



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT
BOARD MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 17, 2022

Call to Order – Kay Olson, Chair, called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on November 17, 2022 at 9:16 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 Credentials report. Steve Nielsen seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Summary - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from October 19, 2022; the October 19, 2022 Medical Staff Report and the November 16, 2022 Credential Committee Report were reviewed.

Reconvene - The North Shore Health Board reconvened in regular session at 9:32 a.m.

Roll Call

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

Members Absent:

Others Present: Kimber Wraalstad; Paul Goettl; Greg Ruberg; David Mills; Steve Frykman; Kurt Farchmin, MD (p); Kelly Swearingen (p);

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic members of the Board (Mary Sanders and Randy Wiitala), Greg Ruberg, David Mills, and Kurt Farchmin attended the meeting via Zoom technology with the ability to hear and see the other participants. Kay Olson, Steve Nielsen, Patty Winchell-Dahl, Kimber Wraalstad, Paul Goettl, Steve Frykman and Kelly Swearingen attended the meeting at North Shore Health.

Approval of Agenda: Steve Nielsen made a motion to accept the meeting agenda as presented and Patty Winchell-Dahl seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes from October 19, 2022 – Mary Sanders made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 19, 2022 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously.

Introduction: Ms. Olson introduced Steve Frykman and welcomed him to the meeting. Mr. Frykman is the newly elected Cook County Hospital District Board Member from District 3. He will be joining the Board in January 2023.

Updates:

- a. **Clinic Board:** Kate Surbaugh was unable to attend the meeting but did provide a written report forwarded to the Board Members. Ms. Surbaugh provided updates regarding COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations and noted that the Sawtooth Mountain Clinic Nursing team has administered nearly 1400 bivalent COVID-19 vaccines and over 1600 influenza vaccines! The possibility of a healthcare career fair is being evaluated with the Health Care Planning Committee. Ms. Surbaugh provided an update on the Early Childhood Bub Grant and the Rural Community Opioid Response Program.
- b. **County Board:** Commissioner Mills reported that public meetings to discuss the Capital Improvement Plan will be held on December 1, 2022 at 10:00, 2:00 and 6:00. Cook County is the recipient of additional ARPA funding and there will be more discussion on the use of the funds in the future. The Comp study is underway and turnover information is being reviewed.
- c. **Board Members:** Ms. Olson recently attended the Minnesota Hospital Trustee Council and shared the discussion from other Trustees about the activities occurring at organizations throughout the state. The Trustee Conference is scheduled for January 2023 and will include the Boot Camp for new board members in addition to breakout sessions.
- d. **Correspondence:** None.

Board Presentation – Practices of Commercial Insurance Plans – Kelly Swearingen, Business Office Manager

Kelly Swearingen, Business Office Manager, joined the meeting to share information regarding practice of commercial health insurances, including the Medicare Advantage Plans. Ms. Swearingen reviewed topics such as the various prior authorization requirements, medical necessity criteria, denials of service and payment and the unintended consequences of the new Surprise Billing legislation. Specific examples of each of these issues involving North Shore Health and our patients were shared. The various nuances for billing different insurance carriers were also highlighted including timely filing requirements versus extended times for the carriers to deny payment and demanded refunds. The employees in the Business Office, Medical Records and Patient Access are unrecognized patient advocates. They work diligently to make sure patients receive the benefits they are owed from their insurance carriers while collecting reimbursement for services provided. The Members of the Board thanked Ms. Swearingen for her presentation and information about the financial impact to North Shore Health.

Financial Reports: Paul Goettl presented the October 2022 financial statements. Patient days in the Acute Hospital were 5 days or 62.5% more than budget with inpatient revenue for the month being \$3K less than budget. Swing Bed days were 19 less than budget with revenue \$2K more than budget. Care Center days were 217 less than budget and revenue \$98K less than budget. The Care Center continues to have a pause on admissions due to staffing. The current census is 27 residents with ten open beds. The Care Center

Interdisciplinary Team is evaluating a revamp to allow options for new admission while keeping the census at 28 until staffing increases. Outpatient revenue of \$1.5M was \$160K more than budget. The volumes in the Emergency Department, Radiology, CT, and Ambulance were above budget while Rehab, Lab, Colonoscopy, and Home Care volumes were less than budget. Gross Patient Revenue was \$54K more than budget. Deductions from Revenue of \$280K were 7% less than budget, with the settlement template being used to determine this calculation. Net Operating Revenue of \$1.7M was 5.0% more than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$1.9M was \$163K or 9.0% more than budget. The Net Loss from Operations for the month of October 2022 of \$189K was \$91K more than budget. Year-to-Date Gross Patient Revenue of \$20M was \$129K greater budget with Deductions from Revenue Year-to-Date being \$20K or 1% less than budget. Year-to-Date Operating Expenses are \$244K more than budget with the Net Loss from Operations Year-to-Date being \$982K, \$70K or 8% more than budget. The Year-to-Date Net Loss of \$110K was \$33K less than budgeted. FTEs were 92.9 and days' cash on hand was 297 days. The current ratio was 4.48 compared to our benchmark of 2.5. Steve Nielsen made a motion to accept the September 2022 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl and the motion carried unanimously.

2023 Budget: Mr. Goettl provided a preliminary review of the draft 2023 Capital and Operating Budgets. The initial draft of the proposed 2023 Capital Budget is \$680K. Mr. Goettl then reviewed the 2023 Volume and Statistics budget. Department Leaders participated in the review process and recommended 2023 volumes based upon past experience and estimating future demand for services. The FTE Budget for 2023 and the proposed revenue for 2023 by Department was shared. The preliminary 2023 Operating Budget was then reviewed with the operating expenses. All the numbers are preliminary and subject to change. The estimated cash requirements based upon the preliminary budget was reviewed. The finalized draft of the 2023 proposed Capital and Operating Budget will be presented at the December Board meeting.

Old Business:

- a) **Community Communication:** Following the October Board meeting, Todd Ford, Information Coordinator, worked with the Board Members to develop a Media Release to address several key issues including the role of the Board Members, the staffing crisis at North Shore Health and how that impacts our financial status. The Media Release was distributed to the local media and was published by the Cook County News Herald, Lake Superior News, North Shore Journal and Boreal. Several Members commented they had received positive comments about the communication.
- b) **Other:** None.

New Business:

- a) **Election Results:** Congratulations were offered to Patty Winchell-Dahl, District 1 and Randy Wiitala, District 5 on their re-election as Board Members. Steve Frykman was also congratulated on his election as the District 3 Hospital District Board Member. The unofficial results from the Secretary of State's Office and Cook County Auditor's Office were reviewed.
- b) **Unbudgeted Capital Request – Cepheid Lab Analyzer Enhancement:** Ms. Wraalstad presented information regarding the request to purchase additional Cepheid GeneXpert Lab Analyzer modules at a cost of \$26,340. As this equipment responds to the COVID-19 pandemic or any future Public Health Emergency, North Shore Health

will use American Rescue Plan – Rural grant funds toward this purchase. Steve Nielsen made a motion to approve the purchase of the Cepheid GeneXpert Lab Analyzer modules as recommended. Parry Winchell-Dahl seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

c) **Other:** None.

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

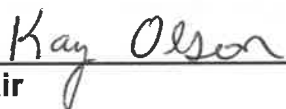
As of November 10, 2022, there have been one thousand five hundred twenty three (1,523) confirmed cases of COVID-19 affiliated with Cook County; including self-reported positive antigen tests and Lab PCR reported tests. Cook County's case rate has increased over the last several weeks. On October 28, 2022, Cook County was in the High Category on both of the maps on the CDC Data Tracker. This was the first time Cook County was in the High Category on the CDC COVID-19 Community Level map.

Troy Batchelor has been steadily encouraging employees to be vaccinated for influenza. As of October 31, 2022, 51% of employees are vaccinated for influenza. Jon Moe has worked diligently to finalize the Emergency Medical Services education program. A site visit to review the curricula and space was completed by the Emergency Services Regulatory Board (EMSRB). On November 9, 2022, the EMSRB issued approval of the five programs submitted for authorization. North Shore Health submitted our intention to participate in the Equitable Cost-Sharing for Publicly Owned Nursing Facilities (ECPN) Program for 2023. Ms. Wraalstad was asked to inquire if Sawtooth Mountain Clinic is interested in continuing with the meetings between their Collaboration Committee and the North Shore Health Board given the difficulty in scheduling a meeting. The proposed 2023 meeting dates were reviewed. The meeting dates in June, September and November will not be on the routine schedule. The final agreed upon dates will be included in December's management report. Paul Goettl, CSAF, Chief Financial Officer, has announced his resignation from North Shore Health effective December 2, 2022. He has decided he would like to return to work in the hospitality industry and has the opportunity to join a growing resort business. Mr. Goettl has agreed to work with North Shore Health on a casual basis to provide support and assistance during this transition. The Members of the Board thanked Mr. Goettl for his service and commented they appreciated his reports and what a remarkable difference he made.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Steve Nielsen and seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl. The motion carried unanimously. The regular meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

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



Chair



Clerk