

Bartlett Regional Hospital

Minutes
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
January 24, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.
BRH Boardroom and Zoom

CALL TO ORDER – Meeting called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Mr. Solomon-Gross, Board President.

Mr. Solomon-Gross introduced the new Chief of Staff, Dr. Nicholas Rosenfeld, and Ricardo Worl. Mr. Worl is to read the land acknowledgement he helped draft for the board.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Mr. Worl introduced himself as a member of the Thunderbird Clan, a child of the Sockeye Clan from the House Lowered From the Sun. He is the media director for the Sealaska Heritage Institute. He worked with Mr. Geiger and Mr. David Sheakley Early to develop the land acknowledgement for BRH. He expressed appreciation for BRH adopting a land acknowledgement and stated when an institution acknowledges where they are and who the original owners of the land are, it is one of the most respectful things that can happen and is an important step in healing for the community. He then read the acknowledgement:

Gunalchéesh to the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian people. We respectfully acknowledge them as the original inhabitants of Southeast Alaska. Bartlett Regional Hospital is located on the homelands of the *Áak'w Kwáan*. We are grateful to provide services in your ancestral homeland and to be a part of this community.

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present (*Zoom attendees italicized*):

Kenny Solomon-Gross, President	Deb Johnston, Vice-President	<i>Max Mertz, Secretary</i>
Brenda Knapp	Mark Johnson	Hal Geiger
<i>Lisa Petersen</i>	Lindy Jones, MD	<i>Iola Young</i>

Also Present (*Zoom attendees italicized*):

David Keith, CEO	Sam Muse, Interim CFO	Tracy Dompeling, CBHO
Kim McDowell, CCO	Dallas Hargrave, CHRO	Nicholas Rosenfeld, MD, COS
<i>Carole Triem, CBJ Liaison</i>	<i>Robert Palmer, CBJ Attorney</i>	<i>Sherri Layne, CBJ Attorney</i>
<i>Barbara Nault, Legal Counsel</i>	<i>Gail Moorehead, Quality</i>	<i>Erin Hardin, Comm. Relations</i>
<i>Nate Rumsey, Business Development</i>	<i>Nathan Overson, Compliance</i>	<i>Sam Norton, Interim IT Dir.</i>
Maria Uchytel, BRH Foundation	Anita Moffitt, Exec. Assistant	Ricardo Worl, Invited Guest

APPROVE AGENDA – Mr. Solomon-Gross amended the agenda to add BRH Foundation update after the public participation. **MOTION** by Ms. Johnston to approve agenda as amended. Mr. Geiger seconded. There being no objections, agenda approved as amended.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

BRH FOUNDATION UPDATE – Ms. Uchytel introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Bartlett Regional Hospital Foundation. The Foundation is a 25-year-old, non-profit organization that raises funds for training, equipment and BRH projects not funded through the budgeting process. She is currently working with Ms. Dompeling on furnishings for the patient areas of the Aurora Behavioral Health Center (ABHC). Mr. Keith acknowledged the great work the Foundation does for BRH. He hopes Board members, physicians and staff recognize the value of their work and encourages them to contribute to the foundation.

CONSENT AGENDA – MOTION by Ms. Johnston that the Board of Directors of Bartlett Regional Hospital approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the December 27, 2022 Board of Directors meeting and the November 2022 Financials. Ms. Knapp seconded. There being no objection, MOTION approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Hospital Capacity Update - Ms. McDowell reported the following: Statewide, hospitalization numbers have dropped for RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) and Covid but acuities are high and can impact Bartlett’s availability to medevac patients. One Covid patients in-house; one employee out with Covid. No issues with supply chain related to Covid or RSV. Mr. Keith suggested it might be helpful in the future, when talking about hospital capacity, to include patients with inordinately long lengths of stay. This will give the board an idea of the difficult throughput issues the staff are dealing with, especially in regard to discharging and outplacement of residents. Ms. McDowell reported as of yesterday, one patient has been here over a year and two patients have been here over 20 days.

MEDICAL STAFF REPORT – Dr. Rosenfeld reported the medical staff approved two policies, one for admission of trauma patients and one for admission of trauma patients awaiting medevac.

MOTION by Ms. Johnston that the Board of Directors of Bartlett Regional Hospital approve the policy for admission of trauma patient and the policy for admission of trauma patients awaiting medevac. Ms. Knapp seconded. In response to Mr. Johnson, Dr. Rosenfeld reported medevac delays are typically due to weather or full hospitals. These policies pertain to patients that are 14-year-olds or older. Admitting physicians are free to consult with Pediatricians for patients younger than 14. **There being no further discussion or objection, MOTION approved.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Planning Committee - Ms. Johnston noted the minutes from the January 6th meeting accurately reflect the discussions from the meeting. Largest topic of conversation was Hospice and Home Health services and how the startup is progressing. Mr. Geiger initiated conversation about the options BRH had for moving ahead with Hospice and Home Health services.

Due to technical difficulties, Board Quality Committee report given before Finance Committee report.

Board Quality Committee – Minutes from the January 19th meeting in the packet. Dr. Jones reported the committee reviewed and approved the annual Environment of Care, Utilization Management and Infection Prevention plans and evaluations. **MOTION by Dr. Jones on behalf of the Quality Committee that the Board of Directors of Bartlett Regional Hospital approve the Medical Equipment, Life Safety, Hazardous Materials and Waste, Safety, Security, Utility Systems, Utilization, Quality, and Infection Control management plans as presented. There being no objection, MOTION approved.**

Dr. Jones also reported Mr. Norton had discussed the Meditech implementation in the Emergency Department (ED). The Physician EMR (Electronic Medical Record) Committee has been resurrected and has helped get physician buy-in for the EMR. Senior leaders have been very supportive of EMR Committee. In response to Mr. Johnson, Dr. Jones stated he is convinced that with proper support and implementation of the Meditech ED module, it will be as good as, or better than the T-System currently in use by the ED. The interface with the rest of the EMR will be 1,000% better.

Finance Committee – Minutes from the January 13th meeting in the packet. Mr. Mertz reported three action items came out of the committee: 1) approval of the financial stability plan 2) the da Vinci Robot lease agreement and 3) audit services. Memos included in the packet for these action items outline the background of these issues. Mr. Muse provided a high-level overview of the phased plan for financial stability. Phase three will be most impactful and will need the board's approval before taking any of those actions. Mr. Solomon-Gross stated the last thing BRH wants to do is reduce staff. Reallocation of staff to other areas will be done for right sizing the organization. Mr. Keith stated reduction in force is the most inefficient way to right size an organization. BRH has been proactive and transparent in its evasive actions plans to avoid staff reduction. Mr. Geiger expressed his opinion that staff has been effective in transparent communications with the public. Mr. Mertz stated conversations will continue with Finance Committee and the full Board.

MOTION by Mr. Mertz on behalf of the Finance Committee that the Board of Directors of Bartlett Regional Hospital approve the phased approach to financial stability and require that any phase 3 activity need further approval from the Board of Directors before implementation. There being no objection, MOTION approved.

MOTION by Mr. Mertz on behalf of the Finance Committee that the Board of Directors of Bartlett Regional Hospital approve the request to sign the lease with Intuitive for the da Vinci Robot for the Robotic Surgical System. Mr. Muse noted there are a couple of minor contractual issues that will be resolved before signing the lease agreement with Intuitive. These items are noted in the memo included in the packet. This approval does not require Mr. Keith to sign the agreement but does allow it. ***There being no further discussion or objection, MOTION approved.***

Mr. Muse provided an overview of the request for solicitation of standalone audit services. This could allow a fresh perspective and a different set of resources for BRH. BRH would like the Board and the Assembly to be part of the selection process. Ms. Knapp noted hiring a firm with healthcare knowledge would provide valuable insights and recommendations as BRH is restructuring to become more efficient and solvent. They can bring comparative assessments and analysis of other hospitals our size.

MOTION by Mr. Mertz on behalf of the Finance Committee that the Board of Directors of Bartlett Regional Hospital approve the memo to the Assembly Finance Committee from the Board President seeking acknowledgement and approval to continue with a standalone solicitation of audit services. There being no objection, MOTION approved.

Mr. Mertz reported there have been significant discussions regarding the merger and takeover of Wildflower Court (WFC). The transaction will be a mutually beneficial t for WFC, BRH and the community. A unique component of this agreement is how to merge a non-profit into a community owned facility. He alerted the Board that the existing non-profit has bond and employment obligations, estimated to be \$1.4 Million. An option under consideration would be to put money into escrow to pay those obligations. This and other issues are being worked on and updates will be provided as work is done towards an agreement for management of and then a merger with WFC.

MANAGEMENT REPORTS:

CEO Report – Mr. Keith reported BRH has had several visitors lately and asked Ms. Dompeling to provide an update. She reported tours of the ABHC were given to members of the Alaska Department of Family and Community services and discussions held about crisis services. We hope to get grant funding from the State for those services. Tours were provided this afternoon for representatives from the Alaska Mental Health Trust (AMHT) and the Governor’s Counsel on Disabilities. BRH will be requesting startup funds for the new behavioral health services from the AMHT. It is anticipated to take 4-6 weeks to get staff up and running before we can begin billing patients. Mr. Keith reported he had met with Mickey Richardson about a potential opportunity for incorporating medical space into plans for Aak’w Landing project. Senior Leadership is working on a revenue enhancement and expense reduction business plan to help stabilize financials. We are starting to see favorable momentum regarding to cost reductions. Metrics showing the favorable direction will be shared with the Board soon.

CFO Report – Mr. Muse provided an overview of where BRH is in the budget process. The CBJ Budget Analyst would like BRH to submit a high-level rough draft by March 1st. The budget will be presented to the Finance Committee at the March 17th meeting and to the Board of Directors at the March 28th meeting. Assuming the Board approves the budget, it will be introduced to the Assembly on April 5th. A presentation of Bartlett’s budget will be given to the Assembly April 19th or 26th depending on the scheduling. The final CBJ budget will be adopted around June 12th. Between April and June, there could be potential changes. Mr. Muse noted BRH’s revenue team is doing a good job implementing an Acureg system to help streamline registration process. Also implementing a self-pay program to help with cash collections from patients. Plans are in place for a more in-depth revenue cycle analysis.

CHRO Report – Mr. Hargrave provided an overview of the quarterly employment stats from October - December. FTEs are slowly starting to trend downward. Although there were more travelers during this quarter than the previous quarter, the trend going forward will also be downward. Quarterly reports will be discontinued as this information will be incorporated into the metrics of monthly dashboards. This move will make the information more relative and timelier. Mr. Keith clarified the dashboard will be a productivity tool with linear graphs to show the progress towards meeting our goals. Mr. Solomon-Gross initiated discussion about the use of travelers. He requested information about the number and length of traveler contracts be included in future reports. Mr. Keith noted that money currently spent on travelers, upwards to \$800,000 per month, can be redirected into the organization to train / retrain existing staff. Dr. Jones stated it is clear that we need to grow our own ultra sound techs and nurses. Mr. Keith reported the strategic plan includes incentivizing Juneauites that go off to school to return to Juneau. Ms. McDowell reported BRH is hosting a luncheon tomorrow for University of Alaska Anchorage nursing students to try to recruit them for BRH. Diagnostic Imaging has created educational affiliations with universities and technical schools across the country for their students to do clinical rotations here and possible employment post-graduation. BRH will be increasing their recruitment of t CNAs as well as LPNs. BRH does have an OR tech program and Radiology Director is working to grow our own and cross train ultrasound techs.

CCO / CNO Report – Ms. McDowell reported working with AHHA (Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association) to provide grants and for help to retain nurses. Working with human resources on a school to work agreement to incentivize potential nursing students. She reported although traveler numbers have not gone down much, BRH has been able to decrease the amount of money it was paying to get them to stay. There are multiple areas in the hospital that have nurses that are precepting, upon completion, each nurse will be able to replace a traveler. Mr. Mertz initiated discussion about the importance of perception and marketing to be able to attract and retain staff. Mr. Keith noted the marketing effort is more about retention and feels strongly that BRH will be able to grow their own staff.

The turmoil and disruption in healthcare is not going to go away any time soon. Mr. Solomon-Gross stated BRH is a great place to work and it's important to get the word out.

CBHO Report – Ms. Dompeling provided an overview of the reorganization exercise of the behavioral health leadership team. They identified opportunities for efficiencies, consolidation, and increased revenues. We are waiting for funding opportunities to help with funding for these services. The Alaska Division of Behavioral Health is interested in looking at Agnew:: Beck's business model for the crisis services. US Department of Justice report had come out about lack of community based behavioral health services for adolescents. Legislators will hear information about these behavioral health services to help in developing a response plan to the federal government about how they plan to address in the state. Service lines are working to increase their census. We will continue to recruit staff to allow increased capacities in each unit. In response to Mr. Mertz, Ms. Dompeling explained BRH's request for \$4 million for capital project from the Alaska State Legislature to support overall costs of the ABHC. City Manager, Rorie Watt asked that because this is outside the standard process to submit Bartlett's priorities to CBJ as part of the legislative priority process, that Bartlett provide a memo to the Borough Assembly for clarification by January 26.. CBJ's lobbyist Kevin Jardell will be able to assist Bartlett in sharing information about the project request with key legislators during the session. Mr. Geiger initiated discussion about tracking the effectiveness of these behavioral health services. Ms. Johnston initiated discussion about qualified staff available to float into different areas. Mr. Mertz thanked Ms. Dompeling for all of her hard work on these services.

Mr. Solomon-Gross called for a brief recess. The meeting recessed at 7:17 p.m. and resumed at 7:24 p.m.

Legal Report – Ms. Nault reported since the last meeting, her office has worked with directors and senior leadership on the following: Structuring a signing bonus program, DME arrangement, Radiology Services agreement, drafting and revising various agreements related to the hospice program, facilitating the valuation services provided to BRH by VMG Health, Intuit lease agreement for the da Vinci Robot, and the WFC transaction. Mr. Keith reported we are very close to finalizing the radiology services agreement. Mr. Palmer had nothing to report.

CBJ LIAISON REPORT – Ms. Triem reported a joint Assembly and BRH Board of Directors meeting has been scheduled to take place from 6:00 – 7:00pm on Wednesday, February 1st. This will be a hybrid meeting. Assembly Finance Committee meeting will immediately follow.

PRESIDENT REPORT – Mr. Solomon-Gross reported the following: He will work with Mayor Weldon on the agenda for the joint Assembly and BRH Board meeting agenda. He noted the importance of everyone being on the same track with Bartlett's plans. He attended every committee meeting except Quality in the past month, as well as several meetings with Mr. Keith, Mr. Palmer, and Ms. Nault. He learned a lot about the credentialing process at a conference he attended last week. Training will be provided to Board Secretary on this process as well. He wants to schedule a joint Board Executive Committee and Medical Staff Executive Committee meeting in February. He thanked Mark Johnson and Iola Young for agreeing to stay on the Board of Directors for an extra month. New Board members should be appointed by the end of the month.

BOARD CALENDAR – February calendar reviewed. Mr. Mertz proposed moving the Finance Committee meeting to February 24th but it was determined to keep it on February 17th. A doodle poll will be put out for an Executive Committee and a Joint Board Executive Committee and Medical Staff Executive Committee. A Governance Committee meeting is to be held in March, Ms. Petersen and Mr. Solomon-Gross will discuss. Compliance and Audit Committee meeting will be held at 2:30pm on Thursday, February 16th to discuss goals for the year.

BOARD COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS – None

EXECUTIVE SESSION – MOTION by Mr. Geiger to recess into executive session to discuss several matters as written in the agenda:

- *Those which by law, municipal charter, or ordinance are required to be confidential or involve consideration of records that are not subject to public disclosure, specifically the Credentialing report, Medical Staff Meeting minutes and, the patient safety dashboard.*

And

- *To discuss possible BRH litigation, specifically a candid discussion of facts and litigation strategies with the BRH and Municipal attorney. (Unnecessary staff and Medical Chief of staff may be excused from this portion of the session.)*

And

- *To discuss information presented that the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of BRH; that being a discussion about campus planning. (Unnecessary staff and Medical Chief of staff may be excused from this portion of the session.)*

Ms. Johnston seconded. Mr. Solomon-Gross reminded attendees that all information to be discussed in executive session is confidential. Attendees are to ensure there are no unauthorized people in the room with them or able to hear the conversations.

The Board entered executive session at 7:47p.m. and returned to regular session at 8:17 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Johnston to approve the credentialing report as presented. Ms. Knapp seconded. There being no objection, MOTION approved.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:17 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: 5:30 p.m. – Tuesday, February 28, 2023