

**LEWIS COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL
BOARD OF MANAGERS**

January 31, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Managers of Lewis County General Hospital was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Michael F. Young, Board President. Members present:

Jennifer Jones

John Lehman

Howard Meny, M.D.

Marguerite Mastascusa

Philip McDowell

Donald Musnicki {Virtually}

Vincent Nortz

Karen Rennie

Susan Ross

John "Ric" Schwartz

Michael Young

Others

Present

Gerald R. Cayer, Chief Executive Officer

Kerry Herbine, Chief Operating Officer

Jeffery Hellinger, CFO

Sean Harney, M.D., CMO, Employed Provider Clinics

Robert Fargo, Director of Facilities Management

Michelle Kelley, Administrative Assistant to CEO

Jessica Skiff, Director of Human Services

Marcy Teal, Director of Nursing

Debra Wurz, Nursing Home Administrator

Christina Flint, Community Services Coordinator

Dr. Steven Lyndaker, Medical Director {entered at 4:26 p.m.}

Dr. Lynn Pisaniello {entered at 4:34 p.m.}

Scott Sauter, Network Systems Analyst

❑ 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, Jennifer Jones.

- ❑ WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** Mr. Cayer welcomed and introduced Mr. Ric Schwartz and Mr. Vinny Nortz to the Board of Managers.

❑ PROCLAMATIONS

Mr. Cayer shared with the group the following Proclamations in honor of Wendy Fenton, LPN, and Sandra Oblick, LPN, and Ilvire Tanis, CNA, who retired from the health system on January 2, 2024, and January 20, 2024, respectively.

Wendy Fenton, LPN: "Whereas, Mrs. Fenton was a dedicated employee at Lewis County Health System with 38 years of service at the time of her retirement on January 2, 2024. She began her career in November 1988 as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) in the Clinics after receiving her LPN degree through the Jefferson-Lewis BOCES program. Mrs. Fenton also worked as an LPN in the Residential Healthcare Facility during her tenure at LCHS. Whereas, Mrs. Fenton's desire to take care of others to the best of her ability and having the privilege of working closely with many providers over the years has contributed to the nursing profession and the community served by the health system, she will be greatly missed. We wish Mrs. Fenton a happy and healthy retirement and great joy as she enjoys spending time with her family, hiking, boating, volunteering, and the great outdoors."

Sandra Oblick, LPN: "Whereas, Mrs. Oblick was a dedicated employee at Lewis County Health System with 14.5 years of service at the time of her retirement on January 2, 2024. She began her career in May 2009 as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) in the Clinics after receiving her LPN degree through the Jefferson-Lewis BOCES program. Whereas, Mrs. Oblick's desire to take care of others and having the privilege of working closely with many providers over the years has contributed to the nursing profession and the community served by the health system, she will be greatly missed. We wish Mrs. Oblick a happy and healthy retirement and great joy as she enjoys gardening and the outdoors."

Ilvire Tanis, CNA: “Whereas, Ms. Tanis was a dedicated employee at Lewis County Health System with 21 years of service at the time of her retirement on January 30, 2024. She began her career in March 2003 as a Certified Nurse Assistant in the Residential Health Care Facility. Whereas, Ms. Tanis was committed throughout her career to the vision and mission of the health system in her role in the Residential Health Care Facility, assisting our residents with their activities of daily living and ensuring their needs were met. Ms. Tanis loved seeing their beautiful smiles and seeing them happy. She made a difference! We wish Ms. Tanis a happy and healthy retirement and great joy in traveling, visiting friends, and creating memories with her grandson.”

- ❑ **INTRODUCTION:** Mr. Cayer welcomed and introduced the three new Nurse Practitioners to the Board:
 - Alison Kiser, NP – Beaver River Health Center
 - Amy Phair, NP - Beaver River Health Center
 - Laci Reilly, NP – Copenhagen Health Center

- ❑ **EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**
 - #1. Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mrs. Ross, the Board congratulated Gabby Carter, CNA, as the September Employee of the Month. Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.
 - #2. Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mrs. Mastascusa, the Board congratulated Stanley Mathys, Van Driver, as the November Employee of the Month. Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.
 - #3. Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. McDowell, the Board congratulated Andrea Peebles, Health Information Management Clerk, as the December Employee of the Month. 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. There were no emails received.

- ❑ **STRATEGIC FOCUS TOPICS:**
 - **RHCF Minimum Staffing Requirements:** Ms. Debra Wurz, Nursing Home Administrator, shared a PowerPoint presentation on Minimum Staffing Requirements, which took effect January 1, 2022, per the NYSDOH due to acute labor shortages in healthcare facilities, including residential health care facilities, in all counties in NYS. The topics discussed were:
 - Minium staffing requirements
 - Staffing required to meet this requirement {RN Nurse Managers, Clinical RNs, LPNs, CNAs and Unit Helpers}
 - RHCF Compliance to date
 - Potential Penalties

- ❑ **OPERATIONAL UPDATES:**
 - ◆ **Patient Safety/Quality:** Mrs. Sue Ross, Chair of the Quality Council Committee, and Mr. Kerry Herbine, COO, provided a brief update:
 - Mrs. Ross shared Mrs. Lyndsey Allen, Director of Quality, put together a few highlights for 2023 from the Quality department as follows:
 - ✓ Hospital:
 - “Get with the Guidelines” Rural Healthcare Outcomes Accelerator program: All 4 quarter composite scores were well over the 75% benchmark; this will put the facility in line for a Silver recognition for 2023. Great job to the ER team.
 - ER left without being seen: Our internal benchmark is 3%. Recent literature supports 2-5% nationwide. 2023 total rate was 2.8%. Great job ER team.

- Health equity data is being collected for many initiatives, including stroke and readmissions.
 - Deep dive was performed within the quality department for vendors. Press Ganey quality measurers that are not currently collected with Medisolv or Get with the Guidelines, will be collected internally.
 - ✓ Nursing Home:
 - In 2023 the interdisciplinary team worked on quality and claims based measures that directly affect the star rating. The team focused on high scoring quality measurers with a goal to decrease facility rates and increase star ratings.
 - ✓ Home Health/ Hospice:
 - The team initiated live audits during 2023, that will resolve all prior deficiencies from the 2022 survey.
 - Meeting structure is now consistent with that of the nursing home and hospital.
 - Performance improvement has a focus on star rating quality and claims based measurers.
 - Mrs. Ross shared the 2024 Quality Plan will be going to committee and then to the full board for their review and approval.
 - Kudos to Mrs. Lyndsey Allen and the Quality teams for all the great work in 2023.
- ◆ **Finance:** Mr. Phil McDowell, Chair of the Finance Committee, introduced Mr. Jeffery Hellinger, CFO, who provided the finance update. The group discussed the following topics:
 - Mr. Hellinger reviewed the following charts with the group to show trends over the last 20 years: Acute Admissions, Nursing Home Admissions, Total Surgeries and Total ER Visits.
 - There was a gain of \$811,172 versus a budgeted loss of \$247,803 for the month of December. The YTD gain is \$1,981,808 versus a breakeven budget.
 - Overall net patient revenue was more than the budget due to additional outpatient revenue.
 - Inpatient revenue was lower in Med Surg (~\$129k), ICU (~\$49k), OR (~\$42k), Lab – Chemistry (~\$44k) and Respiratory (~\$52k).
 - Outpatient gross revenue was higher in ER (~\$370k), OR (~\$552k), Recovery (~\$57k), Med Surg (~\$104k), Drugs Sold – IV (~\$218k), Lab – Chemistry (~\$459k), Lab- Hematology (~\$70k), Lab – Bacteriology (~\$93k), Radiology (~\$107k), Ultrasound (~\$55k), CATScan (~\$333k) and MRI (~\$101k). The department that had lower revenue was CHHA (~\$57k).
 - The clinic revenue was higher at SLHC (~\$13k).
 - The physician office revenue was higher in Family Practice (~\$126k) and General Surgery (~\$189k), but lower in Women’s Health (~\$63k) and Ortho (~\$14k).
 - Contractual allowances were higher than budget primary due to the increase in gross revenue.
 - Mr. Hellinger briefed the board regarding our compliance reserve balance which was originally ~\$5.1M in January of 2023 and was \$8.4M as of December 31, 2023. He noted that the \$8.4M consists of several potential settlements. He added that the \$1.3M liability due to the NYSDOH for their advanced payment has been returned to them per their request, which will reduce the reserve balance.
 - Mr. Hellinger also discussed the health systems cash balance which has a total of \$9.5M available after deducting the bond balance of \$5.2M for the project and reserve of \$14M set by County resolution. Board President, Mr. Young, noted the reserve of \$14M may need to be increased to \$15.3M this year based on our \$92M 2024 budget.
 - Mr. Hellinger shared we have received notice that the award for the 2023 IGT for the Hospital totaled \$6.99M. The County has agreed to pay their portion of \$3.5M on February 1st, which will result in us receiving the total award on February 8th.
 - Overall expenses were higher than budget:
 - Salaries were under budget due to fewer members than budgeted.
 - Employee benefits were over budget due to the increase in health insurance premiums.
 - Professional Fees were over budget primarily due to the addition of Dr. Zehr to General Surgery, the increase to the Anesthesia agreement totaling ~\$58k, and RVU and cash collection bonuses totaling ~\$266k.
 - Utilities were over budget due to the new electricity rates.

- Supplies were primarily over budget due to lab reagent and pharmaceutical purchases during the month.
 - Purchased services were over budget due to traveling nurse staff totaling ~\$280k.
 - Mr. Hellinger also shared several stats for November that experienced positive results:
 - ✓ Acute admissions – highest in 1 year
 - ✓ Observation – highest in 7 months
 - ✓ Inpatient OR Surgeries – highest in over 9 years
 - ✓ Ambulatory Surgeries – highest in 11.5 years
 - ✓ Total OR cases – highest in over 9 years
 - ✓ ER admissions – highest in 1 year
 - ✓ ER transfers – lowest in 9 months
 - ✓ Copenhagen – highest in 7 months
 - ✓ Surgical Services – 3rd highest in over 7 years
 - ✓ CHHA – highest in 1 year
 - ◆ 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, January 22, 2024, which was discussed in detail.
 - Phases 4 and 5 of the project are currently underway, which includes renovations to the old OR's and ICU space, and is currently on pace to be completed by March 7th. Mr. Fargo noted the GC's new superintendent is very attentive to detail and is in the process of completing many of the items on the punch list. He shared there are approximately 30-40 people on site daily working on the project and they are currently working through the many unknowns and obstacles that are expected in a renovation project.
 - Mr. Fargo wanted to thank all the clinic staff for their resilience through this difficult portion of the project and noted everyone has been very helpful.
 - ◆ Human Resources: Board Chair, Mrs. Jones, shared the following updates from the January 17, 2024, HR Committee Meeting:
 - New Hires, Resignations, Retirements & Terminations: The organizations' new hires, resignations, retirements, and terminations were included in Board packets.
 - Employee Sick Bank update
 - HR Goals / Tasks. One of the goals is to develop an electronic application portal and tracker system as last year ~800 applications were received.
 - Employee Grievances. It was noted that there were 18 open grievances and the union withdrew 14 out of the 18 open grievances.
 - Currently there are 19 travelers in the facility {10 RN, 2 CNA, 5 LPN, 2 NH Supervisors} and cost the health system ~\$280,000 in the month of December.
 - The Healthcare Worker Bonus is currently in the 4th round of bonuses for employees, and we had 58 employees that have submitted for this bonus. Mrs. Skiff noted that the bonus money is still processing and has not yet been released to the employees.
- #4. Motion by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. Lehman, the Board approved the creation of the following:
- ◆ 1 FT Respiratory Therapist position card with a salary range of \$28.22 - \$40.44 per hour.
 - ◆ 1 PT Registered Nurse - OR position card with a salary range of \$37.32 - \$46.65 per hour.
 - ◆ 1 FT Registered Nurse - OR position card with a salary range of \$37.32 - \$46.65 per hour.
 - ◆ 1 FT Surgical Technician position card with a salary range of \$20.66 - \$26.71 per hour.
 - ◆ 1 PT Surgical Technician position card with a salary range of \$20.66 - \$26.71 per hour.
- Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.

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

- ◆ ACO Bonus: Mr. Cayer shared we received a check in the amount of \$87,833.12 for our share of the cost savings through the ACO. He thanked Dr. Sean Harney, his team, and the providers in the Clinics for their due diligence in this initiative as we have experienced an uptick in the number of patients being seen in the Clinics and an increase in quality scores.
- ◆ September 2023 & 2024 Trustee Conference: Mr. Cayer shared he, Mr. Lehman, Mr. McDowell and Board President, Mr. Young, met recently and discussed the outcomes from the HANY's Conference they attended in the fall of 2023 in Saratoga, NY. He noted that all of the slide decks discussed have been uploaded to the Board portal together with a copy of the Agenda and a copy of our most recent Board bylaws, which at some point need to be reviewed and updated. He noted that this group also discussed ways to make the board meetings more efficient. Mr. Cayer shared he spoke with HANY's and to bring more attention to the rural hospitals, HANY's has asked the board members for specific ideas of what they would like to see the next HANY's Conference scheduled for the fall of 2024.
- ◆ BOCES LPN Training Model – Consensus: Mr. Cayer briefed the group regarding discussions he has recently had with the Superintendent of Jeff-Lewis BOCES, Mr. Stephen Todd, whereby we can better meet the needs for LPN's in the community. He stated that the goal would be to re-establish an LPN program at the Howard G. Sackett BOCES in Glenfield, NY and have the students do their clinicals LCHS. It would require support of ~\$128,000 yearly for five (5) individuals to go through the training. Mr. Cayer noted that we would need at least five students registered in the program, and no more than 8. There was consensus among the board to move forward with a finalized proposal for consideration.
- ◆ Georges Akl, M.D.: Mr. Cayer briefed the group regarding Dr. Akl, OB/GYN physician, who joined our facility in the fall of 2023. He shared WWNY TV 7 reached out to him recently for an interview to discuss some concerns that were brought to their attention regarding Dr. Akl's Consent Order through OPMC. Mr. Cayer informed the group he conducted that interview this morning and it should be airing soon.

☐ **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

- ◆ Strategic Topics for February 2024:
 - ✓ Employed Provider Practices {Dr. Harney}
- ◆ Gerald R. Cayer, CEO: Board President, Mr. Young, shared the Board previously extended Mr. Cayer's contract as CEO through May of 2025. He added his 2023 evaluation will be sent out to each Board member for their completion in the next couple of weeks and he will request that Mr. Cayer prepare and complete his self-evaluation by February 15th.
- ◆ General: The Board received a copy of the January 2024 News In General.
- ◆ News Notes: The Board received a copy of the News Notes from the media for the month of December.

CONSENT ITEMS:

#5. Motion by Mrs. Mastascusa, seconded by Mrs. Rennie, the Board approved the December 19, 2023, Board of Managers' meetings and acknowledge receipt of the following minutes (all minutes were previously distributed with the board packets):

- 12/18/2023 Capital Improvement Oversight Committee Minutes
- 01/17/2024 Human Resources Committee Minutes
- 01/22/2024 Capital Improvement Oversight Committee Minutes
- 01/22/2024 Finance Committee Minutes

Approved.

VOTE: yes 9, no 0, Abstain 2 {Mr. Schwartz & Mr. Nortz}

- **MEDICAL STAFF:** Dr. Steven Lyndaker, Medical Director, provided the following update.
- ◆ The Medical Staff's Brooks lecture with Dr. Rachel Zehr, General Surgeon, presenting information regarding breast cancer screening and treatment for women has been scheduled for March 21, 2024. Dr. Lyndaker shared 1 in 11 women in the community will need this type of care, which Dr. Zehr offers through her practice as a General Surgeon.
 - ◆ The Medical Staff is currently updating processes for the M&M Committee to get more participation from providers, build trust, and introduce the just culture process.

#6. Motion by Mrs. Ross, seconded by Mr. Lehman, to enter executive session at 6:00 p.m. for credentialing matters. Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.

#7. Motion by Dr. Meny, seconded by Mrs. Jones, to return to regular session at 6:06 p.m. Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.

□ **Credentialing/Recredentialing:**

#8. Motion by Mr. Lehman, seconded by Mrs. Mastascusa, to approve the following:

Reappointments:

- Michelle Johnston, M.D. – Reappointment to the Courtesy Staff, Anesthesia Service, with privileges as requested.
- David Rechlin, D.O. – Reappointment to the Courtesy Staff, Internal Medicine Service, with Pulmonology privileges as requested.

Delegated Reappointments:

- None

Appointments:

- None

Delegated Appointments:

- Clarence Davis, M.D. – Appointment to the Associate Staff, Radiology Service, with privileges as requested.
- Joshua McCain, M.D. – Appointment to the Associate Staff, Radiology Service, with privileges as requested.

Advancements:

- Danah Ernst, N.P. – Advancement to Active Adjunct Staff, OB/GYN Service, with Clinic privileges as requested.

Delegated Advancements:

- None

Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.

Adjourn:

#9. Motion by Mrs. Rennie, seconded by Mrs. Mastascusa, to enter executive session at 6:07 p.m. to discuss a particular person. Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.

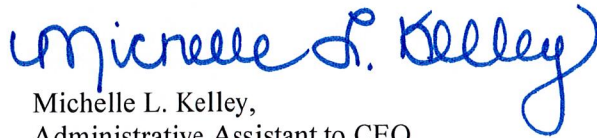
#10. Motion by Mr. Lehman, seconded by Dr. Meny, to return to regular session at 6:42 p.m. Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.

#11. Motion by Mr. Lehman, seconded by Mr. Nortz, to adjourn at 6:43 p.m. Approved.

VOTE: yes 11, no 0.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle L. Kelley,
Administrative Assistant to CEO

Countersigned:

Philip McDowell,
Secretary Board of Managers