

**HUMBOLDT GENERAL HOSPITAL
DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JANUARY 27, 2015 MEETING
SARAH WINNEMUCCA CONFERENCE ROOM**

BOARD PRESENT:

Mel Hummel, Chairman
Ed Hopfer, Secretary
Kevin Chatfield, Member
Michelle Miller, Member
Richard Cook, Member
Marlene Brissenden, County Comm. Member

Kent Maher, Legal Counsel

BOARD NOT PRESENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

James Parrish, Administrator
Sandi Lehman, CFO
Darlene Bryan, CNO
Leonard Perkinson, M.D.
Mike Bell, IT Director
Rose Green, HR Director
Eddy Davis, Controller
Alicia Wogan, Administrative Assistant
Pam Wickkiser, Administrative Director
Pat Songer, Administrative Director
Shauna Barsanti, Business Office Manager
Lonnie Hammargren, Clinic Manager
Jared Oscarson, EMS
Craig Prest, Maintenance Director
Robin Gillis, Nurse Manager
Fergus Laughridge, EMS
Louis Mendiola, Wellness Coordinator
Melissa Lopez, Administrative Support
Shar Pedersen, Quality Manager
Ken Whittaker, Operation Captain
Jeremy Hurst, FNP-C
Jason Manley, Operations

GUESTS:

Millie Custer, Denise Watson, Jean Williams, Marsha Colby (Hospital Auxiliary), Nicole Maher (Public Relations Director), Mike Sheppard (Owners Representative), Lewis Trout, Robin Monchamp, Brad Granath, M.D., Sherry Smith (Hospice), Anita Conger, Robert Conger, Donna Newmon, Ronald Clarke, Bryce Clarke and Robin Granath.

CALL TO ORDER:

Board chairman Hummel called the January 27, 2015 board meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY:

Anita Conger spoke in support of her husband Robert Conger who had seen local physicians, and had a leg amputated at Renown. Conger expressed her opinion that the quality of care here is lacking.

Denise Watson, who said she was speaking for Humboldt County Citizens for Better Healthcare, explained their group started coming to the meetings because of stories like Conger told. Watson's group is hoping to suggest some procedural changes to the meetings, and noted her group has attended the meetings of other local governmental entities to obtain ideas. Their ideas include more pay for board members, more

meetings, additional public commentary, additional meeting materials, recording of meetings (by law the board meetings are recorded), and input on board meeting agendas.

Robert Conger, husband of Anita Conger, explained his background and offered his opinion that his leg may not have been amputated if his medical history was available. Conger suggested hiring a professional consultant to help with procedural matters.

Lewis Trout said he visited the billing office to discuss some billing questions and to review accounts. Trout believes there may be a more effective way to bill and suggested a forensic audit to look at the billing situation.

Darlene Bryan said her elderly mother suffered a fall in her home last week, and commended EMS for utilizing the doggy door to access the house. At the ER she was diagnosed with a broken hip, and because of the decision of the board to provide orthopedic services, a local surgeon was able to repair the injury. Bryan said words do not express how grateful she is that her mother is cared for here. Bryan guaranteed she would not put the health of her family at risk if she didn't have confidence in the care that is provided here. Bryan spoke with a person yesterday who broke his ankle, and he was excited the injury could be treated locally. Bryan commended the board for their decision to bring orthopedic services to Winnemucca.

MEDICAL STAFF REPORT:

Dr. Perkinson said getting orthopedic services up and running contributed to a busy month. Medical staff is considering the applications of four physicians for orthopedic services privileges. Perkinson introduced Dr. Kroner, an orthopedic surgeon working at the Clinic, and echoed the comments made by Darlene Bryan. Administrator Parrish noted Dr. Kroner has seen 66 patients and performed 14 surgeries. Perkinson advised the 66 patients would have had to go to Reno or wait longer to see a visiting physician. Perkinson said January was one of the biggest baby delivery months ever; they are on track to do about 34 or 35 deliveries. Medical staff has been involved in the planning of the new medical offices and OB unit; it will be invaluable for increasing OB care. Perkinson commended administration and EMS for their actions during the recent security incident.

EMS UPDATE:

EMS Administrative Director Songer said in December there were 197 call outs, 30 inter-facility transports, 16 rescues, 20 McDermitt transports, five CP calls, five CPR students, 12 car seats installed and one FVSP. For calendar year 2014, there were: 2609 total calls, 399 inter-facility transports, 104 rescues, 179 McDermitt transports, 18 Lovelock Prison calls, 69 community paramedic calls, 15 airport transfers, 33 helipad transfers, 54 mental health transports, 40 community event standbys, and 109 Humboldt County assists. Songer showed pictures from the new City fire station dedication and two vehicle extractions.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

Administrator Parrish said in December there were eleven charity care program applications and a total of \$33,619 was paid out for charity care. The Patient Access Department assisted 16 patients with Medicaid applications, responded to 854 questions in person and 602 by telephone, and there were six billing errors handled. Parrish advised an extensive review of accounts receivables was done by HRG, and it was learned some things are being done well, and some things need to be worked on. Parrish explained the accounts receivable performance indicators, noting Medicare, Medicaid and the commercial insurances are in line, and self-pay is currently the most significant problem because there are some accounts that date back quite some time. There was discussion regarding self-pay. No action was taken.

Denise Watson commented she has had a billing issue from last April. Watson provided the background on her billing matter.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by board member Brissenden and second by board member Hopfer to approve the medical staff appointments-reappointments. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by board member Chatfield and second by board member Brissenden to approve the board meeting minutes for December 23, 2014. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION REVIEW/ APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Administrator Parrish presented the December 2014 financial report. Board member Chatfield inquired if the orthopedic services will be on the budget. CFO Lehman said it will be on the January report.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Chatfield to approve the December 2014 financial reports as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION / ACTION ON ITEMS OF BUSINESS & OTHER REPORTS:

1. Building controls alternate work for phase 3 of hospital building expansion project and memory care unit in the amount of \$44,849 / Administrator-Owners Representative

Administrator Parrish said that addendum one of the Sletten Construction contract in the sum of \$44,849 to integrate all existing HVAC controls to match the phase 3 controls was not considered by the board when the contract was approved. Mike Sheppard, Owners Representative, explained the three proposed alternates of the Sletten contract included the HVAC controls and two sets of heated sidewalks, which were believed to be too expensive. The HVAC controls will allow access to the control system from offsite, which is very important. Craig Prest, Maintenance Director, explained the current control systems, and how the proposed control system will be beneficial. Trane, the manufacturer, is able to access things remotely that Prest is unable to access. The new program will allow Prest to access the entire system from any computer. IT Director Bell advised that previously there were security problems with the system software which precluded remote access, but changes were implemented to address the security. There was discussion on whether the proposed system will have hidden costs. Board member Brissenden asked if the project will still be under budget if the alternate is added. Sheppard said yes. There was discussion on the HVAC system capabilities and the snow melt systems. Sheppard suggested if the board wants to consider adding the snow melt systems, it should be done soon, because once sidewalks are poured they will not be able to add it later without removing the sidewalks. The project will still be under budget if all three alternates are selected. Parrish said they want to make sure the snow melt system works prior to approval. Sheppard commented he has had minimal experience with the systems. Prest said he has had experience with them and believes they are beneficial. There was discussion on the CMAR and guaranteed maximum price.

Motion by board member Hopfer and second by board member Chatfield to approve addendum one for Phase 3 construction in the amount of \$44,849 for building controls. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Modular office building update / Administrator-Owners Representative

Administrator Parrish advised the modular office building is 90 to 95% completed and is well under budget. Dr. Stringham moved into the building on January 10, 2015, and the visiting physicians are utilizing the unit. Owners Representative Sheppard noted it has been a busy month at the modular; there was a lot of effort by many to set up and move Dr. Stringham's clinic. Board member Cook inquired about the electrical power to the building. Sheppard explained the building permitting and construction process, the challenges

faced when NV Energy changed their requirements affecting utility installation, and the current status of the utility easement.

3. Purchase of wireless system for Acute from CDWG / Administrator

Administrator Parrish said the proposed system will replace the outdated wireless system in Acute and the rest of the hospital to allow expanded use and extension of the wireless technology in radiology, patient portals and those types of things. The system will cost \$32,362.27, and it was budgeted at \$35,000. IT Director Bell explained the system and its function, which will allow seamless internet and IT system access throughout the hospital and the adjacent hospital facilities without interruption of service. Board member Miller asked about the system life span, and Bell explained it is projected to last at least five years.

Motion by board member Chatfield and second by board member Miller to approve purchase of the wireless system from CDWG in the amount of \$32,362.27 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Election of Board of Trustees Chairman and Board of Trustees Secretary / Board

Board member Hummel explained that with the absence of a chairman, it is appropriate to elect new officers. Motion by board member Chatfield and second by board member Miller to nominate the current secretary, Mel Hummel, to serve as chairman, and to nominate Ed Hopfer to serve as secretary. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Orthopedic surgery program update / Administrator

Administrator Parrish commented the orthopedic surgical services update was given during the medical staff comments. So far, administration is very pleased with the project. Board member Miller asked about the service goals, and if they are on track. Parrish advised that 14 surgeries have been performed in the first couple of weeks, and the hope was to do 200 in the first year.

6. Physician Recruitment / Administrator

Administrator Parrish said nurse practitioner Echo Mathews is now seeing patients and the clinic is doing quite well. Jeremy Hurst has been very busy, seeing 412 patients in December. Dr. Kroner is up and running in the orthopedic surgery clinic. Dr. Kracaw will start seeing patients on March 2, 2015.

HOSPITAL BOARD OF TRUSTEE COMMENTS / STAFF REPORTS:

CFO Lehman reported that a consultant came in December to look at the accounting revenue cycle. The consultant recommendations resulted in putting together a team to determine the source of any problems. An action plan has been put together to resolve issues, and they are currently developing policy and procedures, a training program, guidelines, expectations, and monitoring procedures. Board member Miller asked about the hiring of an HRG representative. Lehman said interviews will be conducted this week. Board member Brissenden asked about the HRG 90-day period regarding billing services, and Lehman advised there are still some things that are being addressed, however they have made strides. Board member Chatfield said it appears the consultant report points out that training is an issue with different offices apparently doing different things. Chatfield asked how the issue is being addressed. Lehman said they have consulted with the professional organizations, HFMA and NRHP, for guidance, and they have been talking with other organizations. They are attempting to utilize the best procedures from each entity, as they all have different opinions. Board member Hopfer asked if Administrative Director Wickkiser is comfortable with the approach. Wickkiser advised she thinks the team effort is great and it will help things flow together. Brissenden asked why LarsonAllen didn't catch the problems. Lehman explained they audit the financial statements, they are not engaged to address billing issues or the revenue cycle.

Board member Brissenden said she appreciates the binder with updates and the efforts at addressing billing issues. She suggested the board could allow public comment on the individual agenda items, noting that other public entity boards allow the public to ask questions after the item is discussed. Brissenden thinks members of the public should be put on the agenda if they ask and if they follow the proper procedure for the request.

Board member Hopfer said he appreciates the binder; it's a positive step in right direction to try to improve process with billing and accounts receivables. Hopfer asked what Health Services and Development Manager Louis Mendiola has been doing. Mendiola explained he has been busy, and the primary focus now is to engage the community and build relationships. He has attended meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, Frontier Community Coalition, and Hospital Auxiliary. Mendiola is also working closely with others on the orthopedic services program and the marketing campaign, which may possibly include neighboring communities. Hopfer suggested a board member could serve as a liaison with those involved with the new construction to provide periodic updates. Board member Chatfield said if the board members will send him their email addresses, he will do his best to provide an update.

Board member Miller suggested looking into the aged accounts receivable during the budget meeting and brainstorming ideas of what to do with old accounts.

Board member Cook said he supports having public discussion during the agenda items. Cook commented there seems to be two different cultures, with a positive culture existing at the organization level, and a different, less positive culture at the public level. He believes it may be due to too much isolation; there should be more community involvement.

Board member Chatfield noted he was disappointed with the CMAR subcontractor selection process; he believed there would be more owner participation. Chatfield said in the future it would be good to be involved or, if participation is not possible, to be kept informed.

Board chairman Hummel said he doesn't have a problem with the audience being able to speak on agenda items as long as it is kept manageable. He doesn't want multiple people repeating the same thing. Hummel explained that in the past there were problems a lot of time being taken by an audience member, and when the chairman advised the person to wrap it up, the person would be upset. Legal counsel Maher noted that there were also problems when one person made a point and the several others would repeat the same point.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY:

Lewis Trout commended board chairman Hummel and counsel for the forbearance demonstrated this evening by allowing a person to make an extensive comment on an item that was not agendaized. Trout noted that the Regional Planning Commission (of which he is a member), has a guideline of allowing three minutes, and if there are multiple people with comments they may shorten the time to two minutes. Sometimes the chairman may ask how many people agree with a comment and how many disagree. He is aware that other entities require a person desiring to speak on an agenda item to fill out a card with the request and submit the card to the secretary of the body, with the chairman then calling on the person to speak, to keep the comments in order and within the time limit. Trout commended Owners Representative Sheppard for his exemplary work at the Senior Center, and suggested Sheppard may be able to provide information from his construction project notes to the board and eliminate having Chatfield provide information. Trout agreed with Watson's comment about the board being underpaid. Trout commented that having an easement is typical when crossing the property of a leased entity with a different fee owner; it appears real estate agent was not a right away agent and not familiar with this.

Vickie Rock said her husband was in the ER in December with issues, and it was handled very well; the billing was quite nice, it showed that Medicare and the insurance company were both billed; she didn't have to ask if they billed both. She commented that the situation with the electricity may be remedied by putting solar panels on the roof; currently there is an automatic 30% rebate on taxes for using solar energy.

Board chairman Hummel adjourned the January 27, 2015 meeting of the Humboldt County Hospital District Board of Trustees at 8:03 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Mel Hummel, Secretary

Alicia Wogan, Administrative Assistant