

**LEWIS COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL
BOARD OF MANAGERS
September 27, 2023**

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
Donald Musnicki*

*Karen Rennie
Susan Ross
Cheryl Steckly
Michael Young*

Excused: Dr. Howard Meny

Others

Present

*Gerald R. Cayer, Chief Executive Officer
Kerry Herbine, Chief Operating Officer
Jeff Hellinger, CFO
Robert Fargo, Director of Facilities Management
Lori Peters, Keyboard Specialist
Jessica Skiff, Director of Human Services
Debra Wurz, Nursing Home Administrator
Mary Teal, Chief Nursing Officer
Dr. Steven Lyndaker, Medical Director {entered at 4:36 p.m.}
Marylou Feilmeier, Medical Staff President {entered at 4:37 p.m.}
Joel Carbone, Network Administrator*

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. Jennifer Jones.

EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS

- #103. Motion by Mr. Philip McDowell, seconded by Mrs. Susan Ross, the board excused Dr. Howard Meny from the meeting. Approved.

VOTE: yes 10 no 0.

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

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

- #104. Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. Lehman, the Board congratulated Mackenzie Goutermout RN as the June Employee of the Month. Approved.

VOTE: yes 10 no 0.

- PUBLIC COMMENT:** Anyone wishing to send a public comment may do so by sending an email to info@lcgh.net. There were no emails received.

GENERATIVE DISCUSSION:

- ✓ Mr. Cayer, CEO, briefed the board regarding the 43rd Annual HANYS Trustee Conference held September 21-23, 2023, in Saratoga Springs, New York. He noted the 44th Annual Trustees Conference is scheduled for September 19-21, 2024, at the Saratoga Hilton, Saratoga Springs, New York. Mr. Lehman, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Ross, Mr. Young and Mr. Cayer attended this conference which focused on renewing healthcare governance to navigate the future state. Mr. Cayer noted that conference leaders encouraged Boards to not only focus on mid-term planning in the 3–5-year timeframe but take a longer view of 8–9 years.

- Mr. Cayer will share an overview of the presentations in the board portal.
- Mr. John Lehman noted that he attended a session on cybersecurity which expressed the importance of educating staff – noting that younger staff may be more vulnerable to lapses in cyber safety. A couple of years ago, Samaritan was offline 36 days due to a cyber-attack.

STRATEGIC FOCUS TOPICS:

Community Relations: Mrs. Christina Flint, Community Services Coordinator, briefed the Board on Community Support to and from Lewis County Health System. A few items shared were:

- Mrs. Flint shared an overview of Lewis County Health System's support for community groups in 2023, including staff support and/or financial support totaling \$9,000 in 2023 versus \$8,000 in 2022.
- The Lewis County Health System's website will be updated to Version 7.1 and continues to be a valuable tool for community outreach and education with over 77,000 "hits" year-to-date.
- Physician and nursing staff recruitment is ongoing and is supported online, with recruitment events coordinated by individual departments and Human Resources.
- Upcoming events include the Surgical Pavilion Ribbon Cutting / Open House in late October.

Elder Care Services: Ms. Debra Wurz, Nursing Home Administrator, briefed the Board on DOH Minimum Staffing Levels for the Nursing Home through a PowerPoint presentation. A few discussion items were:

- Every County in New York State has been in acute labor shortage since the 2nd Quarter of 2022.
- Staffing requirements initiated by the State of New York in Q1-2022 have been reviewed, and our RHCF was in compliance with these new requirements during the entire 2022 calendar year and Quarter 1 of 2023.
 - Our nursing home team monitors staffing compliance daily and reports to Administration on a weekly basis.
 - We believe that we will be out of compliance in Quarter 2 of 2023 and could face potential fines of \$500 per day, or \$36,000. This is a statewide concern with over 70% of nursing homes failing to meet the requirements – many failing in 2022 as well as 2023. We are working to have backup available to show our efforts at staff recruitment and will use this when we submit a request for reduction from New York State.
 - CMS is also working on staffing requirements which are more stringent than the New York levels. The recommendations are currently out for public comment.
 - Ms. Wurz noted that we will be able to offer C.N.A. training at our facility beginning in July of 2024. We currently have two active appeals with the State of New York asking that our C.N.A. program be reinstated. In the meantime, we are working with Sunset Nursing in Boonville who is eligible to offer a hybrid program to train staff in person and online.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

- ◆ **Patient Safety/Quality:** Mrs. Sue Ross, Chair of the Quality Council Committee, and Mr. Kerry Herbine, COO, provided a brief update:
 - ✓ The Acute Care QAPI (Full Team) Committee met on September 13, 2023.
 - ✓ The LTC QAPI (Full Team) Committee met on September 26th.
 - Copies of the above minutes will be available on the board portal.
 - ✓ Mrs. Ross reported on the ongoing efforts to promote Health Equity through Lewis County Health System. During our most recent survey, Joint Commission surveyors addressed our efforts at implementing health equity at our facility. We have worked on data collection capabilities through IT which will help us determine community demographics. We are currently working on a staffing survey which will address the health literacy of our staff. After the survey, there will be education and an additional follow-up survey. Hospital-wide trainings will be implemented and the goal is to have this program firmly in place by the end of 2023.
- ◆ **Finance:** Mr. Phil McDowell, Chair of the Finance Committee, introduced the finance update by Mr. Jeff Hellinger, CFO. The group discussed the following topics:
 - There was a gain of \$229,848 versus a budgeted gain of \$556,921 for the month of August. The YTD gain is \$73,617 versus a budgeted loss of \$231,397.
 - Overall net patient revenue was less than budget due to less volume.
 - Inpatient average length of stay was 4.1 in August which is above our goal, however year-to-date we are below the CAH limit of 4 days.
 - Inpatient revenue was higher in ICU (~\$95k), CATScan (~\$49), and Respiratory Therapy (~\$57k). The department that had lower revenue was Drugs Sold – IV (\$~49k).

- Outpatient gross revenue was higher in Lab – Chemistry (~\$177k), Radiology (~\$61k), CATScan (~\$182k), and Sleep Lab (~\$52k). The departments that had lower revenue were Observation (~\$44k), OR (~\$376k), Med/Surg (~\$211k), Lab-Bacteriology (~\$56k), MRI (~\$108k) and CHHA (~\$97k).
 - With the addition of a new surgeon (Dr. Zehr) as well as the availability of four operating rooms, we anticipate an increase in surgical volume starting in October.
 - Other Operating Revenue was over budget due to more 340B referral program.
 - We are continuing to move forward with the County on implementation of cost savings for retiree health insurance to a Medicare Advantage plan effective January 1, 2024.
 - FY 24 Budget. Mr. Hellinger will be presenting the 2024 budget to the Board next month. This will be a break-even budget for 2024.
 - Action: Mr. Young asked that Dr. Zehr be invited to the next Board meeting so that she can be formally introduced.
- ◆ 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 Monday, September 25, 2023, which was discussed in detail.
 - We are working through the final punch list for the surgical pavilion and are currently in Phase 3 of the Med Surg renovations on the State Street side. Phase 4 will begin after the transition of the OR to the new pavilion, then the existing surgical space will be renovated into additional patient rooms.
 - Mr. Robert Fargo noted that the Department of Health has been working well with our facility. There are five outstanding certificates that should be completed by early next week. At that point we will be ready for our final inspection.
 - The Capital project is currently over budget by approximately \$1.5 million as of today. There were four contractors with change orders for issues such as: rock, water lines, fuel lines, road entrance, guard rails, generator hookup and the redesigning of the 1st Floor Surgical Pavilion. There will be some credits coming back to us, however this will not eliminate the entire deficit.
- ◆ Human Resources: Mrs. Jennifer Jones, Chair of the HR Committee, shared the following updates from the September 8, 2023, HR Committee Meeting:
- New Hires, Resignations, Retirements & Terminations: The organizations' new hires, resignations, retirements, and terminations were included in Board packets.
 - Mrs. Jones reported on efforts to start on the employee opinion survey.
 - The Human Resources team is working with Jessica Skiff on reviewing and revising policies relating to a potential sick bank for Lewis County Health System employees. This would need to be approved by the Labor Management Committee.
 - We have started a program where nurses will assist at the jail when patients need opioid treatments when the jail nurse is unavailable.
- #105. Motion by Jennifer Jones, seconded by Karen Rennie, the Board approved the creation of 1 FT Occupational Therapist position card which will focus on Early Intervention - with a salary range of \$66,000 not to exceed \$89,000. Approved.

VOTE: yes 10 no 0.

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

- ◆ **LMA Lab Drawing Station Update:** Mr. Herbine shared the registration levels for LMA patients was 359 in June, 705 in July and 692 in August. He noted that the Lab has seen an uptick in volume since the inception of this outreach.

- ◆ Mr. Herbine shared that it has been an unusually busy summer in all the outpatient areas, acute nursing and nursing home. We have seen a significant increase in swing bed census which requires acute care nursing staff. The current daily census is discussed during administrative huddles by Senior Leaders daily. These 10-minute meetings are very important as we work to maintain staffing levels and utilize our facility for the most valuable and appropriate throughput for our patients.

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

- ◆ On September 12, 2023, the American Hospital Association (AHA) Regional Executive Michael Draine presented an award to Lewis County Health System recognizing 75 years of membership in the AHA.
- ◆ 2018 Funds Transfer Discussion with Board of Legislators: Mr. Cayer reported both he and Jeff Hellinger, CFO, presented to the Lewis County Board of Legislators at their September Health & Human Resources Committee. They respectfully requested that the Committee consider repayment of the 2018 Funds Transfer made by Lewis County Health System to Lewis County in the amount of \$5,497,355. These funds would be used to support the re-opening of the Maternity Unit as well as the completion of the Capital Project. We hope to receive a response to this request over the next month.
- ◆ Mr. Cayer reported that the Senior Leadership team attended a facilitated team building / relationship-building training at Beaver Camp. He noted that the event was very well received by the team and plans are being made for a follow-up program to occur during the winter months.
- ◆ Mr. Cayer reminded the board to reach out to him for any agenda items for board meetings.

□ **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

- ◆ Strategic Topics for October 2023:
 - ✓ Environment of Care {R. Fargo}
 - ✓ IT Status {R. Uttendorfsky}
- ◆ General: The Board received a copy of the September 2023 News In General.
- ◆ News Notes: The Board received a copy of the News Notes from the media for the month of August.
- ◆ **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** The Board memorialized Gerard Crawford, II, M.D., a member of our Medical Staff, in a moment of silence to celebrate his life, February 18, 1949 – August 24, 2023. Dr. Crawford was an outstanding employee and leader in this community.
- ◆ Mr. Young took a moment to discuss the upcoming Hospital Gala on October 14th. He expressed his hope that the Administration and Board would support the efforts of the Hospital Foundation - which raises funds for this facility - and the Gala proceeds will be used for the Capital Campaign / Surgical Pavilion.

CONSENT ITEMS:

#106. Motion by Mrs. Steckly, seconded by Mrs. Jones, to approve the August 30, 2023, Board of Managers' meetings and acknowledge receipt of the following minutes (all minutes were previously distributed with the board packets):

- 08/28/2023 Capital Improvement Oversight Committee Minutes
- 08/29/2023 Executive Committee Minutes
- 09/08/2023 Human Resources Committee Minutes
- 09/11/2023 Medical Staff Committee Minutes
- 09/13/2023 Special Executive Committee Minutes
- 09/18/2023 Finance Committee Minutes

Approved.

VOTE: yes 10, no 0.

- **MEDICAL STAFF:** Dr. Marylou Feilmeier, President of the Medical Staff provided the following update.
- ◆ The Medical Staff is looking forward to upcoming Hospital Foundation Gala which will support the Capital Campaign and will honor the service of Dr. Gerard Crawford II.
 - ◆ They are currently working on preparing for the upcoming Brooks Lecture.
 - ◆ The Medical Staff is very excited about Dr. Zehr joining Lewis County Health System.

#107. Motion by Mr. Donald Musnicki, seconded by Mr. Richard Chartrand, to enter executive session at 5:39 p.m. for credentialing matters. Approved.

VOTE: yes 10, no 0.

#108. Motion by Mrs. Marguerite Mastascusa seconded by Mrs. Karen Rennie, to return to regular session at 5:40 p.m. Approved.

VOTE: yes 10, no 0.

□ **Credentialing/Recredentialing:**

#109. Motion by Mrs. Steckly, seconded by Mr. John Lehman, to approve the following:

Reappointments:

- Kathy Der, N.P. – Active Adjunct Staff, Family Practice Service, with Clinic privileges as requested.
- Brian Gaffney, M.D. - Consulting Adjunct Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with Cardiology privileges as requested.
- Michael Kelberman, M.D. - Consulting Adjunct Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with Cardiology privileges as requested.
- Shereen Palmer, M.D. - Active Staff, Pediatric Service, with privileges as requested.
- Ashok Patel, M.D. - Consulting Adjunct Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with Cardiology privileges as requested.
- M. Lynn Pisaniello, M.D. - Active Staff, Family Practice Service, with Clinic privileges as requested.
- Stacey Walton, N.P. – Active Adjunct Staff, Family Practice Service, with Clinic privileges as requested.

Delegated Reappointments:

- None

Appointments:

- Jill Ford, N.P. – Initial Provisional Adjunct Staff, Internal Medicine Services, with privileges as requested.
- Amy Phair, N.P. – Initial Provisional Adjunct Staff, Family Practice Service, with Clinic privileges as requested.
- Rachel Zehr, M.D. – Associate Staff, Surgery Service, with Clinic privileges as requested.

Delegated Appointments:

- None

Advancements:

- Mercedes Behar, M.D. – Courtesy Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with privileges as requested.
- Benjamin Hodson, M.D. – Courtesy Staff, Emergency Medicine Service, with privileges as requested.
- Shane Woolf, M.D. – Courtesy Staff, Surgery Service, with Orthopedics privileges as requested.

Delegated Advancements:

- Christopher Hampson, M.D. – Courtesy Staff, Radiology Service with privileges as requested.

Service Change:

- Alison Kiser, N.P. – Active Adjunct Staff, Family Practice Service, with Clinic privileges as requested.

Approved.

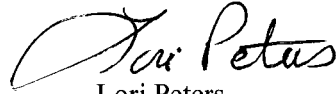
VOTE: yes 10, no 0.

□ **Adjourn:**

#110. Motion by Mr. Chartrand, seconded by Mrs. Ross, to adjourn at 5:46 p.m. Approved.

VOTE: yes 10, no 0.

Respectfully submitted,



Lori Peters,
Keyboard Specialist

Countersigned:

Philip McDowell,
Secretary Board of Managers