



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT
BOARD MINUTES FOR AUGUST 18, 2022

Call to Order – Kay Olson, Chair, called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on August 18, 2022 at 9:15 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 Committee report. Randy Wiitala seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Summary - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from July 20, 2022; the July 20, 2022 Medical Staff Report; and the August 17, 2022 Credentials Committee recommendations were reviewed.

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

Roll Call

Members Present: Kay Olson, Mary Sanders, and Randy Wiitala

Members Absent: Steve Nielsen and Patty Winchell-Dahl

Others Present: Kimber Wraalstad; Paul Goettl; Greg Ruberg; Kurt Farchmin, MD (p); Anne Deenen

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic members of the Board (Kay Olson, Mary Sanders and Randy Wiitala); Dr. Farchmin, Greg Ruberg attended the meeting via Zoom technology with the ability to hear and see the other participants. Kimber Wraalstad, Paul Goettl and Anne Deenen 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 Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes from July 21, 2022 – Mary Sanders made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2022 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously.

Updates:

- a. **Clinic Board:** Kate Surbaugh was unable to attend the meeting due to another meeting. The written report she sent was shared. SMC will work with public health as in the past to provide public vaccination clinics to provide the new bivalent Covid-19 boosters. Local COVID-19 case numbers have been on the upswing in the past month and SMC continues the same

safety protocols, including mandatory masking for all patients. They continue to offer testing, treatment and vaccinations. There has also been an increase in demand for the free masks and tests going to patients and community sites. As of now, the federal programs continue to provide adequate supplies, despite the occasional shipping delay. SMC is planning to expand Pharmacy hours to Saturdays beginning in October. Dr. Alison Stolz is working as a locum provider at SMC. She will be seeing patients one week a month over the next several months. The additional physician hours are intended to increase capacity during the busy summer/fall months. With the addition of Dr. Stolz, SMC now offers the same number of clinic visits/week as summer 2019, despite the continued burden of the COVID-19 response.

b. County Board: No report.

c. Board Members: No reports.

d. Correspondence: None.

Board Presentation – North Shore Health Communication Program – Todd Ford, Public Information Coordinator

Todd Ford, Public Information Coordinator, joined the meeting to provide an overview of the communication activities occurring for North Shore Health. Mr. Ford joined North Shore Health in March 2022 in the shared communications position with Cook County. The communication priorities for North Shore Health were reviewed. The progress of the new website has been slow but Mr. Ford and members of the Presence in the Community Committee have been working to finalize the copy and develop photography for the new site. The Sandbox Site, (site to proof, check links and make final edits) is expected by August 19 with the go live launch planned for early September. The other communication priority is Human Resources recruiting. The need to expand the reach for advertising our available jobs and to try different methods was identified. A testimonial video created by Mr. Ford was shared. Several of these videos have been created and are posted on the current website, Facebook and YouTube. There are targeted ads, various media releases and flyers distributed on various bulletin boards along the North Shore. Examples of the various communication messages were shared. Mr. Ford also highlighted the Image Library he is developing with pictures for the new website and other communication efforts.

Financial Reports: Paul Goettl presented the July 2022 financial statements. Patient days in the Acute Hospital were 6 days or 50% less than budget with inpatient revenue for the month being \$5K less than budget. Swing Bed days were 47 more than budget with revenue \$25K more than budget. Care Center days were 93 less than budget and revenue \$5K less than budget. The pause on admissions due to staffing continues at the Care Center with the current census being 31 residents with six open beds. It is anticipated that resident days and revenue will continue to be below budget and that has been included in the forecast. Outpatient revenue of \$1.5M was \$95K less than budget. The Emergency Department, Radiology, Rehab, Home Care and Ambulance were all less than budget. Gross Patient Revenue was \$83K less than budget. Deductions from Revenue of \$276K were at budget. Net Operating Revenue of \$1.8M was 4.0% less than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$1.8M were at budget. The Net Gain from Operations for the month of July 2022 of \$36K was \$82K less than budget. Year-to-Date Gross Patient Revenue of \$12.6M was \$36K below budget with Deductions from Revenue Year-to-Date being \$119K or 7% less than budget. Year-to-Date Operating Expenses were at budget with the Net Loss from Operations Year-to-Date being \$955K, \$118K or 11% less than budget. The Year-to-Date Net Loss of \$427K was \$33K less than budgeted. FTEs are 93.4 and days' cash on hand was 292 days. The current ratio was 4.46 compared to our benchmark of 2.5. Mary Sanders made a motion to accept the July 2022 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

a) Other: None.

New Business:

- a) **Financial Auditor Proposal:** Request for Proposals were sent to four different firms for Audit and Cost Reporting Services. Proposals were received from CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) and Eide Bailly. The detailed proposals from each firm were included with the Board materials. It was noted that CLA has been the auditor for North Shore Health since 2015 and while a new audit firm can bring new insight, there can also be continuity of staying with the existing firm. Both firms have an excellent reputation and are very knowledgeable about Critical Access Hospitals and Skilled Nursing Homes. Mr. Goettl provided a summary showing the total fees for the audit and cost report services over four years; CLA was slightly less expensive than Eide Bailly. Randy Wiitala made a motion to engage CliftonLarsonAllen to complete the financial audit and cost report for the next four years. The motion was seconded by Mary Sanders and the motion carried unanimously.

- b) **Levy Request Discussion:** The Cook County Hospital District levy request for 2023 will need to be submitted to the Cook County Auditor on September 15, 2022, the date of the next meeting. The forecast is being developed and will likely include salary and wage adjustments without an increase in revenue. As noted in the Management Report and discussed in Mr. Ford's presentation, many recruitment activities are occurring and if they are not successful, the ability to continue to provide services will be impacted. The likely increase in costs and stagnate or decreasing revenue will influence the 2023 levy request. The Board Members will contemplate these issues as they prepare for the levy discussion at the September meeting.

- c) **Other:** None.

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

As of August 11, 2022, there have been one thousand two hundred thirty seven (1,237) confirmed cases of COVID-19 affiliated with Cook County; including self-reported positive antigen tests and Lab PCR reported tests. The CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker transmission rate continues in the high (red) transmission category. With the continued high transmission rate, required routine testing continues on a twice a week basis for those employees/ Essential Caregivers who are not vaccinated or "up-to-date" with their COVID-19 vaccination. Sawtooth Mountain Clinic continues to provide Over the Counter Antigen COVID-19 Tests and N-95 masks at the North Shore Health screening table. The weekly updates to Department Leaders now include any positive COVID-19 cases among Care Center residents or employees. This information is also provided to Care Center Residents and their families. To date, there have been no Residents who have tested positive for COVID-19.

As discussed earlier in the meeting, North Shore Health is continuing to address the workforce shortage within our organization. The On Track Nursing Assistant Program allows students to receive their education in Grand Marais and we have been approved as one of the pilot sites that can administer the certification exam at North Shore Health rather than requiring students to travel to Duluth or beyond. Jon Moe is developing an EMT education program that provides the didactic education on-line and the skill training to be completed by North Shore Health employees. Goosie Silence is working with an Immigration Attorney to explore options to recruit workers from other Countries. Kaomi Lee, a reporter with Almanac, the public affairs show on Twin Cities PBS, was in Grand Marais to discuss workforce shortage and our lack of affordable housing. They spent an hour at North Shore Health reviewing our concerns about the workforce shortage and the need for affordable workforce housing. Jason Yuhas has joined North Shore Health as our new Infection Control/Quality Improvement/Corporate Integrity Coordinator. He officially joined our team on Monday, July 25, 2022. During the week of June 11, 2022, the Care Center received our unannounced standard Federal survey and a complaint survey from the Minnesota Department of Health. The Statement of Deficiencies was received on Thursday evening, August 4. The Plan of Correction was submitted on August 13. We received fourteen federal tags. There were also seven Life Safety code tags received.

North Shore Health submitted a grant application to the Helmsley Charitable Trust to support the purchase of two ultrasound units: diagnostic ultrasound unit for Radiology and a point of care ultrasound for the Emergency Department. The Helmsley Charitable Trust has an initiative regarding ultrasound equipment and training needs in rural communities. The grant award announcement is expected in November or December.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kay Olson and seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously. The regular meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on September 15, 2022.

Kay Olson
Chair

Mary L Sanders
Clerk