

**HUMBOLDT GENERAL HOSPITAL  
DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
AUGUST 24, 2021 REGULAR MEETING  
MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE--VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**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:**

Alvaro Galvis, MD  
Robert Johnson, PA  
Lacy Fetic, MD

**GUESTS:**

Marsha Foreman (Community Health Nurse), Ashley Maden (Humboldt Sun), Tracy Neely (A&H Insurance), Heidi Sterner (A&H Insurance), Jessica Anderson, Jim Hawkins (Columbia), and Millie Custer.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Board chair Cramer called the August 24, 2021 board meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Board member Miller commented on the timeline of text and email messages earlier this month to the present regarding the apparent lack of communication to employees, board and public with statistical information and policies put into place which affect the staff and community, and suggested the issues need to be thought out and presented with an actual plan.

Ela Fright had a question about the Health Board meeting and board chair Cramer advised she would try to get information to her.

**MEDICAL STAFF – HOSPITAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Medical Staff report:**

CNO Dunckhorst went over the Covid testing and results for the month of August. At the direction of the Covid team, N-95 masks are required and mask alternatives are being discussed. Air handler systems, sanitation backpacks, and UV lights are being used in the hospital. A definitive plan to handle a surge in Covid cases is being worked on. Dunckhorst said she will get answers to respond to the public comments. Dunckhorst advised the State Covid test is free, but the Quest testing has an administrative fee. Board chairman Cramer stated she understood there was no administrative fee charge. Revenue

Cycle Director Mangrum advised the hospital will not be charging an administrative fee and any previous admin fee charges will be credited back to the patient. Dr. Adajar explained the SNF protocol for Covid prevention and noted that, so far, they have done very well in the nursing home with only a couple of lockdowns. This week all nursing home residents tested negative. Adajar said the use of regenerative antibodies for patients has encouraging results.

**MedX AirOne update:**

There was no report.

**Administration Department reports:**

- a) EMS Report: EMS Chief Peine reported on: the Night in the Country 2021 event; patient counts; EMS fleet status; total runs by month; non-billable vs billable runs by month; non-billable runs by type; blood draws by requesting agency; outreach events by month; outreach hours by month; outreach cost by month; and, community paramedicine patient volume. Board member Tipton asked about the cost of a run that is non-billable, particularly blood draws. Peine said he will get that information and break it down with staff time and court time, and provide the overall outreach costs by month.
- b) Chief Human Resources Officer Giese went over first 90-day accomplishments: met with 28 department leaders; implemented new hire onboarding process; reorganized new hire orientation; created new template for job descriptions; created a new performance evaluation tool; implemented a performance management policy and form in order to hold employees accountable; and, engaged Press Ganey to begin an employee satisfaction survey in October. Giese noted the organization leaders believe communication is lacking. Giese explained the new hiring process and changes from the previous process. Ongoing projects include: revising employee handbook; evaluating job descriptions with leaders; developing a position control process for replacement and new positions, including justification process; employee milestone offsite in November (the location has not been determined); working with executive team in developing criteria and training regarding ICARE Values for annual evaluations; employee survey October 18 through November 8; DNV prep; and, HR file review. Board member Trout inquired if the employee handbook includes a section on absences for religious activities. Giese said no, and it does need to be added. Chief Compliance Officer Otto advised those matters are being addressed. There were comments on various policies which are being evaluated and revised, including: PTO and holidays; patient privacy/guidelines for discipline; absenteeism; dress code; and, certification pay. The board suggested it may be a good idea for all policies to be reviewed by board members. Giese explained HR statistics for open positions and turnover, noting employees are offered exit interviews when they separate from employment.
- c) Columbia-Jim Hawkins presentation on self-funded insurance included a report on the organization's background, philosophy, support system, programs and affiliations. They are currently working on plan and rate details and met with HR Officer Giese. Hawkins said he consulted for CEO Powers for over ten years at Powers' previous hospital which experienced a less than 2% increase over six years. Board chair Cramer suggested the best approach is to submit plans and proposals to the insurance committee for review, noting it is the insurance committee function to bring proposals to the board. Board member Tipton asked for the business address, which is 345 Bob White Court, Boise, Idaho.
- d) CEO Report: Revenue Cycle Director Mangrum gave an update on the revenue cycle, daily collections, and the adjustment of the Covid administrative fees, which should take about a week. Project Manager Bell and Community Relations Manager Shea gave an update on strategic themes. Board member Tipton commented on the County health fair on September 8, and expects the hospital to be involved in a big way. Shea advised there will be blood pressure checks and information on service lines. Board member Miller said the presence of doctors, billing

personnel and the clinic manager may be helpful to regain trust. Board chair Cramer suggested providing a list of providers and the Friday lab test information. Powers reported on the cath lab/cardiology proposal and the ortho pro forma. Tipton asked if the ortho proposal will be within the budget. Powers explained the current and anticipated costs. Cramer asked about ortho coverage on other than on call days. Powers said locums will provide the coverage. The source of the bonus and moving expenses was questioned.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Hunt to approve the consent agenda consisting of: (i) board meeting minutes of July 27, 2021; and, (ii) Medical Staff applications for appointments, reappointments, provisional and temporary privileges for: Joseph Drew, MD, Provisional-Urology; Alban De Schutter, MD, Provisional-Cardiology; Vivek Agrawal, MD, Provisional-Orthopedics; Dominic DiPrinzio, DO, Provisional-Emergency Medicine; Raj Patel, MD, Provisional-Emergency Medicine; Samantha Swanson, PsyD, Allied Health Professionals-Psychology; Keiron Kennedy, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; Christine Lamoureux, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; Jennifer Kim, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; Shwan Kim, MD, Consulting-Teleradiology; Brittani Smith, MD, Active-Family Practice/OB; John Gull, DO, Provisional-Otolaryngology; Anthony Sciascia, MD, Active-Emergency Medicine; and, Robert Leckie, MD, Consulting-Radiology. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORTS:**

CFO Plummer presented and explained the July 2021 financials, including: governmental accounting standards board (GASB); accrual versus cash accounting; budget to actual; income statement; total operating revenue; total operating expenses; total nonoperating income; operating income; net income; balance sheet; total current assets; total assets; total current liabilities; total liabilities and net position; net accounts receivable; cash and cash equivalents; forecasted EBIDA; net operating revenue and expenses; gross patient revenue; contractual allowances and bad debt; operating revenue-expenses; net income-loss; admits; PT days; daily average census; clinic visits; surgeries/procedures; stats; statement of profit and loss; and, statement of net position. Board member Tipton said his earlier questions were asked because only one time since February has the revenue been enough to cover expenses. Board member Miller noted not all departments are functioning well. Board member Trout asked if the revenue trend is up over the last five months or is there a negative charge on average daily revenue. Plummer explained the figures and CEO Powers explained the seasonal variations in health care. Powers said with urology starting in September and the billing of professional fees that were not previously billed, there should be some positive reports. Trout stated he shares Tipton's concerns, noting that they may need to look at what programs should be deferred for a time. Powers suggested cash collections will increase as the revenue cycle team gets traction. Trout suggested waiting on some capital expenditures until the results are known. Powers said it is a board call. Miller commented on the need to streamline and function better before adding service lines. Tipton questioned why increased numbers coming from labs and radiology are not transferring into increased revenue. Plummer stated that dropping the prices may be the cause.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Hunt to approve the July 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 advised the fee scale is only for the non-insured patients. Board member Miller would like Washburn to answer some questions on the scale and suggested the matter be tabled.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Trout to table the sliding fee scale policy for the Rural Health Clinic. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Hospital Administration / request to approve professional services employment contract for Trenton Argyle, MD to provide family practice services / Administration**

Board Chair Cramer confirmed that the agreement will not be effective until next budget cycle. Board member Miller would like the agreement to have standards and expectations, and suggested the matter be tabled pending receipt of more information.

Motion by Board member Miller second by board member Trout to table the professional services employment contract for Trenton Argyle, MD to provide family practice services. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Hospital Administration / request to approve professional services employment contract for Jeffrey Meter, MD to provide orthopedic services / Administration**

Board chairman Cramer stated this matter was discussed previously and was tabled. Board member Miller asked if additional staff will be required. Powers said an RN will be added as a new hire. Cramer said the board and administration need to look at the whole picture. Miller said she is concerned with Dr. Davis leaving and, because of the difficulty in procuring orthopedic services, does not have a problem approving the agreement due to the timeline and losing an ortho surgeon. Powers explained the monitoring of productivity. Board member Hunt asked if there are performance benchmarks in the contract. Cramer said the Dr. Meter services are desired, but it must be done the right way, and she is concerned the money is not allotted in the right spot. Board member Trout said he is concerned with losing the provider and asked if a special meeting could be held in two weeks after gathering more information. Board member Tipton commented open staffing was looked at earlier and questioned if there is a real need. A special meeting was set for August 31, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. to consider this matter.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Hunt to table the professional services employment contract for Jeffrey Meter, MD to provide orthopedic services. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Hospital Administration / request for approval to proceed with lab expansion and oncology infusion clinic / Administration**

Board member Trout questioned with the budget situation if this item should be deferred for sixty to ninety days. Board member Tipton said he would like more information and questioned if holding off will be detrimental. Board member Miller said she would like to see the plan of utilization. CEO Powers advised the lab is in such a very confined space that equipment is overheating; it is not an ideal situation.

Motion by board member Trout and second by board member Hunt to table the lab expansion and oncology infusion clinic to the August 31, 2021 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Hospital Administration-Respiratory / request for approval to purchase pulmonary function testing machine for respiratory therapy department / Respiratory Manager-Administration**

Board chair Cramer asked about the cost and the budget. CFO Plummer stated there are Cares Act Funds that may be used. Respiratory manager Vincent said currently there is no pulmonary testing machine.

Motion by board member Trout and second by board member Hunt to approve the purchase of pulmonary function testing machine for the respiratory therapy department, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**6. Hospital Administration-Anesthesia / request for approval to purchase ultrasound machine for anesthesia department / Anesthesia Manager-Administration**

Board chair Cramer went over the cost and the budget.

Motion by board member Tipton and second by board member Hunt to approve the purchase of ultrasound machine for anesthesia department, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. District Administration / review and evaluation of: (i) the performance of Timothy Powers as hospital administrator and chief executive officer; and, (ii) the progress of Timothy Powers in meeting the goals and objectives of the hospital administrator and chief executive officer position / proposals, terms and conditions of the continued employment or separation from employment of Timothy Powers as hospital administrator and chief executive officer / Board of Trustees**

Motion by board member Hunt and second by board member Miller to table to next scheduled board meeting in September. Motion carried unanimously.

**TRUSTEE COMMENTS-STAFF REPORTS:**

Board member Tipton asked that CEO Powers and CFO Plummer provide the source of the budget funding when requesting equipment purchases. Tipton said he appreciated the report from Hawkins and reminded that the board selected an insurance provider and turned the employee insurance over to a committee. Tipton commented Powers needs to stay out of it, the committee was selected and they need to be allowed to perform. Tipton congratulated Plummer on being appointed CFO, and thanked Powers for presenting to County Commission.

Board member Hunt agreed with Tipton's comments, noting there is a lot of risk and a responsibility to safeguard staff and patients. Hunt said there were arguments last week on a press release, and there is need to be careful about the information that is published, particularly medical staff items. The board answers to the community, and they need to be proactive.

Board member Casalez congratulated CFO Plummer. Casalez commented on the need for the board to see where the money is being spent. Casalez reminded that, regarding the insurance, a couple of years ago staff came to the board to ask for help with selecting insurance plans because administration was not listening to their requests and suggestions. The board voted to form a committee and placed Cramer and some employees on the committee. Casalez said the committee format must continue, and their function should not be circumvented.

Board member Miller feels insurance matters and presentations need to go to the insurance committee to look at all options. Miller remarked the days cash on hand and receivables are doing better and appear to be going in the right direction. Miller stressed the need for good measurements.

Board member Trout congratulated CFO Plummer and expressed appreciation to Shelly Smith for serving as the interim controller. CNO Dunckhorst has been nominated for a statewide award and the voting is open. Trout shares the concern that any contract, especially insurance, needs to be subject to fair and open competition. The current insurance company and the insurance committee should have

the ability to perform their functions. Trout noted the signature block on the HGH cash accounts report still has the name of the former CFO and needs to be corrected.

Board chair Cramer advised there will be boiler tour on September 28 at 5:00 p.m. and reminded of Oktoberfest which is coming up. Cramer appointed board member Casalez to work with Chief Compliance Officer Otto on policies.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ela Fright asked how to vote for Robyn Dunckhorst. Board chair Cramer said she will provide the information to her. Fright had questions regarding the Covid testing protocols. Cramer said she will have someone contact her.

Board chair Cramer adjourned the August 24, 2021 meeting of the Humboldt County Hospital District Board of Trustees at 8:43 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

**ATTEST:**

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Alicia Cramer, Board Chair

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Alicia Wogan, Executive Assistant