie has been working with the Fort Erie Aboriginal Centre to make sure there's a place for indigenous health at Douglas Memorial. The FE Aboriginal Centre at Buffalo Road are looking at putting a healing centre in place there.

The Town's deferred motion to withhold funding intended for NH for the new Niagara Falls Hospital, and asking for the resignation of Lynn Guerrierio and Board was scheduled previously to be discussed at the Town's next council meeting. (Aug 24)

Port Colborne is going in a different direction. They are looking at selling their hospital to developers and keeping a portion of the proceeds, maybe for a teams-based medical hub. They don't own the building either. The Town of Port Colborne has done a lot in the community to determine what residents want. Maybe our next step should be to encourage the Town to hold a public session after we hear the result of the consultants' reports.

c. Election of officers for SOS. A notice will be posted on Facebook and social media, providing a month's notice to the community that we will be electing our executive officers at our next meeting on September 8th. Positions are President, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. Anyone can apply for office for office via Facebook, email and website.

d. Jane proposed we send meeting minutes to councillors; seconded by Russ, motioned carried.



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3. Committee Reports:

a. Recruitment and Community Engagement:

- i. Heather created our first monthly newsletter which was sent by email to everyone who has asked to be updated about our activities. The template was designed so we can insert information easily about current and new events, and patient experiences. A request for volunteers will always be included. Heather investigated having it distributed via Canada Post. The cost would be 18 cents each which is not cost-effective. Board members took ten copies to distribute in the community. To keep costs down we will not print on glossy paper. Ways to print the newsletter more cheaply were discussed, e.g. Staples and possibly Crystal Beach Library. We will include supporters' logos on each newsletter.
- ii. Ken Jessop has invited us to set up a stall at Stevensville Market every Wednesday at 3 pm. Russ will go if we can find another volunteer. Ardyth agreed she could help
- iii. Josephine has offered us a banner which can be painted over.
- iv. Kassandra has offered to help with printed promotional material
- v. We will work to get businesses involved. Heather has been putting more content on Facebook trying to persuade businesses that they have an interest in saving Douglas Memorial. There has not been much response from businesses, but this has resulted in more feedback from community members. We will approach businesses to find out their thinking. It was agreed that sending letters to businesses in the mail does not work. We need to approach them in person to find out who to talk with and make an appointment.
- vi. Crystal Beach End of Summer Parade, September 5th: Heather will borrow a truck, and we will need to register

b. Media, Social Media, Editorial & Marketing:

- i. SOS is now appearing prominently in Google searches.
- ii. Heather is continuing to post regularly on social media.
- iii. Josephine indicated that video reels on social media are very popular and generate interest. These could be created when approaching businesses for support, e.g. filming while going into Fleet to find out who to talk to, followed up by other reels showing what happened.

c. Fundraising, Sponsorship & Budgeting:

- i. Lawn sign sales have stalled. Heather will ask Dan Favarro if he would sell SOS lawn signs at his business.
- ii. Suggestion: We could do a Spin-the-Wheel at Stevensville Market. Mary will provide a letter to Jim to use when approaching businesses.
- iii. Suggestion: We could do a corn-hole toss at Stevensville Conservation Fall Fair. We would need to work out how to organize this. Prizes would be needed for this too.



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- iv. Kassandra offered 4080 Erie Road, Crystal Beach as a location where we could set up a Loganberry drink stand every Saturday 11 am – 3:30 pm. \$2 a glass. Maybe bake sale too. Kassandra will look into it further and get back to us. Could Canadian Tire donate the loganberry syrup?
 - v. It was suggested we could organize a 5 km walk / run / ride event (whatever suits) at a cost of \$5 for entrants, with sponsors. We will defer this until we know what the consultants' reports contain.
- d. **Events & Promotion Planning:** All-Candidates Meet & Greet. We will invite all candidates for the local election to attend an All Candidates Meet & Greet where they will each have a table to speak to constituents, and possibly an opportunity to talk for a few minutes.

Locations are being considered. The ideal location would be Fort Erie Leisureplex. Heather will see if the Town will agree to no fee for this event. If not, the cost will be approx. \$600 which may not be viable for us. Backup locations are Beachcombers, Ridgeway, (Jane is having problems talking to the decision-makers) or perhaps Fort Erie Legion. It was advised the BIA can get Leisureplex for free.

A fee of \$50 per candidate was discussed but no decision will be made until we know what the cost of the hall will be.

4. Upcoming Events 2026				
Wed, Aug 12	11 am–12:30 pm	Strong Fort Erie Neighborhoods	St. Michaels Parish Central Ave	Ardyth & Russ
Thursday, Aug 13	4:00 pm – 8:00 pm	CB Supper Market	CB Waterfront	4–6 pm: Mary and Ardyth. 6 – 8 pm: Jim & Barb. Josephine and daughters will observe.
Thursday, Aug 20	11:30 am – 1 pm	Banner Day	Garrison/Concession	Need volunteers. Encourage neighbours.
Thursday, Sept. 3	4:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Crystal Beach Supper Market	CB Waterfront	4–6 pm: Orma & Kassandra. 6–8 pm: Jim & Barb
Saturday, Sept. 5	7:30 am – 1 pm	Ridgeway Market	282 Ridge Rd	7:30–10:30 am Ardyth and Heather. 10:30 am – 1 pm: Jim & Barb.
Saturday, Sept 5	11 am–2 pm	CB End of Summer Parade	Ridgeway Arena	Heather, Josephine, Jane, Orma, Cassanda
Tuesday, Sept 8	11 am–1 pm	SOS Board Meeting	Fort Erie Library, Centennial Branch	
Saturday, Sept. 26th	10 am – 3 pm	Stevensville Conservation Area Fall Fair	Stevensville	Book sale + possibly Corn hole toss. Volunteers: Orma, Jane, Barb & Jim. Need more volunteers.
Saturday, Oct. 3	7:30 am – 1 pm	Ridgeway Market	282 Ridge Rd	Need two Volunteers each shift: 7:30–10:30am and 10:30am – 1 pm



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4. Upcoming Events 2026

Saturday, Oct. 3	11 am – 4 pm	We Gotta Talk	Leisureplex	Volunteer: Ardyth. More volunteers needed 9:30-noon; noon – 2:30 pm; 2:30 pm – 5 pm.
Saturday, Oct 17	5-8	All Candidates meet and greet	To be decided	Volunteers and organizer needed

5. Financials as of July 31, 2026

Date 2026	Item Description	Bank Charges	Details	Donations	Fundraising, Signs etc.	Operating Costs	Expenses	Current Bank Balance	Petty Cash On Hand
01-Jul	Opening Balances							\$987.27	\$147.12
July 2	Interac purchase		Douglas MH Birthday cake				\$74.99	\$912.28	
July 2	Monthly Fee	\$ 6.00						\$906.28	
July 2	Interac cash deposit	\$ 0.50						\$905.78	
July 8	Deposit				\$237.51			\$1,143.29	
July 21	Deposit		Excess petty cash		\$137.15			\$1,280.44	\$ 9.97
July 30	Interac purchase		Printing August Newsletter				\$ 180.80	\$1,099.64	
July 30	Closing Balances	\$ 6.50			\$374.66		\$ 255.79	\$1,099.64	\$9.97

Jane motioned to accept the financial report; seconded Russ. Motion carried.

6. Any Other Business:

- Niagara Health Coalition sometimes has a table at Ridgeway Market. Heather will liaise with Sue Hotte to ensure we don't attend on the same day.
- NHC - Last Saturday of the month 11 am – 1 pm. Penn centre at Glendale.
- Josephine mentioned a Facebook page, "No data centre in Fort Erie" for us to check out. This has been a source of great stress for her.

7. Next meeting: September 8th, 2026, 11-1 pm Fort Erie Centennial Library.