



COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT
BOARD MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 19, 2024

Call to Order – Kay Olson called the meeting of the Cook County Hospital District Board of Directors to order on December 19, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of North Shore Health.

Recess to Closed Session – Steve Frykman 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 and pursuant to Minn. Stat. sec. 13D.05, subdivision 3 (a), to evaluate the performance of the hospital district's CEO/Administrator Kimber L. Wraalstad. Randy Wiitala seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Summary – The Quality Improvement/Peer Review Report from November 20, 2024, the Medical Staff Report from November 20, 2024 and the December 18, 2024 Credentials Committee Report were discussed. Also discussed was the CEO/Administrator's Evaluation.

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

Roll Call

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Kimber Wraalstad, Nicole Siegner, Troy Batchelor, Jason Yuhas, Michelle Silence, Greg Ruberg, Todd Ford, Doug Sanders, Milan Schmidt, Kelly Swearingen, Muain Haseeb and Karla Pankow

Public Comments: Kelly Swearingen offered her thanks to Kay Olson and Mary Sanders for their service on the Board of Directors.

Recognition: On behalf of the Board Members and Employees of North Shore Health, Randy Wiitala presented Kay Olson and Mary Sanders with certificates recognizing their service to North Shore Health and spoke about some of the accomplishments achieved during their tenure on the Board. Ms. Sanders served on the Board of Directors beginning January 2020 and Ms. Olson has served for 17 years, beginning her service in October 2007 and serving as the Board Chair since 2015.

Approval of Minutes for November 19, 2024 – Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2024 meeting as presented and the motion was seconded by Steve Frykman. The motion carried unanimously.

Updates:

Clinic Board: As she was unable to attend the meeting, Kate Surbaugh shared a written summary of activities at Sawtooth Mountain Clinic.

Board Members: Ms. Olson thanked the Board Members for their service and noted that she appreciated their support of North Shore Health and our mission. She has been proud to represent North Shore Health while attending the meetings of the Minnesota Hospital Association, National Rural Health Association, etc.

Board Presentation – Laboratory Update – Muain Haseeb, Administrative Director of the Laboratory

Mr. Haseeb shared information about the Laboratory at North Shore Health. Laboratory tests are one of the most important diagnostic tools that the providers rely on to make a diagnosis, order medications or other interventions, and monitor the overall treatment plan for their patients. He noted that according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) there are over 14 billion lab tests ordered annually and 70% of medical decisions depend on laboratory results. The staff at the North Shore Health Laboratory include a Pathologist, Laboratory Scientists and Medical Laboratory Technicians. These professionals are highly educated and are dedicated to serving the needs of our providers, patients, and residents. They use the highest quality tests to produce the most accurate results. All the tests, instruments and equipment (as needed and applicable) are verified before they are used for patients' testing. All tests have procedures (instructions for use) to maintain consistency in doing these procedures. Preventative maintenance (PM) is performed on all our instruments and equipment per the Manufacturer's recommendations to ensure they function properly and safely. Quality Control (QC) is run on the instruments and kits before patients results are reported to ensure the accuracy, reliability, safety, and consistency of patients' results. Staff are fully trained using training checklists for each section and staff competency are verified at least once per year. The North Shore Health Laboratory is accredited by Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) as a quality laboratory. Routine and STAT testing is performed in the sections of Chemistry (Routine and immunoassays), Blood Gases, Coagulation, Serology, Molecular Diagnostics, Hematology, Urinalysis, Microbiology and Transfusion Services/Blood Bank. In addition, the Laboratory also collaborates with accredited Reference Laboratories for esoteric and other testing needs. Year-to-date, North Shore Health has performed more than 79K test with about 4K send outs. Following Mr. Haseeb's presentation, the Board Members had the opportunity to tour the Laboratory and meet several employees.

Financial Reports: Nicole Siegner, Interim Chief Financial Officer, presented the November 2024 financial statements. There was an Income from Operations for the month of \$20K, compared to the budgeted Loss from Operations of -\$411K. The Statement of Net Position, Statement of Revenues and Expenses and Changes in Net Position were reviewed. Gross Patient Service Revenue of \$2.1M for the month of November was 11.0% higher than budget. Revenues from Swing Bed and Outpatient were above budget while revenue from Inpatient, Care Center and Home Care were below budget for the month. Contractual Adjustments and Other Deductions were -\$75K compared to the budget of \$270K. The Deductions from Revenue were discussed at length because of the unique situation of being an addition to revenue. Ms. Siegner also discussed the Days in Accounts Receivable and noted that Account Receivable days over 90 and unbilled charges are decreasing. Total Operating Revenue for the month was \$2.110M, 28.0% more than budget. Total Operating Expenses of \$2.090M were 2.0% less than budget. The days cash on hand, debt service coverage ratio, current ratio and payer mix were also reviewed by Ms. Siegner. Patty Winchell-Dahl made a motion to accept the November 2024 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Mary Sanders and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

- a) **2024 - 2027 Strategic Plan Update:** The Scorecard for the Strategic Priorities #2 – Service Portfolio and Community Value and #3 – Organizational Health and Viability were reviewed. As previously noted, the update focuses on goals due for action to be completed in the next six months. The brief summary and arrows provide the status of each goal.
- b) **Other:** None.

New Business:

a) Budget Presentation

- 1) **2025 Capital Budget:** Ms. Siegner presented the proposed 2025 capital budget of \$953,197. Several of the items proposed for the 2025 Capital Budget were highlighted by Ms. Siegner. She also noted that the 2024 capital purchases are estimated to be \$605,013 compared the budget of \$890,103. Patty Winchell-Dahl moved the adoption of the 2025 Capital Budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Steve Frykman and the motion carried unanimously.
- 2) **2025 Operating Budget:** The 2025 volume and statistics budget, FTE budget by department, income statement, patient revenue by department, expense forecast by department and cash requirements were reviewed in detail by Ms. Siegner. Patty Winchell-Dahl moved the adoption of the 2025 Operating Budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Steve Frykman and the motion carried unanimously.

- b) **Other:** None.

Management Report:

The Management Report for December 2024 included in the Board materials was reviewed. North Shore Health had our follow up certification survey for the Critical Access Hospital (CAH) and Swing Bed services. Two surveyors arrived on November 27 and were on-site for

less the three hours. They shared that North Shore Health was “In compliance with CFR Part §485 Subpart F, Critical Access Hospitals”. Great work by Troy Batchelor, Andrea Brobst, Meghan Flynn, and the rest of the staff for their work. The State Fire Marshal arrived on December 12 and spent an hour at North Shore Health. He also found North Shore Health “In compliance” with Medicare/Medicaid requirements for Life Safety Code. Thank you to Jason Hoefker, Brook Lessard, Corey Hudler and Bill Lovaas for their work. North Shore Health is expecting to receive our property, inland marine, boiler & machinery, and auto insurance renewal for January 1, 2025, within the next week. Our agents, Marsh McLennan/Vaaler, were not happy with the original renewal terms and have been negotiating better terms. North Shore Health has engaged Bill Auxier and the Auxier Group to assist us in building a Culture Transformation program and create a Culture of Connection based upon the Culture and Gaps Analysis completed in February 2024. As part of this work, 24 Department Leaders will have the opportunity to participate in the Cultural Transformation Coaching Engagement for the next 12 months. The initial workshop will be held on January 7, 2025, and pre-assessment work by the participants is already beginning. This program includes both in-person and video conference calls with all participants. In addition, each participant will each be assigned an Executive Coach with whom they will have a 30-minute individual coaching call each month. This is important work for North Shore Health and will be a valuable individual experience for our Leaders. In addition to the Culture Transformation Project, follow-up to the Employee Engagement survey is also being developed. Staff participation in the survey was over 68% and Workforce Research Group, the organization who administered the survey, is working with North Shore Health to review and interpret the results of the survey. We have also entered into an agreement with Corrie Searles of Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative (RWHC) to assist North Shore Health rollout the survey results to Department Leaders and Employees. Ms. Searles will be working with Department Leaders to analyze the results and develop action plans that are department specific and align with the facility goals. She will also lead three in-person sessions on January 8, 2025, to share the survey results with employees. During these sessions, Ms. Searles will share graphs related to organizational category results, highlight key themes from the open-ended question responses and highlight notable strengths & opportunities. Employees will be asked to suggest three key focus areas for improvement as their input is welcomed and will be valuable as we develop and initiate actions to respond to their feedback. The Minnesota Nurses Association and North Shore Health have had one contract negotiation meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for the week of December 16 with additional dates being identified for meeting in January 2025. The existing contract expires December 31, 2024; however, it is not unusual for negotiations to continue into the next year. As of December 14, 2024, 59% of employees are vaccinated for influenza; moving toward our goal of 90%. The Care Center residents have also had their influenza vaccination with only two residents declining to be vaccinated. The decision has been made by City and County officials not to continue with Cook County Voices, the e-newsletter to legislators in 2025. While it provided an opportunity to share information with State and Federal Legislators, participation was sporadic. North Shore Health is proceeding with the transition of the electronic health record for the Care Center from Meditech to Point Click Care. Several software options that are specific for long-term care were reviewed with Department Leaders and Care Center direct caregivers having an opportunity to participate in demonstrations. Documentation and analysis will be easier, more efficient and meet the expectations for long-term care. Several of the employees have used the two software options and provided their opinions and recommendations. Legal counsel is currently reviewing the Master Services Agreement and Scope of Work. The implementation of this software typically takes four to six months so we anticipate “go live” by July 1, 2025. The 2025 Minnesota Hospital Association Winter Trustee Conference is scheduled for January 8–10, 2025. This conference assists Board Members to remain

informed on health care trends, best practices and advocacy efforts. Steve Frykman, Milan Schmidt and Sam Usem will be attending the conference representing North Shore Health. On November 22, the Teams from North Shore Health and Sawtooth Mountain Clinic had the opportunity to work with Rhonda Barcus from Rural Health Innovations (RHI), to review the Health Care Needs Assessment report. The participants agreed upon the health care priorities and began the action planning for the identified priority areas. Another meeting is being scheduled for January or February to continue the action planning work. The tentative meetings dates for 2025 North Shore Health Board meetings were again reviewed and will be finalized during the January 2025 meeting. Ms. Wraalstad also shared the *Rural Health Care in Minnesota: Data Highlights* that was prepared by the Minnesota Department of Health Division of Health Policy.

Adjourn:

Randy Wiitala moved to reconvene to a closed session for the purpose of discussing the CEO/Administrator's evaluation. Patty Winchell-Dahl seconded the motion and the meeting returned to closed session at 11:29 a.m.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kay Olson and seconded by Patty Winchell-Dahl. The motion carried unanimously.

The regular meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

A special reorganization meeting will be held on January 2, 2025 in the Board Room at North Shore Health.

The next regular meeting will be held on January 23, 2025 in the Board Room at North Shore Health.



Chair



Clerk

