



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT  
BOARD MINUTES FOR AUGUST 19, 2021

**Call to Order** – Kay Olson called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on August 19, 2021 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 Reports. The motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala and the motion carried with all ayes.

**Closed Session Summary** - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from July 21, 2021; the July 21, 2021 Medical Staff Report and the August 18, 2021 Credentials Committee information were reviewed.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**Members Absent:** Steve Nielsen

**Others Present:** Kimber Wraalstad; Paul Goettl; Greg Ruberg; Milan Schmidt, MD (p); David Mills; and Doug Sanders (p)

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

**Approval of Agenda:** Randy Wiitala made a motion to accept the meeting agenda as presented; it was seconded by Mary Sanders. The motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comments:** While there was not attendance from “public”, there was discussion regarding mask and vaccination mandates at various organizations in the County. Ms. Winchell-Dahl commented that the Oshkiogimaag Charter School in Grand Portage has adopted a mask mandate. ISD-166 in Grand Marais will be discussing mask requirements during their next School Board meeting. The mandating of COVID-19 vaccination for North Shore Health employees is still under discussion, but is proceeding without a mandate at this time. Currently over 85% of employees are vaccinated and it is not likely that a mandate will increase the vaccination rate to 100%. Safety precautions will continue to be in place for all employees, however, unvaccinated employees will require additional layers of protection. All employees will

continue to use surgical or N-95 masks while working, use eye protection when providing care to individuals who are symptomatic for COVID-19, upon entry into the building will screen for symptoms of COVID-19, test when they have symptoms of COVID-19 and do not work when ill. For the protection of themselves and others they interact with, unvaccinated employees use eye protection while working and participate in routine COVID-19 testing. The White House has directed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to mandate COVID-19 vaccination for employees in skilled nursing facilities. CMS is currently in the process of rulemaking and more information is expected at the end of September.

**Approval of Minutes from July 22, 2021 – Mary Sanders made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 22, 2021 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **Updates:**

- a. **Clinic Board:** Kate Surbaugh was unable to join the meeting but sent an update. Sawtooth Mountain Clinic (SMC) is again preparing for increased vaccination needs given updated CDC guidance. Vaccination clinics for those who are moderately to severely immunocompromised are set for later in August. SMC nurses will be making outreach calls and public health has sent a press release to local media. The Delta variant and rising case numbers have triggered a few changes at the Clinic. SMC staff members have reinstated all COVID-19 precautions that were loosened earlier this year. Many tools remain available to manage patient and staff safety, such as telehealth, and those tools will be used as needed based on local transmission rates. The Preschool Development (Hub) Grant has completed its community needs assessment with Wilder Foundation. The results of this research will be shared with the community in September.
- b. **County Board:** Commissioner Mills reported the 1% Lodging Tax was renewed. The County is also experiencing challenges in recruiting several positions reinforcing the concerns with available housing in Cook County. Hearings have been held regarding the development of a Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA). It is anticipated the Cook County Board of Commissioners will take action to adopt an HRA at their August 24, 2021, meeting.
- c. **Board Members:** Ms. Sanders, Ms. Olson and Ms. Wraalstad attended the Community Leadership Committee (aka Joint Powers Committee) meeting in August. Information was presented from the Housing subcommittee and the Racial Equity subcommittee.
- d. **Correspondence:** None.

#### **Board Presentation – Trustee Education Video – Mary Krinkie, Minnesota Hospital Association Vice President of Government Relations**

The Minnesota Hospital Association video presentation by Mary Krinkie, Vice President Government Relations, was shown. Ms. Krinkie summarized the 2021 legislative session highlights and ongoing legislative work and priorities of the Minnesota Hospital Association.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Goettl presented the July 2021 financial statements. Patient days in the Acute Hospital were 3 days or 11.5% more than budget with inpatient revenue for the month being \$1K more than budget. Swing Bed days were 6 less than budget with revenue \$18K more than budget. Care Center days were 4 less than budget and revenue \$22K less than budget. Outpatient revenue of \$1,662K is \$92K or 6% more than budget. Net Operating Revenue of \$2,206K is 1% less than budget. Deductions from Revenue are \$136K more than budget; a 60K adjustment was made to include a reserve for the 2020 receivable. Total Operating Expenses of

\$1,740K are 5% less than budget. The Net Income for the month of July 2021 of \$106K is \$78K more than budget. The year-to-date Loss from Operations is \$717K, which is \$1,002K better than budget. Gross Patient Revenue is \$1,544K higher than budget year-to-date. The year-to-date Net Loss is \$333K, \$1,037K less than the budgeted loss. Year-to-date FTEs are 105.0, 8.6 less than budget. Days' cash on hand remains strong at 307 days. In September 2021, North Shore Health will repay the CMS COVID-19 advanced payment of \$3.5M received last year. Mr. Goettl reviewed the 2021 forecast. The forecast uses seven months of actual numbers and five months of budgeted numbers. Gross patient revenue has been forecasted to be 7% greater than budget with total operating expenses forecasted to remain the same as budget. To date, no COVID-19 adjustments have been made to the forecast. Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to accept the July 2021 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Mary Sanders and the motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business:**

- a) **Other:** None.

**New Business:**

- a) **Educational Scholarship/Loan Program:** The Educational Scholarship/Loan Program policy and attachments were reviewed. The intent of this program is to provide scholarships/loans to assist in the recruitment and retention of health-related job classifications needed by North Shore Health. For positions where there is a need, North Shore Health will pay for tuition, books, fees and expenses, up to \$7,000 per year, and up to a maximum of \$28,000 for any individual, in return for an agreement by the current or prospective employee to work for a specified period of time as outlined in the policy. It was noted that the program was reviewed by Tom Torgerson, Legal Counsel. Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to adopt the Board Resolution for the Educational Scholarship/Loan Program and the motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala. Motion carried unanimously.
- b) **Ratification of SEIU Contract:** Mary Sanders made a motion to ratify the SEIU Labor Contract for 2021 – 2023. The motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala and the motion carried unanimously.
- c) **2022 Tax Levy Request:** Mr. Goettl presented the 2021 forecast during the financial presentation and reviewed a 2022 pre-budget estimate. The ongoing impact of COVID-19 in 2021 and the potential impact in 2022 were discussed. An estimated 2022 cash flow statement based on the 2022 pre-budget was also reviewed. A home with a taxable value of approximately \$225,000 will be levied approximately \$200 per year. After a lengthy discussion regarding the 2022 levy, Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to set the levy at \$1,300,000, remaining the same as 2021. The motion was seconded by Randy Wiitala and the motion carried unanimously.
- d) **Other:** None

**Management Report:**

The Management Report for August 2021 included in the Board materials was reviewed. The Incident Command for North Shore Health was scaled back from a full deployment of assets and management to a limited monitoring of events involving the COVID-19 incident. The COVID-19 screening processes at the building entrances were modified at the end of July and modified again in August. Employees continue to take their temperature. The Essential Caregivers will complete a similar screening process as employees by taking their temperature and attesting they don't have symptoms. All other individuals go to the Registration area to be screened. They are asked about symptoms and exposure. If those answers are negative, they are given a sticker

with the day of the week on it. A COVID-19 testing program for individuals who are traveling, particularly going across the Canadian border, was established. Testing is offered on a very limited basis at 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. With the concern of the increase transmissibility of the Delta variant and smoke from the wild fires, the air scrubbers in the Care Center have returned. In addition, air scrubbers are also being used in the Front Lobby. At Jennifer Dowden's invitation, a representative from the MDH Infection Control Assessment and Response Program (ICAR) surveyed North Shore Health. Minor modifications were recommended but they were pleased with the Infection Control Program and Response at North Shore Health.

The mammography service of North Shore Health received our Food and Drug Administration Mammography Quality Standards Act (MQSA) Inspection on June 24, 2021. North Shore Health meets all key MQSA requirements and there were no citations. The Serenity Garden has been transformed! The trees and shrubs were planted by Winchester Higgins and then a group of mighty volunteers arrived to plant other perennials. There were many donations of perennials that were used in the Garden. Much gratitude to Nancy Koloski, Monica Anderson and Mary Sanders for making the Serenity Garden come alive. A Serenity Garden Open House for donors and volunteers is scheduled for Saturday, September 11, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. with a program at 2:00 p.m. Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, the event will be in the Garden only. The 2021 Annual Program Review/Strategic Planning meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 5 and Wednesday, October 6. More information will be forthcoming as arrangements are finalized. Community Stakeholder Meetings with Senator Tom Bakk and Representative Rob Ecklund will be held on October 30. North Shore Health is planning to participate at the Grand Portage Community Stakeholder meeting. Troy Batchelor has been selected as the new Hospital Director of Nursing for North Shore Health and will join North Shore Health on Monday, September 13, 2021. Joan Gardner-Goodno, Executive Director of the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation and Scott Harrison, Foundation Board Member visited North Shore Health on August 11 to learn more details about North Shore Health's grant application for the use of the purchase of Force platforms.

**Board Planning Update:**

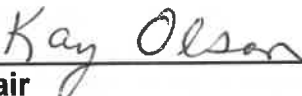
The North Shore Health Board of Directors continued the discussions to assist in the development of the strategic plan. The Medicare Cost Report, Financial Review by Department and Divisional Financials were reviewed.


**Next Meeting:** The September Board meeting was scheduled one week later than the normal schedule due to the Minnesota Hospital Association and LeadingAge Minnesota Annual Meetings. However, due to the increasing COVID-19 case counts in Minnesota both those meetings have been transitioned to virtual meetings. Therefore it was decided to transition back to the normal meeting date of the second to the last Thursday of the month, September 23, 2021.

**Adjourn:**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Patty Winchell-Dahl and seconded by Mary Sanders. The motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting will be held on September 23, 2021.

The regular meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

  
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Chair

  
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Clerk