

**HUMBOLDT GENERAL HOSPITAL  
DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
AUGUST 27, 2019 REGULAR MEETING  
SARAH WINNEMUCCA CONFERENCE ROOM**

**BOARD PRESENT:**

JoAnn Casalez, Chairman  
Michelle Miller, Secretary  
Bill Hammargren, Member  
Gene Hunt, Member  
Ken Tipton, County Comm. Member

Kent Maher, Legal Counsel

**BOARD ABSENT:**

Jennifer Hood, Member

**MEDICAL STAFF PRESENT:**

Paul Gaulin, M.D.  
C. Robert Westling, M.D.  
Ludwig Kroner, M.D.  
James Langevin, M.D.

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Karen Cole, Interim CEO  
Darlene Bryan, CNO  
Sandi Lehman, CFO  
Duane Grannis, Maintenance Director  
Rick McComb, Interim IT Director  
Lisa Andre, Quality Director  
Rick Roche, Interim HR Director  
Jason Mercier, Revenue Cycle Director  
Robert Johnson, Practice Administrator  
Kim Plummer, Controller  
Alicia Wogan, Executive Assistant  
Diane Klassen, Radiology Manager  
Theresa Bell, Materials Management Manager  
Kanjana Gillespie, Accounts Payable  
Jeanette Grannis, PAD  
David Simsek, Pharmacy Manager  
Lorrie Merion, OB Manager

**GUESTS:**

Ashley Maden (Humboldt Sun), Nicole Maher (Public Relations Director), Mike Sheppard (Owners Representative) and Lewis Trout.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Board chairman Casalez called the August 25, 2019 board meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Casalez introduced and welcomed Joseph Ricioli, D.O. and Yatin Dhir, D.O. as the new residents.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Lewis Trout commented on the past observance of 9-11 by EMS. Trout suggested no decision should be made on the status of Dr. Li until the medical board makes a decision on the administrative matters.

**MEDICAL STAFF – HOSPITAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Great Basin College Foundation update – Matt McCarty**

Matt McCarty, Great Basin College Foundation representative, said an architect firm was chosen earlier today to provide the predesign services for the Great Basin College Winnemucca Health Sciences Technology building. The architect is confident that the \$7 million budget should be adequate to complete the facility. The solicitation for proposals to construct the facility will be issued in early 2020 and it is expected the groundbreaking will occur in June or July 2020. The college enrollment numbers are up, which is very reassuring for the future. McCarty thanked the Hospital District for its generosity.

**Medical Staff report:**

Chief of Staff Gaulin stated he was present at Dr. Li's sentencing yesterday. Li received the minimum sentence following a guilty plea. Gaulin said there are still patients in Winnemucca dealing with chronic pain, and pain management services would be helpful. Gaulin said the hospital needs to look at a second CRNA on the staff. Call schedules should be considered when entering into new contracts. Gaulin complimented EMS on the skill exercised in the transportation of a trauma patient.

**Administration Department report:**

CFO Lehman advised the two ambulances which were loaned to Reno Fire have been returned.

Practice Administrator Johnson said the hospital is looking at offering OB/GYN clinic care at the Fort McDermitt reservation, noting there is funding available for such services. The goal is to prevent patients from showing up at the hospital ready to deliver and there has been no prenatal care. Board member Hammargren asked about the funds owed to the hospital by tribal members. Johnson stated they are expecting the delinquencies to be caught up prior to staffing a clinic. Hammargren asked how many patients have presented with no prenatal care.

Johnson advised that Dr. Janhunen (pediatrics) is seeing twenty plus patients a day and is now scheduling about a month out.

Interim CEO Cole reported: Dr. Alex Curtis (FPOB) is expected to start on September 3; Dr. Rommel Adajar (Internal Medicine) plans to be here on October 7; she is working on the itinerary for a physician site visit September 15-17; a physician is available in 2020 who has a physician spouse and she is working to have them participate in a site visit; and, a physician currently practicing in the State of Washington whose husband is a paramedic is also looking at possible employment. Cole reported that the Cerner electronic health records project is about three months from completion. Wipfli has been a big help and staff has been working very hard on the project, particularly the lab and the pharmacy. Cole commented on the Medicaid long term care billing and the Cerner partnership with Americare. Board member Hammargren asked if enough funds were allocated for all the Cerner project costs. Cole said two interfaces which were not previously identified will have to be purchased. The estimate for Carestream interface is \$110,000. There are data migration funds which will not be used in the amount of \$50,000 and money set aside for extra staffing will result in about \$175,000 in extra funds. There is no plan to seek additional budget funds at this time.

Maintenance Director Grannis commented it's great to have the Sletten team back for the pharmacy remodel project which is going well. The demolition is about complete and they are framing walls. There have been no infection control issues.

Cole stated Human Resources is working hard to go live with Optimum as soon as possible, although the issues with procuring data from Medhost continue. The goal is to be done before January, 2020. Staff is working with a broker from NRHP to solicit quotations for health insurance.

An additional CRNA staff person will be here on September 16, 2019. The position was not budgeted but the savings from not spending money on locums has helped.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

The board considered the consent agenda consisting of the June 25, 2019 board meeting minutes and the Medical Staff applications for appointments, reappointments, provisional and temporary privileges

for: Veronica Janhunen, M.D., provisional-Pediatrics; Kermit Brunelle, M.D., provisional-Pediatrics; Joel McReynolds, M.D., provisional-Internal Medicine; Michael Odom, M.D., provisional-Family Practice/OB; Srikishna Vulava, M.D., provisional-Internal Medicine; Alex Curtis, M.D., Provisional-Family Practice/OB; Craig Dates, M.D., provisional-Emergency Medicine; Vinh-Truyen Nguyen, M.D., active-Internal Medicine; Bradford Granath, M.D., active-Family Practice/OB; Christopher Igtiben, M.D., active-Internal Medicine; James Sullivan, M.D., consulting-Nephrology; Robert Leckie, M.D., active-Radiology; Juan Pederson, SFA, Allied-Surgical First Assistant; and, Thomas Rembetski, M.D., courtesy-General Surgery.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Miller to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously with board chairman Casalez abstaining from the June 25, 2019 board meeting minutes because she was not present at the meeting.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORTS:**

CFO Lehman presented the June and July 2019 financial reports. The auditors will be doing field work the week of September 23. The Chargemaster pricing review is anticipated to be scheduled for the October 2019 Board meeting. There are some long term care claims being held by Medicaid and it is uncertain when they will be resolved. Board member Hunt asked how much longer HRG will be involved with the billing. Lehman said once Cerner takes over, HRG will help with backlog and when that is finished HRG will be done. Board member Hammargren said he has dealt with HRG personally and it has been difficult at best. Lehman said she has not received complaints about HRG. Board member Miller asked if there were criteria as to when money is moved from the general fund checking into savings. Lehman said no threshold level has been set because in order to avoid banking fees a balance of 8 million dollars must be maintained. Lehman is working with the bank to determine if better arrangements can be made. Board members suggested some standards should be established. Interim CEO Cole commented that after staff confers with the banking representatives any relevant information will be shared. Miller asked about the year-to-date figures and the payer base and questioned if there is anything the board should be looking at. Lehman said she doesn't have an answer but the questions will be presented to the auditors.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Hammargren to approve the June and July 2019 financials as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **BUSINESS ITEMS-OTHER REPORTS:**

##### **1. Hospital Administration-Pharmacy / proposal to purchase casework for pharmacy remodel project / Administration-Pharmacy Director**

Interim CEO Cole explained there was confusion on the casework because during the value engineering process they reconfigured the casework acquisition as opportunities for savings were considered. A portion of the casework will be eliminated and some items which can be purchased for less will be considered.

No action was taken. The item was tabled until the September 2019 board meeting to obtain more information.

##### **2. Hospital Administration-Radiology / proposal to purchase mammography and bone densimeter equipment for the radiology department / Administration-Radiology Director**

Interim COO/HR Director Roche and Radiology Director Klassen stated the equipment currently in use is at the end of life. New equipment was budgeted at \$450,000 and the upgrade will include 3D

mammography. In response to request for proposals, two (2) quotes were received, one for \$328,500 and one for \$395,000.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Hunt to approve purchase of the mammography and bone densimeter equipment for the radiology department from Turn Key in the amount of \$328,500. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Hospital Administration / proposal to adjust CTA Architects fee for services related to the pharmacy remodel project / Administration-Owners Representative**

Owners Representative Mike Sheppard stated the pharmacy project was a long time coming and there was significantly more work required of the architects because of the delays and the changes. They are requesting additional fees in the sum of \$90,000 to cover the additional work which was done. Sheppard noted those fees are significantly less than the fees for similar situations he has been involved with using in-state professionals. Sheppard encouraged board approval of the request.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Tipton to authorize the \$90,000 addition to the budget for the architect services related to the pharmacy project. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Hospital Administration / proposal to renew agreement for payments to CTA Architects on a time, materials and cost reimbursement basis for miscellaneous architect and engineering services / Administration**

Interim CEO Cole stated a copy of the letter from CTA Architects relating to miscellaneous architect and engineering services and fees is in the packet. This request has nothing to do with the pharmacy remodel. CTA is consulted periodically on various matters, such as the replacement of furnishings and carpeting which involved the services of the CTA interior design group and the procurement of new and upgrade items to stay current with the many changes which have occurred since the previous project was completed almost ten years ago. This proposal provides board authorization for the miscellaneous services that staff procures from time to time.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Hunt to authorize the agreement for payments to CTA Architects on a time, materials and cost reimbursement basis for miscellaneous architect and engineering services. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Hospital Administration / determination that airport vehicle is no longer required for public use and authorization to dispose of vehicle / CFO-Administration**

The vehicle used to transport providers from the airport to the hospital is no longer required for use by the hospital and the request was made to authorize disposal of the 1990s genre vehicle. CFO Lehman advised that in the past surplus equipment was offered to employees by auction.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Miller to dispose of the airport vehicle as it is no longer required for public use and to authorize staff to dispose of the vehicle in any manner. Motion carried unanimously.

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**6. Hospital Administration / proposal to use the professional services of and enter into an independent contractor agreement with Andrew Wesely, M.D. to provide pain management services / Administration**

Interim CEO Cole said discussions with Dr. Wesely have been ongoing. Cole suggested in light of the comments made earlier this evening about the need for certain medical services it is appropriate to consider this agreement for the providing of pain management services.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Miller to enter into the agreement with Andrew Wesely, M.D. for pain management services as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Hospital Administration / proposal to use the professional services of and enter into an independent contractor agreement with Alvaro Galvis, M.D. to provide pediatric services / Administration**

Interim CEO Cole stated that while awaiting the arrival of Dr. Janhunen the hospital contracted with a company that provided the services of Dr. Galvis. He has worked out very well. In order to contract directly with Dr. Galvis, his agreement with the locum agency must be bought out.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Miller to enter into the agreement with Alvaro Galvis, M.D. for pediatric call services as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. Hospital Administration / proposal to use the professional services of and enter into an independent contractor agreement with Bejal Patel, M.D. to provide pediatric services / Administration**

Interim CEO Cole stated Dr. Patel worked extensively with Dr. Janhunen in the past and expressed interest in continuing to work with Janhunen. There is no locum fee and Dr. Janhunen has vouched for Dr. Patel.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Hunt to enter into the agreement with Bejal Patel, M.D. for pediatric call services as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**9. Hospital Administration / proposal to use the professional services of and enter into an independent contractor agreement with Charles Stringham, M.D. to provide collaboration and oversight services for mid-level providers / Administration**

Interim CEO Cole acknowledged and recognized Dr. Westling for his past work on providing mid level provider services and commented that the workload on Westling is a concern. Dr. Stringham agreed to take over the supervision of the mid-levels which will relieve some of the burden on Westling. Dr. Westling acknowledged there is a lot of work but the nurse practitioner assistant provided has been great. Westling questioned if there was compliance with the regulations regarding physician oversight services for mid-levels, noting that Dr. Stringham is an internal medical doctor. Westling does not believe he meets the requirements. Dr. Gaulin suggested it may be helpful for medical staff to review contracts prior to them being entered into. Board member Hammargren stated contracts have many details and lots of information and if a physician is not suitable that would be a medical staff determination, not a contract matter. Hammargren said the hospital needs the ability to negotiate with physicians and if too many people are involved in the process, it slows things down and increases the possibility of losing physicians. Cole noted the contract doesn't have anything to do with the physician's privileges and credentialing is not based on anything economic. Dr. Langevin commented that the

physician has not been to a medical staff meeting during the time Langevin has been in Winnemucca. Legal Counsel Maher stated there has been contact with the Board of Medical Examiners to discuss the regulations criteria for mid-level supervision. Board member Tipton said he doesn't understand why this is being proposed if Westling wants to continue the service. Cole said there have been numerous issues and complaints with Westling, and cited examples involving the computer systems and the amount of records that Westling is requesting for review. Westling has spoken with Cole several times regarding the supervision services and the burden of the workload. In an attempt to reduce that workload this proposal was developed. Hammargren commented he has been involved in the workload issue and this proposal is a good way to spread the workload and have additional backup services. Gaulin stated he believes this comes back to professional conduct, if there was a shortcoming that medical staff was not made aware of, then there was a skipping of the step in peer review. Cole stated it is a contractual issue, not a medical staff issue.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Miller to enter into the agreement with Charles Stringham, M.D. to provide the mid-level supervision and collaboration services as presented. Motion carried with board members Miller, Hammargren and Casalez voting aye and board members Hunt and Tipton voting nay.

**10. Hospital Administration / proposal to use the professional services of and enter into a contract with Sleep Medicine Associates, Inc. to provide sleep medicine services / Administration**

Interim CEO Cole stated this proposal will provide a valuable service to the community. It will eliminate people having to drive to Reno for the services. The company provides all the staffing and equipment, the hospital does the billing and payments for the services are based on what is collected. Cole said it is not a huge money maker but it will add a much needed service for the community.

Motion by board member Miller and second by board member Hammargren to enter into the contract with Sleep Medicine Associates, Inc. to provide sleep medicine services as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**11. Hospital Administration-EMS/Maintenance / proposal to purchase two Cummins 20KW generators to provide backup power to emergency operations and communications center / Administration-Maintenance Director**

Maintenance Director Grannis stated the communications center has no backup power and one generator is needed to supply that power. The other generator is for the emergency operations center to provide power for the IT building and command center if there is a disaster.

Motion by board member Hunt and second by board member Hammargren to purchase two Cummins 20KW generators as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**12. Hospital Administration-Human Resources / determination of critical labor shortage of Radiology Tech position for radiology department to allow reemployment of retired public employee / Administration-Human Resources Director**

Interim HR Director Roche said there will be a shortage of the radiology technician positions due to maternity leave and requested the board determine there is a critical labor shortage to allow bringing back a retired employee to provide services. Legal Counsel Maher advised the board must make specific findings on the history of turnover, openings, and other criteria as listed in the request form which is in the meeting packet. Board member Hammargren stated normally there is more information provided to make a decision, noting that it must be documented how difficult it is to recruit for the position and the

attempts made to cover the position. Hammargren said the hospital needs to be able to demonstrate that they have tried without success to fill the position.

Motion by board member Hammargren and second by board member Miller to table determination of critical labor shortage determination for the Radiology Tech position for radiology department to allow reemployment of retired public employee until further information is provided. Motion carried unanimously.

**TRUSTEE COMMENTS-STAFF REPORTS:**

Board member Tipton wished the CEO a nice vacation.

Board member Hunt said he is thrilled by the addition of the pain management services.

Board member Miller asked about training on bylaws.

Board chairman Casalez thanked staff for the hard work on Cerner project.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were no comments from the public.

Board chairman Casalez adjourned the August 27, 2019 meeting of the Humboldt County Hospital District Board of Trustees at 7:06 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

**ATTEST:**

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Joanne Casalez, Board Chairman

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Alicia Wogan, Executive Assistant