



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT
BOARD MINUTES FOR MARCH 24, 2022

Call to Order – Kay Olson, Chair, called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on March 24, 2022 at 9:17 a.m. on Zoom and in the Board Room.

Adjourn to Closed Session – Mary Sanders made a motion to adjourn into closed session for the Quality Improvement, Medical Staff and MNA negotiation. Randy Wiitala seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Summary - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from February 16, 2022, the February 16, 2022 Medical Staff Report, and negotiation update.

Reconvene - The North Shore Health Board reconvened in regular session at 9:30 a.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: Kay Olson, Mary Sanders, Randy Wiitala, and Patty Winchell-Dahl

Members Absent: Steve Nielsen

Others Present: Kimber Wraalstad; Greg Ruberg; Milan Schmidt, MD (p); David Mills (p); Kate Surbaugh (p); Jon Moe (p)

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic members of the Board (Kay Olson, Mary Sanders and Randy Wiitala); Dr. Schmidt, Dave Mills and Jon Moe attended the meeting via Zoom technology with the ability to hear and see the other participants. Patty Winchell-Dahl, Kimber Wraalstad and Greg Ruberg attended the meeting at North Shore Health.

Approval of Agenda: Mary Sanders made a motion to accept the meeting agenda as presented; it was seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: Ms. Dahl commented on various social media posts seeming to connect legislation regarding licensed bed capacity with an intention to close the Care Center. Even though correct information has been included in the Cook County News-Herald and WTIP, it was requested that information be shared again. Todd Ford has just joined North Shore Health as our Public Information Coordinator and he will increase communication from North Shore Health.

Approval of Minutes from February 17, 2022 – Mary Sanders made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2022 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl. The motion carried unanimously.

Updates:

- a. **Clinic Board:** Kate Surbaugh attended the meeting and shared a Sawtooth Mountain Clinic update. The community has experienced a lull in COVID-19 allowing the Clinic to modify some of the COVID-19 responses. The community vaccination events have transitioned from the Community Center to the Clinic. This transition has gone well and allows vaccination to be offered when patients are at the Clinic for a different appointment; emphasis has been placed on those individuals who are not “up-to-date”. The Clinic also has a good supply of masks, over the counter antigen tests and anti-viral medication. The calendar year 2021 reporting has been submitted to the Health Resources and Services Administration and the Clinic received recognition for maintaining strong clinical measures. In conjunction with a telehealth grant, Sawtooth Mountain Clinic now has a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner who is available via remote appointments. Ms. Surbaugh discussed the advocacy efforts to maintain the telehealth reimbursement benefits established during the COVID-19 public health emergency, particularly for voice only visits.
- b. **County Board:** Commissioner Mills shared that Todd Ford has joined Cook County as the joint Public Information Coordinator shared with North Shore Health. The County is very happy to have Mr. Ford on board and thanked North Shore Health for this opportunity to continue to work together. The Cook County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will be announcing their Executive Director on Friday. The issue surrounding child care options and availability in Cook County is being discussed. A Town Hall meeting was held on March 14. Commissioner Mills shared the proposed plans for the redistricting of the county commissioner districts. A public hearing will be held on April 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the County Courthouse. The Cook County Hospital District Board mirrors county commissioner districts. While all the County Commissioners will need to run for re-election, Auditor Braidy Powers has confirmed that only those Hospital Board Members whose terms expire in 2022 will need to run for re-election.
- c. **Board Members:** No individual reports were provided.
- d. **Correspondence:** None.

Board Presentation – RQI Education – Jon Moe, RN, Education Coordinator

Jon Moe, North Shore Health Education Coordinator, shared information about our organization’s transition to the Resuscitation Quality Improvement (RQI) Program for Life Support education. This is a performance improvement program from the American Heart Association that provides short quarterly education/practice opportunities. This includes education for basic CPR, Pediatric Life Support and Advanced Cardiac Life Support. Mr. Moe was able to negotiate an upgrade to the mobile practice cart when enrolling North Shore Health in the RQI program. The system allows employees to maintain their CPR skills during quarterly hands-on practice rather than in yearly classes. The more frequent skills sessions provide audio-visual coaching on critical components of high-quality CPR. Participants are able to see the quality of their compressions and breaths. A short video was shown of the practice cart being used. This system seems to be enjoyed by the majority of employees who have completed their education.

Financial Reports:

February 2022 Financial Report: Paul Goettl is attending a CFO Bootcamp focused on Critical Access Hospital Reimbursement so was not in attendance at the meeting. Ms. Wraalstad presented the February 2022 financial statements in Mr. Goettl's absence. Patient days in the Acute Hospital were 4 days or 19.0% less than budget with inpatient revenue for the month being \$25K less than budget. Swing Bed days were 71 less than budget with revenue \$61K less than budget. Care Center days were 20 less than budget and revenue was \$48K less than budget. There is a temporary pause on admissions to the Care Center due to staffing with the current Care Center census at 31 residents. Outpatient revenue of \$1,183K is \$127K or 12% more than budget. Observation, Lab and CT volume remain strong while Physical Therapy is less than budget. Gross Patient Revenue is \$12K less than budget. Deductions from Revenue are \$3K more than budget; as a percent of Gross Patient Revenue, Contractual Adjustments are 18.2% compared to the budget of 13.8%. The process for calculating deductions using the modeling tool that incorporates volume, expenses and expected reimbursement from payers including Medicare was discussed. Net Operating Revenue of \$1,326K is 1.0% less than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$1,627K are 3.0% less than budget. The Net Loss for the month of February 2022 of \$364K is \$14K less than budget; the Year-to-Date Net Loss of \$378K is \$113K less than budgeted. FTEs are 97.8 and days' cash on hand is 275 days. The current ratio is 4.24 compared to our benchmark of 2.5.

Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to accept the February 2022 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

- a) **Other:** None.

New Business:

- a) **Other:** None.

Management Report: The Management Report for March 2022 included in the Board materials was reviewed.

As of March 17, 2022, there have been eight hundred twenty-four (824) confirmed cases of COVID-19 affiliated with Cook County; this includes self-reported positive antigen tests in addition to the Lab PCR reported tests. The increased positives have slowed significantly. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released revised guidance regarding mask use based upon COVID-19. This guidance is for the community only. Health care facilities are still directed by CMS to use the CDC COVID Data Tracker. The different data levels and the impact of the different levels were reviewed. The CDC changed their language to use "up-to-date" regarding vaccination. This means a person has received all doses they are eligible to receive. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) adopted the "up-to-date" language on March 10, 2022 for the purposes of routine screening of staff based upon the CDC COVID Data Tracker community transmission rate. Those employees who are not "up-to date" will need to resume with routine testing beginning on March 28, 2022. Beginning in March the vaccine events transitioned to SMC. The instructions for accessing a vaccination have been posted on the Cook County COVID-19 Hub site. SMC staff are excited because this provides greater opportunity to give vaccinations when patients are in the clinic for another reason. The North Shore Health Pharmacy currently has a good supply of the monoclonal antibody treatments including Bebtelovimab. Evusheld, a pre-exposure for immune compromised patients, has also been received.

Legislation allowing North Shore Health to increase our bed capacity (HF2812/SF2704) continues to make its way through the legislative process. A summary of the legislative hearings was discussed. Both Senator Bakk and Representative Ecklund were recognized for their work on this legislation.

The audit team from Clifton Larson Allen (CLA) has been working on the audit fieldwork since March 14. The audit presentation to the Board is still scheduled to be delivered at the May Board meeting. North Shore Health is working with Nancy Janzig, an efficiency expert from Duluth, to refine the current Certified Nursing Assistant training program and processes. Todd Ford has been hired as the shared Public Information Coordinator between North Shore Health and Cook County and Todd began his new role on Wednesday, March 9, 2022.

Ms. Wraalstad expressed her disappointment with President Biden's proposed nursing home reform initiative with the Center's for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). There are some new initiatives, but many of the other initiatives reflect expansions, updates, or changes of emphasis within nursing home programs and activities that CMS is already conducting. The proposals are misguided and tend to demonize Nursing Home caregivers and organizations. CMS intends to issue a proposed rule to establish minimum staffing levels within one year but does not recognize or address the caregiver crisis that had been developing even before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Patty Winchell-Dahl and seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously. The regular meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on April 21, 2022.


Chair


Clerk