



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT  
BOARD MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 18, 2021

**Call to Order** – Kay Olson called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on February 18, 2021 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 Medical Staff and Credentials Committee Reports. The motion was seconded by Steve Nielsen and the motion carried with all ayes.

**Closed Session Summary** - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from December 16, 2020; the Medical Staff Report from January 20, 2021 and the February 17, 2021 Credentials Committee Report were discussed.

**Reconvene** - The North Shore Health Board reconvened in regular session at 9:29 a.m.

**Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Steve Nielsen, Mary Sanders, Kay Olson and Randy Wiitala  
**Others Present:** Kimber Wraalstad; Paul Goettl; Greg Ruberg; Patty Winchell-Dahl; Milan Schmidt, MD (p); Doug Sanders (p); Dave Mills (p); Grace Grinager (p);

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

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

**Public Comments:** Doug Sanders spoke about the opportunity to listen to the presentation on Health Care Finance provided by Joe Schindler during the Minnesota Hospital Association Trustee Winter Trustee Conference. He appreciated the information provided and expressed his admiration for the work being done by Mr. Goettl.

**Introduction:** Patty Winchell-Dahl was introduced and she provided information and background about herself. Ms. Winchell-Dahl is interested in serving as the Board Member from District 1.

**Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2021 – Steve Nielsen made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2021 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Mary Sanders. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Updates:**

- a. **Clinic Board:** Kate Surbaugh had a conflict and was unable to attend the meeting. She shared a written update of activities at Sawtooth Mountain Clinic (SMC). SMC continues to partner with Cook County Public Health to vaccinate community residents. The SMC Pharmacy has been open for six weeks and the Pharmacy can now accept most major insurance carriers. Ms. Surbaugh also shared information on SMC's responsive scheduling process using telehealth appointments.
- b. **County Board:** Commissioner Mills shared the County Board has a new Commissioner. Robert Svaleson was elected to represent District 1. The entire County Board is attending the Association of Counties 101 education. The County is discussing the long term highway plan and capital improvement plan. The County Board approved the hire of Nick Cusick as the Public Information Coordinator that will be shared with North Shore Health.
- c. **Board Members:** Mary Sanders shared her experience attending the Minnesota Hospital Association Boot Camp for new Board Members. She very much enjoyed the Boot Camp and found the information presented to be very helpful. The information presented at the Winter Trustee Conference regarding the Health Effects of Food Insecurity presented by Allison O'Toole, CEO, and Jana Martin, M.S., RDN, LD, FOODRx program manager, Second Harvest Heartland was informative and eye opening. The Town Hall on the Economy with Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis President Neel Kashkari was also very interesting. Ms. Winchell-Dahl also attended the Boot Camp and commented the presentations were very informative.
- d. **Correspondence:** A letter from Mary Edson, LPN, EMT, regarding the development of possible on-call quarters was shared.

**Board Presentation – Public Health and COVID-19 – Grace Grinager, Public Health Supervisor with Cook County Public Health and Human Services**

Ms. Grinager provided an update regarding the vaccine process for Cook County. Cook County Public Health and Sawtooth Mountain Clinic have been offering vaccination clinics at the Community Center. The registration system, PrepMod, is being used to schedule appointments. All appointments require pre-registration, there are no walk-ins. The online registration system can be accessed via the Cook County Hub at [www.cookcountycovid19.org](http://www.cookcountycovid19.org). It has been determined that 300 appointments per day is the maximum size for a vaccine clinic. The flow has gone very well with that number of appointments. They are providing buttons stating "I got the COVID-19 Vaccine, Cook County MN" and Ms. Grinager hopes to make vaccination a source of pride. Community support groups such as CarePartners, the HUB and Social Services have been provided education so they can assist individuals in registering for a vaccination appointment. Sawtooth Mountain Clinic has called patients over 65 who have not yet been vaccinated to offer an opportunity for vaccination and provide assistance in registering. Ms. Grinager feels opportunities to be vaccinated have been provided to everyone over 65. The Contact tracing/case investigation process and the collaboration with Grand Portage Health Services was reviewed. Cook County Public Health is also supporting the schools with their preparedness planning. Ms. Grinager has actively participated as a member of the North

Shore Health Incident Command Team during the last year and she expressed her appreciation for the collaborative work of the entire medical community during the last year. The members of the Board expressed their gratitude to Ms. Grinager for her outstanding work and leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Goettl presented the January 2021 financial statements. Patient days in the Acute Hospital were 9 days or 75.0% less than budget with inpatient revenue \$50K less than budget. Swing Bed days were 81 less than budget with revenue \$61K less than budget. Care Center days were 3 more than budget and revenue \$15K less than budget. Outpatient revenue of \$1,116K is \$150K or 12% less than budget. Net Operating Revenue of \$1,529K is 9% less than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$1,711K are 1% less than budget. Employee benefits are higher than budget due to a timing issue with health insurance. The Net Loss for the month of January 2021 of \$138K is \$151K less than budget. The year has started out slow in all areas of the Hospital with revenue down in all areas except Home Care. Mr. Goettl noted that expenses remain flat. Deductions from Revenue are \$120K better than budget due to a significant shift in payer mix from Medicare to Commercial. Official notification has been received that the SBA Payroll Protection Program loan has been forgiven. Year-to-date FTEs are 104.6, 9.3 less than budget. Days' cash on hand remains strong at 304 days. Randy Wiitala made a motion to accept the January 2021 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Steve Nielsen and the motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business:**

- a) **Other:** None.

**New Business:**

- a) **District 1 – Board Member:** Patty Winchell-Dahl submitted her letter of interest to serve as the Board Member from District 1. Ms. Winchell-Dahl was the first Grand Portage Community Center Director. In this position she had the privilege and responsibility of ensuring the completion of the building project, programing development, coordination of services as well as managing the day-to-day operation. Most recently, she retired as the Elderly Nutrition Program Director. In this role, she had the opportunity to provide programs and services for the growing Elder population on the Grand Portage Reservation. She is currently the chairperson of the Oshkionigaming Charter School Board and is a member of Grand Portage's Wisdom Keeper Alzheimer Board. Ms. Winchell-Dahl was recommended by Robert Deschampe, Grand Portage Tribal Chair and Marie Spry, Grand Portage Tribal Council Member.

Steve Nielsen made a motion to appoint Patty Winchell-Dahl as the District 1 replacement for Sharon Bloomquist. The motion was seconded by Mary Sanders and the motion carried unanimously.

- b) **Other:** None.

**Management Report:**

The Management Report for January 2021 included in the Board materials was reviewed. As of February 10, 2021, 77% of North Shore Health employees and 95% of Care Center residents have been fully vaccinated. According to the State of Minnesota, with data submitted as of February 9, 2021, 32.5% of Cook County's population is vaccinated. This compares to the statewide rate of 10.8%. This vaccination rate is a phenomenal effort by

Cook County Public Health, Sawtooth Mountain Clinic, Grand Portage Health Services and North Shore Health. The addition of an afternoon drive-up COVID-19 test collection began on Monday, February 8, 2021. This will allow for increased opportunities for timely COVID-19 testing. Visitation was increased for both patients in the Hospital and Care Center Residents.

Nick Cusick has been hired as the shared Public Information Coordinator with Cook County and began his new role on Thursday, February 18, 2021. A recent meeting with representatives of the Community Asset Foundation, the group interested in developing an Assisting Living Facility has determined that the project has become difficult to move forward, given the financial proforma isn't able to break-even. The 2021 – 2022 Legislative Priority Bill Tracker from the Minnesota Hospital Association was reviewed. Since the legislative session is being conducted virtually, it has gotten off to a slow start. The Joint Elected Boards (now known as the Community Leadership Committee) meeting was held on Thursday, February 11, 2021. The Committee agreed to form two work groups to focus on the topics of racial equity and housing. Various attendees in the meeting volunteered to participate in the work groups. Ms. Olson commented that any Board Member interested in participating in one of the work groups is welcome.

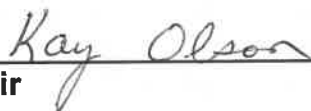
**Board Planning Update:**

The North Shore Health Board of Directors continued the discussions to assist in the development of the strategic plan. The Older Adult Service Landscape: Environmental Trends and Issues Detail was shared from LeadingAge Minnesota. The history of the Care Center was shared including resident days and occupancy since 2003. Topics for future meetings will include staffing, regulatory issues, reimbursement, Nursing Home cost reports, and financial position.

**Adjourn:**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Steve Nielsen and seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting will be held on March 18, 2021.

The regular meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

  
Chair

  
Clerk