



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT

BOARD MINUTES FOR APRIL 18, 2024

Call to Order – Kay Olson called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on April 18, 2024 at 9:03 a.m. at the Schaap Community Center at 7401 Gunflint Trail in Grand Marais.

Adjourn to Closed Session – Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to recess into closed session permitted pursuant to Minn. Stat. §145.64 subd. 1(d) to discuss decisions, recommendations, deliberations or documentation of a Review Organization; pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.05, subd. 2 to discuss not public medical data. Randy Wiitala seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Summary - The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from March 20, 2024 and the Medical Staff Report from March 20, 2024 were discussed.

Reconvene - The North Shore Health Board reconvened in regular session at 9:31 a.m.

Roll Call

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

Members Absent:

Others Present: Kimber Wraalstad, Troy Batchelor, Lori Ericson, Jason Yuhas, Dr. Todd Severnak, Todd Ford, Bruce Meade and Community Members.

Approval of Agenda: Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to accept the meeting agenda as presented; it was seconded by Steve Frykman. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: Anne Deneen provided public comment.

Approval of Minutes for March 21, 2024 – Randy Wiitala made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 21, 2024 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Mary Sanders. The motion carried unanimously.

Updates:

- a. **Clinic Board:** As she was unable to attend the meeting, Kate Surbaugh shared a written summary of activities at Sawtooth Mountain Clinic (SMC). SMC has released the Annual Report. A copy was distributed to the Board Members.
- b. **County Board:** None.
- c. **Board Members:** Ms. Olson shared information discussed at the recent Minnesota Hospital Association Trustee Council meeting. Financial and workforce challenges were shared by Trustees from many organizations, large and small, throughout Minnesota.

Board Presentation – Investment Overview – Bruce Meade, Edward Jones

Bruce Meade, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones joined the meeting and provided a brief overview of the current investment portfolio for North Shore Health. Mr. Meade discussed the current market conditions and provided thoughts about future market directions. Public hospitals may be invested in any security that has been recommended by an investment adviser within the limitations under Minnesota Chapter 118A regarding investments. Mr. Meade stated that he has reviewed the current North Shore Health Investment policy and it provides a nice high-level discussion of the types of investments and overall goals.

Financial Reports: Ms. Ericson presented the March 2024 financial statements. There was a Loss from Operations for the month of \$231K, compared to the budgeted Loss from Operations of \$434K. The Statements of Net Position, Statements of Revenue and Expenses and Change in Net Position were reviewed. Gross Patient Service Revenue of \$2.039M for the month of March was 6.58% more than budget. Outpatient revenues were above budget with Inpatient, Swing Bed, Care Center and Home Care being under budget. Contractual Adjustments were \$311K compared to the budget of \$270K. Total Operating Revenue for the month was \$1.730M, 4.66% more than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$1.961M are 6.02% less than budget. The days cash on hand, debt service coverage ratio, current ratio and payer mix were reviewed by Ms. Ericson. Randy Wiitala made a motion to accept the March 2024 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Mary Sanders and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

- a) **Organization Review Update:** The report and analysis from the culture and gaps survey completed by Dr. Bill Auxier and the AUXIER Group has not yet been received. The report is expected to be received in the near future. Eric Shell from Stroudwater will be onsite on May 1 and 2 to begin to update the Strategic, Financial and Operational Assessment. The Employee Engagement survey remains on schedule to be conducted in August 2024.
- b) **Other:** None.

New Business:

- a) **Financial Assistance Policy Review:** The following policies regarding financial assistance and collections were reviewed:
- Zero Tolerance Policy
 - Bad Debt Collection
 - Debt Collection Agency Policy
 - Debt Collection Litigation/Garnishment
 - Patient Financial Responsibility Policy
 - Financial Assistance Program

The policies were updated with the 2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines and various type and grammatical errors were corrected. Annual review and approval of these policies are required by the Board. Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to approve the policies as presented and the motion was seconded by Steve Frykman. Motion carried unanimously.

The work of Julie Eliassen and Kelly Swearingen in Patient Accounts were recognized as they work diligently with the various insurers to make sure patients receive the benefits they are owed. They also work with patients to set up payment plans and provide information about our Community Care program. The letter sent by Kelly Swearingen to members of the Senate Tax Committee regarding the Revenue Recapture program was read to the Board and will be included with the May Board material.

- b) **Investment Policy:** The North Shore Health Investment Policy referenced by Bruce Meade was reviewed.
- c) **MHA Legislative Video Update:** The legislative video update from the Minnesota Hospital Association could not be shown due to technical difficulties.

Management Report:

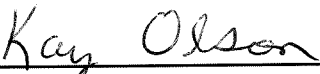
The Management Report for April 2024 included in the Board materials was reviewed. Legislation has been introduced once again in this legislative session that would provide an average \$5/hour wage increase to nursing home workers and to address the 21-month delay in payments for nursing homes to allow an appropriate response to economic inflationary factors. However, there has been no action on these areas. The work by the Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board will continue to delay meaningful progress, as that Board lacks any authority to fund needed wage increases and fails to provide a meaningful voice to provider representatives who have been appointed to that Board. LeadingAge MN and its Imperative partner are working to try to ensure that at least one employer vote is needed on the prevailing side before a standard is promulgated through rule. Both the Minnesota Hospital Association and LeadingAge MN continue their advocacy and share information that will affect health care organizations such as North Shore Health. It was shared that Marice Zimmer and Hilja Iverson will be leaving North Shore Health in May. Marice has served as the Dietary Manager since May 2006. Marice will be retiring with the goal to spend more time with her family. Hilja has been the North Shore Health Social Worker since November 2012. She is pursuing her Master's Degree in Social Work and has been accepted into the Child Welfare Scholar Fellowship at UMD. North Shore Health has entered into an agreement with the Cook County Sheriff's Office provide jail meals on an as needed basis. PDL Connect

Consulting recently shared their "Drive the Road" education to our Department Leaders and various future leaders. The focus of the education was on the operational details of leadership. North Shore Health was awarded a \$110,000 Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Grant toward the purchase of an Ortho Clinical Vitros 5600 chemistry analyzer for the Laboratory. Congratulations and thank you to Lori Ericson and Melisa Scott for their hard work in preparing and submitting the grant application. The development of a Minnesota High Value Network continues. Cibola Health is in the process of gathering and analyzing data. The 2024 Summer Trustee Conference will be held on July 31 – August 2, 2024 at the Breezy Point Resort in Breezy Point, MN. Those interested in attending the conference should give their registration forms to Kimber Wraalstad by May 24, 2024.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mary Sanders and seconded by Randy Wiitala. The motion carried unanimously.

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.



Chair



Clerk