



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT
BOARD MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 20, 2022

Call to Order – Kay Olson, Chair, called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on October 20, 2022 at 9:15 a.m. on Zoom and in the Board Room.

Adjourn to Closed Session – Steve Nielsen made a motion to adjourn into closed session for the Quality Improvement and Medical Staff report. Mary Sanders seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Summary - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from September 21, 2022; the September 21, 2022 Medical Staff Report and the October 19, 2022 Credential Committee Report were reviewed.

Reconvene - The North Shore Health Board reconvened in regular session at 9:33 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; Kurt Farchmin, MD (p); Michelle Silence (p); Todd Ford; Kalli Hawkins; Lori Boody; Rovena Claxton; Ruth Dejarrette

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic members of the Board (Mary Sanders and Patty Winchell-Dahl), Greg Ruberg, David Mills, and Todd Ford attended the meeting via Zoom technology with the ability to hear and see the other participants. Kay Olson, Steve Nielsen, Randy Wiitala, Kimber Wraalstad, Paul Goettl, Kurt Farchmin, Kalli Hawkins, Lori Boody, Rovena Claxton, and Ruth Dejarrette attended the meeting at North Shore Health.

Approval of Agenda: Steve Nielsen made a motion to accept the meeting agenda as presented and Randy Wiitala seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes from September 15, 2022 – Steve Nielsen made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 15, 2022 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously.

Updates:

- a. **Clinic Board:** Kate Surbaugh was on vacation. On her behalf, Dr. Farchmin shared that the Pharmacy hours are temporarily reduced. The Clinic is training new staff and hope to add another Pharmacy Tech in the near future.

- b. **County Board:** Commissioner Mills reviewed the ongoing discussions regarding childcare and housing. The Truth in Taxation meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
- c. **Board Members:** None.
- d. **Correspondence:** None.

Board Presentation – Employee Turnover Statistics and Employee Benefit Review – Michelle Silence, Director of Human Resources

Michelle Silence, Director of Human Resources, joined the meeting to share information regarding employee benefits and employee turnover statistics. During the last several months, Ms. Silence has worked with Ryan LeBeau, CEBS, Vice President and Benefits Consultant at USI Insurance Services, to evaluate the employee benefits provided by North Shore Health with peers throughout Minnesota and the Mountain region. Ms. Silence shared a pre-recorded presentation by Mr. LeBeau. This information has also been shared with Department Leaders and employees. The value of the health insurance plan design was compared with the USI peer groups and several local employers. The payroll contributions by the employees for both single and family coverage was compared together with the overall value of the plan. In all comparisons, North Shore Health offers health insurance that has a better plan design and lower costs to the employees. Dental insurance and time off was also reviewed. While there are opportunities for improvement with dental insurance, time off is very competitive. Ms. Silence then shared turnover and retention information. Yearly turnover by work area was reviewed for 2020 through 2022 to date. The facility turnover rate was also reviewed with the largest turnover rate occurring in 2020. This was the start of the staffing crisis with half of the jobs vacated at the time still open. There was also a significant increase in December 2021 when the vaccine mandate became effective. There were also several instances where prospective employees did not pass the drug screen and individuals who resigned in their first week. Ms. Silence shared comparisons from LeadingAge MN and other health care organizations. Opportunities for improvement in recruitment and retention are one of Ms. Silence's and North Shore Health's focus areas. The Members of the Board thanked Ms. Silence for the information.

Old Business:

- a) **Community Communication:** The Board Members discussed the recent conversations circulating on local social media and radio. While a response to these conversations was shared on behalf of North Shore Health, the Board Members stated that the community deserves to hear factual, true and fair information directly from them. Mr. Nielsen suggested the Board work with Todd Ford, Public Information Coordinator, to provide a positive, fact-filled response to the community. Mr. Nielsen also commented on the lack of recognition of what a gem North Shore Health is for the community. Ideas on how best to allow the community hear from the Board directly were discussed. Steve Nielsen made a motion for North Shore Health staff, including Todd Ford, to develop and review a plan for the Board based upon the conversation. Ms. Olson offered an amendment that Steve Nielsen work with Staff and Mr. Ford to develop the plan. The amended motion was seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl and the motion carried unanimously.
- b) **Other:** None.

Financial Reports: Paul Goettl presented the September 2022 financial statements. Patient days in the Acute Hospital were 1 day or 8% less than budget with inpatient revenue for the month being \$4K less than budget. Swing Bed days were 2 less than budget with revenue \$13K less than budget. Care Center days were 205 less than budget and revenue \$79K less than budget. The pause on admissions due to staffing continues at the Care Center. The current census is 28 residents with nine open beds. The Care Center resident days and revenue being below budget has been incorporated into the 2022 forecast. Outpatient revenue of \$1.6M was \$81K less than budget. The volumes in the

Emergency Department, Radiology, CT and Lab were above budget while Rehab, Colonoscopy, Home Care and Ambulance volumes were less than budget. Gross Patient Revenue was \$182K less than budget. Deductions from Revenue of \$54K were 20% less than budget, as always, the settlement template was used to determine this calculation. Net Operating Revenue of \$1.8M was 7.0% less than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$1.8M was \$133K or 8.0% more than budget. The Net Loss from Operations for the month of September 2022 of \$2K was \$262K less than budget. Year-to-Date Gross Patient Revenue of \$17M was \$75K greater budget with Deductions from Revenue Year-to-Date being \$716 or 0% less than budget. Year-to-Date Operating Expenses are \$81K more than budget with the Net Loss from Operations Year-to-Date being \$792K, \$21K or 3% less than budget. The Year-to-Date Net Loss of \$205K was \$106K more than budgeted. The return on investments is \$135K less than budgeted. FTEs were 92.4 and days' cash on hand was 292 days. The current ratio was 4.86 compared to our benchmark of 2.5. Steve Nielsen made a motion to accept the September 2022 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala and the motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

- a) **Unbudgeted Capital Request – Ultrasound Equipment:** Ms. Wraalstad presented information regarding the request to purchase ultrasound equipment at a cost of \$205,235. The purchase of two ultrasound systems: Sonosite PX Ultrasound System to be used as a point of care ultrasound in the Emergency Department and Phillips PIQ Elite Diagnostic Ultrasound System to be used for diagnostic ultrasounds in the Imaging Department. The Sonosite PX Ultrasound System with three transducers will be purchased at a cost of \$60,860 and the Phillips PIQ Elite Diagnostic Ultrasound System will be purchased at a cost of \$144,375, for a total cost of \$205,235. The cost of the ultrasound systems will be fully covered by the grant from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. Steve Nielsen made a motion to approve the purchase of the Ultrasound Equipment as recommended. Mary Sanders seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.
- b) **Other:** None.

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

As of October 13, 2022, there have been one thousand four hundred eighteen (1,418) confirmed cases of COVID-19 affiliated with Cook County; including self-reported positive antigen tests and Lab PCR reported tests. There were significant changes to the COVID-19 response during the last month. The Center for Disease Control issued updated COVID-19 guidance for healthcare settings at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, September 23, 2022. At that time, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services also issued corresponding QSO memos. Troy Batchelor, Hospital Director of Nursing and Jason Yuhas, Infection Control Coordinator, have spent significant time reviewing the guidance and attending meetings with the Minnesota Department of Health and LeadingAge Minnesota to determine how to best implement the changes applicable to North Shore Health. There is much nuance to the revised guidance so evaluation of the guidance will continue and additional changes will likely be implemented. With the revised guidance, the definition of screening has changed from active screening to passive screening. Passive screening allows for the use of visual alerts, i.e. posters, to provide education to individuals entering the building. The visual alerts must educate those entering the building on what to do if they have a positive COVID-19 test, symptoms of COVID-19, or other infectious symptoms. Thank you to Todd Ford for creating the visual alerts, i.e. posters. The screening table at the front entry was discontinued as of noon on Friday, September 30, 2022. The doors to the Care Center and the Hospital are unlocked and anyone will be able to enter these areas. The doors between Sawtooth Mountain Clinic and North Shore Health are also now open. Masks are still required at North Shore Health and physical distancing is expected. Employees will no longer need to take their temperature when they arrive for their shift. The employee screening table will continue at this time so employees can acknowledge they currently do not have symptoms of COVID-19 nor have they had a high risk exposure. The use of routine/universal eye protection was

also discontinued as of September 30, 2022. This was happily received by the employees. Visitors to the Care Center or the Hospital no longer need to be screened. The residents and patients still have the right to accept only vaccinated visitors in their room. While in a resident's/patient's room and with their permission, a visitor does not need to keep their mask on. As of October 3, 2022, North Shore Health is no longer conducting asymptomatic routine testing of those employees who are not up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccination. Only employees who have received religious or medical exemptions will be participating in routine testing. Testing asymptomatic staff and residents with a COVID-19 exposure will still occur. The testing frequency for staff with high-risk exposure and residents with close contact exposure requires a series of three tests. Those residents and employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 will continue to be tested as currently required. All positive COVID-19 cases of undetermined source will result in the testing of all residents and employees. Troy Batchelor administered the bivalent vaccine to the Care Center residents during the week of October 3. Troy has also been offering the COVID-19 bivalent booster to employees as well.

The updated North Shore Health website and intranet went live on Thursday, September 15. The Board Members commented on the wonderful job done by Todd Ford, Hilja Iverson and Marice Zimmer in making the new website happen. As we continue to review the sites, updates are being made as they are identified. After much work and design by Nancy Koloski, the Serenity Garden Project Manager, public recognition of donors to both the Serenity Garden and North Shore Health is now present in the Front Lobby. Ms. Wraalstad also happily reported that Troy Batchelor, Hospital Director of Nursing, has rescinded his resignation from North Shore Health. Troy and his wife, Linda, stated their hearts were not in leaving and returning to Denver; they wanted to stay in Cook County.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Randy Wiitala and seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl. The motion carried unanimously. The regular meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on November 17, 2022.


Chair


Clerk