



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT
BOARD MINUTES FOR JANUARY 19, 2023

Call to Order – Kay Olson called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on January 19, 2023 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 report. Randy Wiitala seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Summary - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from December 21, 2022; the Medical Staff Report from December 21, 2022 and the January 18, 2023 Credentials Committee Report were discussed.

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

Kim Shepard, Deputy Court Administrator, joined the meeting to administer the Oath of Office to the following Board of Directors elected on November 8, 2022.

Patty Winchell-Dahl – District 1
Steven Frykman – District 3
Randy Wiitala – District 5

Roll Call

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

Members Absent:

Others Present: Kimber Wraalstad (p); Troy Batchelor; Michelle Silence; Doug Montgomery; Greg Ruberg; David Mills (p); Steve Nielsen (p); Kurt Farchmin, MD (p); Kim Shepard (p)

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic members of the Board (Randy Wiitala and Patty Winchell-Dahl), Doug Montgomery, Greg Ruberg, David Mills, Steve Nielsen, and Kimber Wraalstad attended the meeting via Zoom technology with the ability to hear and see the other participants. Kay Olson, Steve Frykman, Mary Sanders, Troy Batchelor, Michelle Silence, Kurt Farchmin, and Kim Shepard 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: Patty Winchell-Dahl commented that many individuals she has spoken with are not aware of the many services offered at North Shore Health. It was requested that Todd Ford continue to use the various communication methods to share information services available including the newspaper in addition to Boreal, Northern Wilds and Social Media. Steve Frykman also commented that Physicians from Duluth may also not be aware of services available in Grand Marais. Mr. Wiitala discussed the pricing transparency regulations and the costs for travel and time.

Reorganization Meeting

a. Election of Officers:

- **Chair** – Mary Sanders nominated Kay Olson to remain as Board Chair and Steve Frykman seconded the nomination. Ms. Olson was elected as Board Chair with a unanimous vote.
- **Clerk** – Mary Sanders nominated Mary Sanders to remain as Board Clerk and Steve Frykman seconded the nomination. Ms. Sanders was elected as Board Clerk with a unanimous vote.
- **Treasurer** – Mary Sanders nominated Randy Wiitala to remain as Board Treasurer. Steve Frykman seconded the nomination and Mr. Wiitala was elected as Board Treasurer with a unanimous vote.

b. Conflict of Interest Statements: The Conflict of Interest Statement Policy and 2023 Conflict of Interest Statements were distributed to Board Members. The Members will complete the Conflict of Interest statements and return them to Ms. Wraalstad for review and to be kept on file.

c. Assignments: Currently, Ms. Olson attends the Quality Improvement/Peer Review Committee and Medical Staff Meetings as a Board Liaison. Steve Frykman volunteered to serve as the liaison for 2023.

d. Meeting Reimbursement Amounts: It was noted that since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, the members of the Board have not accepted the Board stipend reimbursement. Randy Wiitala moved that the Board begin accepting the meeting stipend and mileage reimbursement. The motion was seconded by Steve Frykman and the motion carried unanimously. It was agreed to maintain the meeting reimbursement at the same amount as 2022.

e. Delegation to Administrator: Randy Wiitala moved to adopt the Cook County Hospital District dba North Shore Health CEO/Administrator Delegation Policy. Mary Sanders seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

f. Closed Meeting Resolution: The resolution detailing the responsibility of the Board of Directors for Quality Improvement/Peer Review activities and identifying that while conducting those responsibilities the Board will meet in closed session was reviewed. A motion to again adopt the resolution was made by Mary Sanders and seconded by Steve Frykman. The motion carried unanimously.

Recognition Steve Nielsen:

Ms. Olson presented Mr. Nielsen with a certificate for his service as a member of the North Shore Health Board. Our Deepest Appreciation for Serving as an NSH Board Member December 2016 - December 2022. This certificate is given to Steve Nielsen for: Service Excellence, Communication, Quality and Integrity.

Approval of Minutes for December 22, 2022 – It was noted that Mary Sanders was present in person and not via zoom. Mary Sanders made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 22, 2022 meeting as corrected and the motion was seconded by Steve Frykman. The motion carried unanimously.

Updates:

- a. Clinic Board:** Kate Surbaugh was not in attendance at the meeting but shared a written summary of activities at Sawtooth Mountain Clinic (SMC). The RCORP (Rural Communities Opioid Response Program) grant is moving ahead with a large coalition of local partners. The three-year grant has a broad workplan to tackle prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery. The group has already offered Nalaxone training in the community, and has started on other prevention programs such as Harm Reduction Education and Mental Health First Aid. Respiratory viruses (including Covid) continue to dominate this winter season. Thankfully, most illness has been mild and well-managed at home. SMC continues to order at home tests and high-quality masks from the federal government for distribution around the county. A copy of Ms. Surbaugh's report has been forwarded to the Board Members.
- b. County Board:** Commissioner Mills commented on the North Shore Health Board Member reimbursement and noted their reimbursement has also increased. He also discussed the plans to address salaries of Cook County employees and how to pay for the wage increase. Commissioner Mills shared that a 51 unit housing complex is being planned for the Gunflint Trail just below the Water Tower. Beth Drost has resigned as the EDA Director. The EDA Board is evaluating the possibility of having a joint Director with the HRA. The County is also continuing to move forward with the Capital Improvement Plan. The information from the Capital Improvement Plan will then be used to develop the financial management plan and assist with the Strategic Plan.
- c. Board Members:** Mr. Frykman shared information from the new member Boot Camp from the Minnesota Hospital Association Trustee conference. He noted that there was much discussion about workforce shortages throughout Minnesota and the nation. Ms. Winchell-Dahl attended the meeting in person and commented that we are dealing with the same issues that other organizations in Minnesota are experiencing. Both Mr. Frykman and Ms. Winchell-Dahl felt that the information was excellent and the conference was well worth attending. Ms. Olson discussed the Trustee Council meeting and noted that many of the employees with the Minnesota Hospital Association are new. It was also noted that MHA will no longer be sharing office space with LeadingAge Minnesota.
- d. Correspondence:** None.

Board Presentation – LeadingAge Minnesota Policy Priorities and Advocacy for the Care of our Seniors – Dan Nelson, Director of Community Engagement for LeadingAge Minnesota

Mr. Nelson is the Director of Community Engagement for LeadingAge Minnesota and his role at the Association is to assist with advocacy efforts. The top legislative priorities include the provision of a direct rate increase for nursing homes to allow for increased wages, reform the 21-month delay in reimbursement for nursing homes and fully fund the state's Medicaid waivers that are intended to cover costs of caring for seniors. LeadingAge Minnesota will be hosting a Day at the Capitol on March 13 and Action Alerts have been developed to assist organizations in receiving immediate information about legislation impacting senior services. Board Members were encouraged to engage with our Legislators – Senator Grant Hauschild and Representative Roger Skraba.

Financial Reports: Mr. Montgomery presented the December 2022 financial statements with a focus on the unaudited year-end financials. Patient days in the Acute Hospital were 76 days or 22.5% less than budget with inpatient revenue \$171K less than budget. Swing Bed days were 151 less than budget with revenue \$30K less than budget. Care Center days were 1,257 less than budget and revenue \$530K less than budget. Outpatient revenue of \$16,594M is \$7291K or 5% more than budget. Net Operating Revenue for the year of \$19,613M is 1% more than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$21,388M are 2% less than budget. The Net Loss for 2022 of \$555K is \$179K better than budget. Deductions from Revenue are \$196K better than budget. Year-to-date FTEs are 95.3, 15.3 less than budget. Days' cash on hand remains strong at 286 days. Mary Sanders made a motion to accept the December 2022 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

- a) **Other:** None.

New Business:

- a) **Audit Engagement Letter:** The engagement letter for the Fiscal Year Ending 2022 financial audit from CliftonLarsonAllen was discussed. The cost of the audit is \$27,000 and it is anticipated that the representatives from CLA will complete their fieldwork virtually during the first two weeks of March. Steve Frykman made a motion to engage CliftonLarsonAllen to complete the Fiscal Year Ending 2022 financial audit. The motion was seconded by Mary Sanders and the motion carried unanimously.

- b) **Bank Designation:** The Board annually designates a financial institution to be used for routine banking actions such as the deposits of daily receipts and the withdrawal of accounts payable and payroll expenses. The current financial institution used by North Shore Health for the deposits of daily receipts is Grand Marais State Bank. The majority of receipts are received electronically. Security State Bank was helpful in assisting North Shore Health to secure the Paycheck Protection Program loan. As such, Kimber Wraalstad is recommending two banks serve as the designated banks for North Shore Health in 2023. Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to use Grand Marais State Bank and Security State Bank as the designated banks for North Shore

Health. The motion was seconded by Mary Sanders and the motion carried unanimously.

Management Report:

The Management Report for January 2023 included in the Board materials was reviewed.

As of January 13, 2023, there have been one thousand five hundred seventy two (1,572) confirmed cases of COVID-19 affiliated with Cook County; including self-reported positive antigen tests and Lab PCR reported tests. CMS requires facilities to use the community transmission level as the triggers used by health care for everything and the current transmission rate for Cook County is in the High category, the Red Classification. On December 30, 2022, the transmission rate for Cook County was in the Low category or Blue Classification. This had been the first time Cook County had been in this transmission level for at least a year and it was a momentous enough occasion that we included a picture of the transmission level in the COVID-19 update. Had the transmission level stayed in the Low category for another week, North Shore Health might have been able to modify mask use. Unfortunately, one day makes a difference and on January 6, 2023, the transmission level returned to the High category. Therefore, mask use is still required at North Shore Health. Visitors may remove their masks in a resident's/patient's room with that person's permission. However, visitors must still wear a mask at all other times. Families and friends may still share a beverage, snack and/or meal with a Care Center resident but only in the resident's room. Visitors are encouraged to be cautious and not visit if they have any respiratory symptoms or have been exposed to COVID-19 or Influenza.

Applications for the Chief Financial Officer have been received. Screening interviews have been completed via the telephone and several on-site interviews have been conducted. The thoughts of the Team Members who participated in the interview process are being gathered and next steps will be determined within the next week.

The Care Center is going to work differently with the current staffing to continue providing quality care while safely maximizing potential admissions and utilize the strengths of our current Team Members. The Woods household will be designated for higher acuity patients. Familiar Nursing and NAR staffing model would remain in place during day and evening shifts. The Waves household will consist of lower acuity residents to enable a nurse or TMA to provide care for at least 7-8 residents without an assigned NAR. A Universal Worker Model will be utilized, consisting of Nursing or TMA staff during day and evening shifts. Several residents have been moved between the households based upon the Minimum Data Set (MDS) data determining care levels. As much as possible the moves have been minimized. After a period of evaluation, the admissions have been resumed to meet the census goal of at least 28 residents. This plan may result in admissions from someone who is lower on the waiting list so questions can be directed to Robert McGregor or Kimber Wraalstad. The process for going through the Care Center waiting list was discussed. It was requested that the waiting list process be reviewed regarding options for prioritization and Ms. Winchell-Dahl volunteered to participate in the discussion.

The Minnesota Department of Health released the application for the Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Grant. North Shore Health is planning to submit a grant application for the endoscopy equipment replacement. Randy Wiitala moved to adopt the Board Resolution allowing North Shore Health to submit the Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Grant. Mary Sanders seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Sanders and Ms. Winchell-Dahl complemented the work of the Maintenance Department in maintaining the parking lot as free as possible from snow and ice. They are doing a wonderful job. Mr. Ruberg provided a review of the process for Ms. Wraalstad's annual evaluation. Mr. Frykman commented on the lighting that has been installed behind the stain glass in the Lobby. Details in the stain glass are much more visible. Brook Lessard has been working on enhancing the lighting for the last year.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Patty Winchell-Dahl and seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting will be held on February 16, 2023.

The regular meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Kay Olson

Chair

Mary L Sanders

Clerk