

**HUMBOLDT GENERAL HOSPITAL
DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JULY 27, 2021 REGULAR MEETING
MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE--VIDEOCONFERENCE--IN-PERSON**

BOARD PRESENT:

Alicia Cramer, Chair
JoAnn Casalez, Member
Gene Hunt, Member
Ken Tipton, County Comm. Member
Lewis Trout, Member
Michelle Miller, Secretary

Kent Maher, Legal Counsel

BOARD ABSENT:

None

MEDICAL STAFF PRESENT:

Richard Davis, MD, Chief of Staff
Robert Johnson, PA
Timothy Musick, MD

STAFF PRESENT:

Tim Powers, CEO
Robyn Dunckhorst, CNO
Mike Bell, IT Director
Brett Peine, EMS Director
Darlene Mangrum, Revenue Cycle Director
Brian Washburn, DOO
Angela Giese, Chief Human Resources Officer
Kim Plummer, Controller
Laura Shea, Marketing-Comm Relations (via phone)
Theresa Bell, Project Director
Sara Otto, Chief Compliance Officer
Bertha Higbee, ACNO
Shelly Smith, Senior Accountant
Jessica Villarreal, Credentialing Specialist
Adriana Calderon, Inpatient Manager
Jackie Wilson, CIO
Theresa Willis, EMS (via phone)

GUESTS:

Bill Hammargren (MedX AirOne Community Advocate), Dawn Sears (Envision Director of Operations), Ashley Maden (Humboldt Sun), and Kale Barry (Monigle, via phone)

CALL TO ORDER:

Board chair Cramer called the July 27, 2021 board meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no comments.

MEDICAL STAFF – HOSPITAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Medical Staff report:

Chief of Staff Davis reported that the US positivity rate is doubling every two weeks since June; Nevada is at 6% or 7% and the County COVID positivity rate is just over 5%; and, LTC will perform weekly testing for unvaccinated. Davis explained about the new COVID Delta variant and the protection offered by being vaccinated. Nevada's fully vaccinated rate is 44%. Davis said he is a vaccine advocate. Davis commented on the current discussion about making vaccination a condition of employment in healthcare facilities, noting the VA is the first federal agency to do so. Davis recommends this organization give the condition consideration.

MedX AirOne update:

MedX AirOne representative Bill Hammargren reported on assisting with the Night in the Country event and commended EMS for their work and noted the respect other law enforcement agencies have for HGH EMS. Smoke conditions have grounded aircrafts. Board chair Cramer asked about fuel shortages affecting MedX AirOne. Hammargren said he has not heard of that affecting them.

Administration Department reports:

- a) RHC: DOO Washburn explained: the definition and purpose for Rural Health Clinics; CMS mandates for RHCs; benefits of RHC status especially in regard to Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements; provider productivity standards; location requirements; encounters for RHC; testing requirements for RHCs; commingling; and, the sliding fee discount program. Board member Hunt asked for clarification on the testing requirements for RHCs. Washburn commented that the RHC must be able to perform the 6 point-of-care tests in the facility. Chief of Staff Davis asked about the current location (in the building) for RHC and the potential commingling of patients. CEO Powers commented on how the patient perspective plays into commingling for RHCs. Board member Trout asked how it is audited. Washburn commented that a state surveyor would audit this. In response to board questions, Washburn replied that the specialty Ortho, General Surgery, Podiatry, and Pain Management clinics are in the front of the hospital and the specialty OBGYN clinic is in the back. Board chair Cramer asked how the sliding fee discount program works with insurance and copays. Washburn said the program is for non-insured patients and referred to the policy. Board member Miller asked how HGH compares to the CMS standards for patient encounters. Washburn responded that many RHC providers do not meet those standards, but are close to 40 or 50% of the standard. If the standards are not met it will lower the all-inclusive rate for the next year. Washburn noted that the providers will use a CPT code to deem an encounter medically necessary. Washburn explained on-the-scene encounters. Powers noted that the CMS standard is the expectation for provider encounters. Washburn said the goal is to hit these standards. Powers and Washburn commented that the adequacy of staffing is being looked at. Board member Tipton asked if the community demands can meet these standards. Washburn explained the factors involved and noted it is difficult to gauge. Tipton commented that he hopes there will not be remodeling costs associated with the separation between RHC and specialty clinics.
- b) EMS Report: EMS Chief Peine reported on: the Night in the Country 2021 event; EMS fleet status for command/support vehicles and ambulances/rescue vehicles; total runs by month; non-billable vs billable runs by month; non-billable runs by type; non-billable runs; blood draws by requesting agency; and, community service updates which will be provided in detail next month. Board member Trout asked what percent of EMS billing is being collected. Peine responded about 40%. Board member Miller asked for clarification on not continuing Night in the Country due to financial factors. Peine responded that was with Burning Man and not Night in the Country.
- c) Envision: Director of Operations Dawn Sears reported on: the Envision history and recent developments; clinical leadership; in network insurance payors; out of network billing; coding training; customer service survey tools; and, goals. Board member Casalez asked about the in-network and out-of-network insurance payors that Envision accepts, noting it is her understanding that Envision accepts all the same payors that are accepted by HGH. Sears commented that she will note which insurance payors Envision is not contracted with that HGH accepts and will discuss this with the Envision Managed Care team. Board member Miller commented on the confusion the patients have when it comes to the billing associated with emergency room visits at HGH. CEO Powers said that the billing with the emergency department needs to be addressed. Sears committed to addressing this issue for HGH and will have an update the next time they report. Board chair Cramer asked if the rate will be accepted if a contract is not signed with the payor. Sears commented that she is not able to answer that question at this time. Cramer would like to have this included on a future agenda to follow up with Sears and Envision on the billing issue. Sears said she will provide periodic updates to Powers. Powers asked about a reduction in the pro fees for Envision. Sears said that they have not been increased since 2018 and will look into this adjustment and report back along with the

insurance payors. Powers advised that with Qualitick no longer in place, HGH will be using Press Ganey for the customer service surveys.

- d) Community Perception Results: Kale Barry with Monigle reported on the results of the community perception survey with community leaders, area residents, and employees/providers. The survey covered the topics of suggestions for improving HGH's image, reputation, which services have been used, satisfaction of different service areas and interactions, deliverables, awareness, communication themes, and personal regard for HGH. Barry also reported on a proposed change for branding. Board member Hunt noted that social media posts are used by community members to address unrelated issues they have with the hospital. Hunt also commented that once one issue is addressed there will be a domino effect of positivity for HGH. Barry agreed with Hunt's comment. Board members commended the billing department on the timely billing for Medicare claims and administration for the quick response and accountability they showed for a collection agency error. Board member Casalez commented on lab costs and pointed out the difference between what the hospital lab does versus what LabCorp can do and charge and is pleased to see that the hospital is looking at adjusting the other lab prices. CEO Powers acknowledged that some lab prices have been adjusted. Board member Tipton commented that the community is not aware of all the different providers and services that the hospital offers, and that the hospital does not advertise it. Board chair Cramer agreed with Tipton's comment.
- e) CEO Report: CEO Powers reported on: Cath lab update; auxiliary luncheon, Powers and Board chair Cramer commended dietary staff for their work and presentation they did for the auxiliary luncheon; GBS education and National Awareness Week, CNO Dunckhorst expanded on the GBS campaign; Orthopedic surgeon recruiting update, Powers hopes to bring a contract for Dr. Meter to the August meeting; COVID mandatory testing discussion, Chief of Staff Davis commented on the trend of requiring vaccination for healthcare providers; DNV/Rx remodel/attorney delineation of responsibilities, CCO Otto provided details on the DNV accreditation process, compliance issues with Rx remodel, and attorney DOR. Board member Trout asked about the legal counsel being provided to the Board from the District Attorney's office. Board member Tipton commented the DA office likely would not be able accommodate the additional workload. Legal Counsel Maher commented that the inability of the DA office to provide counsel was the original reason why the District went to outside counsel. Powers acknowledged the approved plan of corrections from the recent state surveyor's visit to SNF and commended everyone's work on accomplishing that. Powers commented that the ophthalmology services search is ongoing. Revenue Cycle Director Mangrum provided details on the rev cycle stabilization plan, including: professional fee billing; AR and DNFB; Cerner redesign and optimization; and, back fall of outside vendor's poor performance.

1. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Motion by Board member Casalez and second by Board member Hunt to approve the consent agenda consisting of: (i) minutes for May 24, 2021, May 25, 2021, June 22, 2021 and June 28, 2021.; and, (ii) Medical Staff applications for appointments, reappointments, provisional and temporary privileges for: Claudia Deliz Guzman, MD, Provisional-Emergency Medicine; Andrew Michelson, MD, Provisional-Emergency Medicine; Shannon Eldridge, CRNA, Allied Health Professionals-Anesthesia/CRNA; Lawrence Briggs, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; Cristina Cavazos, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; Deborah Conway, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; Scott Kerns, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; James Sullivan, DO, Consulting-Nephrology; Thomas Rembetski, MD, Courtesy-General Surgery; Robbie Grant, DO, Courtesy-Family Medicine; and, Steven Berger, MD, Provisional-Psychiatry. Motion carried unanimously with Board member Casalez abstaining from the June 28, 2021 minutes due to not being present at the meeting and Board member Miller abstaining from the June 22, 2021 minutes due to not being present at the meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Controller Plummer presented and explained the June 2021 financials, including: gross patient revenue; contractual allowances and bad debt; operating revenue; operating expenses; net income; and AR and days cash on hand. Plummer stated that the audit will start August 23, 2021 and be completed remotely.

Motion by Board member Miller and second by Board member Hunt to approve the June 2021 financials, warrants, and disbursements as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

BUSINESS ITEMS-OTHER REPORTS:

1. Hospital Administration / presentation and proposal to establish a sliding fee scale policy for the Rural Health Clinic / CEO-Administration

CEO Powers commented that administration would like to proceed with the sliding fee scale policy concept and then make a recommendation in August.

Motion by Board member Trout and second by Board member Casalez to approve the sliding fee scale policy for the Rural Health Clinic as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS-STAFF REPORTS:

Board member Trout recognized the work the billing office has put into the billing since bringing it in-house July 1, 2021 and shared his appreciation for their efforts.

Board member Casalez would like to see information put out regarding the hospital auxiliary and their work with the hospital, nursing scholarships, and Poke ‘N’ Peek. She also expressed appreciation for the efforts with the GBS campaign and shared the comments she received from other hospitals.

Board member Tipton appreciates the direction the billing is heading and hated to see the error happen with the collection agency.

Board chair Cramer thanked Mangrum, Powers, Dunckhorst for all their efforts. She also commended the efforts by staff for the sports physicals and commented the need to improve our communications.

Board member Miller commended the administration and billing office response to the error in regard to the collection agency and the accountability administration showed with this.

CEO Powers announced Jackie Wilson as HGH’s new Chief Information Officer.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no comments.

Board chair Cramer adjourned the July 27, 2021 meeting of the Humboldt County Hospital District Board of Trustees at 8:06 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Alicia Cramer, Board Chair

Alicia Wogan, Executive Assistant