

**LEWIS COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL  
BOARD OF MANAGERS**

**March 29, 2023**

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The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Managers of Lewis County General Hospital was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Michael Young, President. Members present:

*Richard Chartrand*  
*Jennifer Jones*  
*John Lehman*  
*Marguerite Mastascusa*

*Philip McDowell*  
*Howard Meny, M.D.*  
*Donald Musnicki {Via Videoconferencing}*

*Karen Rennie*  
*Susan Ross*  
*Cheryl Steckly*  
*Michael Young*

Others  
Present

*Gerald R. Cayer, Chief Executive Officer*  
*Kerry Herbine, Chief Operating Officer*  
*Sean Harney, M.D., CMO, Employed Provider Clinics*  
*Jeff Hellinger, CFO*  
*Marcy Teal, Chief Nursing Officer*  
*Debra Wurz, Nursing Home Administrator*  
*Robert Fargo, Director of Facilities Management*  
*Michelle Kelley, Administrative Assistant*  
*Christina Flint, Public Relations*  
*Jessica Skiff, Director of Human Services*  
*Dr. Steven Lyndaker, Medical Director {entered at 4:52 p.m.}*  
*Marylou Feilmeier, Medical Staff President*  
*JoAnne Rhubart, Executive Director, Hospital Foundation*  
*Scott Sauter, Network Administrator*  
*Julie Abbass, Reporter, Watertown Daily Times {entered at 4:41 p.m.}*  
*Michelle Beagle, Retired Transcriptionist {left at 4:37 p.m.}*

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**VISION, MISSION & VALUE STATEMENTS:** The health system's Vision, Mission and Value Statements were read with the group at the start of the meeting by board member, Mrs. Mastascusa.

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

**#25.** Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. McDowell, the Board congratulated Darcy Zehr, Physical Therapist, as the January Employee of the Month.  
Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

**EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

**#26.** Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. Lehman, the Board congratulate Phillip Snow, Leisure Time Activities, as the *Employee of the Year* for 2022. Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

**CONFLICT INQUIRY:** No known conflicts were identified on tonight's agenda for any board member.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Anyone wishing to send a public comment may do so by sending an email to [info@lcgh.net](mailto:info@lcgh.net). Mrs. Michelle Kelley noted no emails were received.

☐ **Proclamation in Honor of Retiree:**

Mr. Cayer presented the following Proclamation in honor of Michelle Beagle, Transcriptionist, who retired from the health system on February 18, 2023.

*“Whereas, Ms. Beagle was a dedicated employee at Lewis County Health System with 13.5 years of service at the time of her retirement on February 18, 2023, having begun her career fulltime in October of 1985 as a Typist until October of 1993 and then rejoining the team in the Health Information Management department in 2018 as a Transcriptionist.*

*Whereas, Ms. Beagle was committed to the health system's vision, mission and values and played an integral role in working cohesively with all the departments throughout the health system in sharing her knowledge and insights. She truly enjoyed working in the HIM Department, where she gained an in-depth knowledge of Release of Information laws, and assisting to promote positivity in the work environment. Ms. Beagle has made a difference during her time at LCHS!*

*We wish Ms. Beagle a happy and healthy retirement to enjoy her time volunteering, operating and managing her Run Spirit Walk Orchards, writing and photograph.”*

☐ **STRATEGIC FOCUS TOPICS:**

- **RHCF Financial Overview:** Ms. Debra Wurz, Nursing Home Administrator, shared a PowerPoint regarding Minimum Data Set (MDS) = Revenue & Quality. The topics discussed were:

- What is MDS?
- Why Does MDS Matter?
- LCGH MDS Score History
- The Why!
- How are Quality Measurers Used?
- Types of Quality Measures

In response to a question from Mrs. Ross, Ms. Wurz noted that the Nursing Home's overall rating through CMS is currently a 2 Star rating out of 5. The overall rating is based on our Nursing Home's performance on 3 sources:

- Health Inspections (2 Star rating out of 5)
- Staffing (3 Star rating out of 5)
- Quality Measurers (3 Star rating out of 5)

Mr. Kerry Herbine added Mrs. Maryann Karpinski, the MDS Coordinator, will be moving under the Quality Department and the direction of Mrs. Lyndsey Allen, effective April 6<sup>th</sup>. This will allow for cross training and backup for vacations and sick time for Mrs. Karpinski. He added in the near future Infection Prevention will also be transitioned to the Quality Department for oversight.

- **2022 Human Resources Annual Report:** Mrs. Jessica Skiff, HR Director, shared a snapshot of health system's Human Resources' activities for 2022 with the Board. The topics discussed were:

- HR Team
- Retention
  - ✓ 572 total staff {FT, PT and Casual} as of 12/31/22 vs. 551 as of 12/31/2021
- Recruitment
  - ✓ New Hires = 147 in 2022
  - ✓ Received 765 applications in 2022 & interviewed 376
  - ✓ Created 11 position cards and Abolished 1 position card
  - ✓ 95 open positions as of December 31, 2022
  - ✓ New Interview Criteria established:
    - Can they do the job?
    - Are they a team player?
    - Are they manageable?
- Vacancy & Turnover Reporting
  - ✓ Vacancies - Overall 13.1% for CNA's, LPN's & RN's {better than NYS overall average of 16.6%}

- Key Opportunities
  - ✓ CNA & LPN Programs
  - ✓ HRSA Loan Forgiveness & PLFP
  - ✓ Performance Management
- Employee Opinion Survey
  - ✓ This initiative was completed at the end of 2022 and the managers are currently working on completing two Plan of Actions for their respective departments.
- Healthcare Worker Bonus
  - ✓ Payments for the first two periods (10/21 – 3/22 & 4/22 – 9/22) have been made to the eligible workforce and the 3<sup>rd</sup> period (10/22 – 3/23) is due May 1, 2023.
- Continued Growth

□ **OPERATIONAL UPDATES:**

- ◆ **Patient Safety/Quality:** Mrs. Sue Ross, Chair of the Quality Council Committee, provided a brief update:
  - ✓ The LTC QAPI Committee met on March 21, 2023 – a copy of the minutes is in the board portal.
  - ✓ The Acute Care QAPI Committee met on March 8, 2023 – a copy of the minutes is in the board portal.
  - ✓ The Quality Department has done a lot of work standardizing the quality structure/format for efficiency and establishing new goals for 2023. Another significant shift in 2023 was bringing the Nursing Home into the Hospital side of quality management. Kudos to Mrs. Lyndsey Allen and Mrs. Lori Peters for all of their hard work. Board Member, Mr. Phil McDowell, a new member of the Quality Committee in 2023, noted Mrs. Ross and Mrs. Allen have been very patient with him and noted he is very appreciative of their efforts.
- ◆ **Finance:** Mr. Phil McDowell, Chair of the Finance Committee, introduced the finance update by Mr. Jeff Hellinger, CFO. The group discussed the following topics:
  - Mr. McDowell noted that the auditors from Fust Charles Chambers will be presenting the 2022 Audit at the next Finance Committee Meeting scheduled in April.
  - Mr. McDowell shared that rural hospitals nationwide are closing at an alarming rate.
  - Mr. McDowell noted Mr. Hellinger spoke at the March Finance Committee regarding Contractual Allowances. Mr. McDowell requested Mr. Hellinger share the PowerPoint on this topic at the April Board meeting.
  - There was a loss of \$63,235 compared with a budgeted loss of \$290,240 for the month of February. The YTD loss is \$414,290 versus a budgeted loss of \$644,849.
  - Outpatient gross revenue was higher in ER (~\$207k), OR (~\$275k), Med/Surg (~\$113k), Lab – Chemistry (~\$109k), and CAT Scan (~\$364k). The department that had lower revenue was Drug Sold - IV (~\$68k).
  - Contractual Allowances were higher than budget due to more gross revenue as well as a higher contractual allowance reserve percentage compared to budget.
  - Other Operating Revenue was under budget due to less 340B revenue as well as little miscellaneous funding.
  - Overall expenses were lower than budget:
    - ✓ Salaries were under budget due to fewer staff members than budgeted.
    - ✓ Supplies were over budget due to more implant costs.
- ◆ **Capital Improvement Oversight Committee Report:**
  - Chair, Mr. Donald Musnicki, presented a copy of the Capital Improvement Oversight Committee Monthly Report to the board members prepared by Project Manager, Michael Nuffer, from C&S Companies. A copy of this report was also shared with the Capital Improvement Oversight Committee at their monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, which was discussed in more detail.
  - Mr. Musnicki shared the project remains on schedule with a completion date in early 2024. He added we continue to have scheduling issues with the electrical switches. Mr. Fargo noted that switches are scheduled to arrive on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.
  - There have been no job site accidents to date. Kudos to all of the contractors on site who are promoting a safe environment not only for their staff, but also for our patients, residents and staff.

- Mr. Fargo shared that the fire proofing hurdle has been cleared and we have seen a lot of progress inside the new addition. He noted that the morgue equipment, should be resolved by weeks end.
  - Black Horse, the general contractor, is currently ahead of schedule with the brick veneer work on the new addition with having heated enclosures over the winter to do the work.
  - Mr. Musnicki and Mr. Cayer discussed the potential acquisition of the real property adjacent to the medical campus. Mr. Cayer provided a brief overview of the real property through a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Cayer noted that at this time there is no specific purpose for the purchase of the property, in response to a question from Board President, Mr. Young.
- ◆ Human Resources: Mrs. Jennifer Jones, Chair of the HR Committee, shared the following updates from the March 10, 2023, HR Committee Meeting:
- New Hires, Resignations, Retirements & Terminations: The organizations new hires, resignations, retirements, and terminations were included in Board packets.
  - Mrs. Jones noted we have 17 civil service cards that need to be abolished on tonight's agenda and will have more in the near future as HR goes through the titles.

#27. Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. Lehman, to request the Board of Legislators to:

- Create 1 FT Patient Access Clerk position card with a salary of \$16.35 - \$21.59 per hour.
- Create 1 FT Central Sterile Technician position card with a salary of \$14.54 - \$19.63 per hour.
- Create 1 PT Central Sterile Technician position card with a salary of \$14.54 - \$19.63 per hour.
- Create 2 FT Registered Nurses position cards with a salary of \$35.97 - \$44.96 per hour.

Approved

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

#28. Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. McDowell, to request the Board of Legislators to ABOLISH the following seventeen (17) Civil Service cards:

- Keyboard Specialist - FT
- Senior Keyboard Specialist - FT
- Public Health Hospice Nurse Coordinator - FT
- Medical Transcriptionist x 2 - FT
- Laboratory Director - PT
- Assistant Director of Nursing - FT
- Assistant Nursing Home Administrator - FT
- Patient Account Supervisor – FT
- Admissions/Outpatient Coordinator – FT
- Senior Stenographer - FT
- Outpatient Care Coordinator - FT
- Patient Reimbursement Analyst – FT
- Patient Review Coordinator – FT
- Data Entry Machine Operator
- Typist – FT
- Typist – PT

Approved

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

**☐ CHIEF OPERATOR'S REPORT:** Mr. Kerry Herbine provided a brief update on the following:

- ◆ Lab Outreach Program: Mr. Herbine discussed the new Lab Outreach Program which is slated to begin on May 1, 2023 at Lowville Medical Associates on Dayan Street. He shared that this is a great opportunity to partner with others in the community to better serve our community members. He noted that we would be leasing space at Lowville Medical Associates to perform laboratory testing and conduct blood draws which would then be couriered back to our laboratory on site for testing. He added he would like to get more lab outreach programs out in the community as well. Basically, there would be a phlebotomist available 5 days per week to conduct blood draws during clinic hours for members of the community. This would be very convenient for the members of the community and would alleviate the need for them to have to come to the hospital for a blood draw.
- ◆ Performance Review Process: Mr. Herbine noted that the new template for the performance review process has been launched and is going well.

**☐ CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT:** Mr. Cayer provided to the Board a brief overview on the following topics:

- ◆ Grateful Patient: Mr. Cayer read out loud a letter shared from a grateful patient who experienced excellent treatment at our facility recently. He especially wanted to thank Dr. Tuttle-Malone for coordinating his treatments with ENT surgeon Dr. Chahfe, the nursing staff in Ambulatory, East Wing and ICU, the hospital Pharmacy staff who coordinated with Dr. Tuttle-Malone to adjust the antibiotic dosage and finally a special thanks to the Admissions staff who worked through a raft of paperwork and doctor's orders. In conclusion, he added, "You truly did treat me like family."
- ◆ EQIC – Sepsis Compliance and Quality Improvement: Mr. Cayer shared our health system was selected to present on April 6, 2023, at the Eastern US Quality Improvement Collaborative (EQIC) Quarterly CAHort meeting on its quality improvement work in sepsis. Kudos to Ms. Marcy Teal, RN, and Mrs. Rebecca Keefer, RN, for their dedication to improving sepsis compliance for our facility.
- ◆ Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages: Mr. Cayer shared nursing homes are now going to follow the contingency strategy for returning to work after COVID 19 infection for healthcare workers. This will allow health care personnel with COVID 19 who are well enough and willing to work to return to work at least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared (day 0) and at least 24 hours have passed since last fever (100.4F) without the use of fever reducing medications symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved. He added that Ms. Debra Wurz and her team have worked hard to manage this during mini outbreaks of COVID in our nursing home with residents and staff and this is a meaningful change for us.
- ◆ Women's Health: Mr. Cayer briefed the group on initiatives we are currently undertaking to recruit OB/GYN providers to our facility.
- ◆ Strategic Planning Update: Mr. Cayer reviewed the working draft of the deliverables with the Board. He noted that there are four (4) areas of focus at this time and noted that the Senior team would develop the measurables and bring them back to the full board.

**☐ PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

- ◆ Strategic Topics for April 2023:
  - ✓ Environment of Care {R. Fargo}
  - ✓ Hospital Foundation {J. Rhubart}
- ◆ General: The Board received a copy of the March 2023 News In General.
- ◆ News Notes: The Board received a copy of the News Notes from the media for the month of February.

**□ CONSENT ITEMS:**

#29. Motion by Mrs. Rennie, seconded by Dr. Meny, to approve the February 22, 2023, Board of Managers' meetings and acknowledge receipt of the following minutes (all minutes were previously distributed with the board packets):

- 02/20/2023 Capital Improvement Oversight Committee
- 02/20/2023 Executive Committee Minutes
- 02/10/2023 Human Resources Committee Minutes
- 03/20/2023 Finance Committee Minutes

Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

□ **MEDICAL STAFF:** Dr. Marylou Feilmeier, President of the Medical Staff provided the following update.

- ◆ The Annual Barnes Memorial Lecture is tentatively scheduled in April of 2023. The speaker will be David Vivas, M.D. who will be speaking on common anorectal problems.

#30. Motion by Mr. McDowell, seconded by Mrs. Ross, to enter executive session at 6:18 p.m. for credentialing matters. Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

#31. Motion by Mr. Lehman, seconded by Mrs. Rennie, to return to regular session at 6:22 p.m. Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

**□ Credentialing/Recredentialing:**

#32. Motion by Mrs. Steckly, seconded by Mrs. Mastascusa, to approve the following:

**Reappointments:**

- Jie He, M.D. – Reappointment to the Courtesy Staff, Internal Medicine and Emergency Medicine Services, with privileges as requested.
- Jonathan Mizgala, N.P. – Reappointment to the Courtesy Adjunct Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with privileges as requested.

**Delegated Reappointments:**

- Anuradha Duleep, M.D. – Reappointment to the Consulting Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with Tele-Medicine privileges as requested.

**Appointments:**

- Shaun Brown, M.D. – Appointment to the Associate Staff, Emergency Medicine Service, with privileges as requested.
- Matthew George, N.P. – Appointment Initial Provisional Adjunct Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with privileges as requested.
- Wajeeh Sana, M.D. – Appointment to the Associate Staff, Emergency Medicine Service, with privileges as requested.

**Delegated Appointments:**

- Nasser Razack, M.D. – Appointment to the Associate Staff, Radiology Service, with privileges as requested.
- David Reiner, M.D. – Appointment to the Associate Staff, Radiology Service, with privileges as requested.

**Advancements:**

- None

Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

□ **Other:**

#33. Motion by Mrs. Ross, seconded by Mrs. Rennie, to enter executive session at 6:24 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

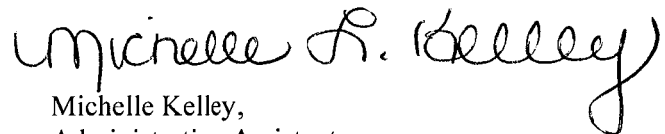
#34. Motion by Mrs. Ross, seconded by Mrs. Steckly, to return to regular session at 7:21 p.m. Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

#35. Motion by Mrs. Ross, seconded by Mrs. Rennie, to adjourn at 7:22 p.m. Approved.

*VOTE: yes 11, no 0.*

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle Kelley,  
Administrative Assistant

*Countersigned:*

Philip McDowell,  
Secretary Board of Managers