

**MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL OF SWEETWATER COUNTY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

January 8, 2025

The Board of Trustees of Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County met in regular session on January 8, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. with Dr. Barbara Sowada, President, presiding.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Sowada welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Dr. Sowada requested a roll call and announced there was a quorum. The following Trustees were present: Judge Nena James, Mr. Marty Kelsey, Ms. Kandi Pendleton, Mr. Craig Rood, and Dr. Barbara Sowada.

Officially present during the meeting: Ms. Irene Richardson, Chief Executive Officer; Mr. Geoff Phillips, Legal Counsel; and Mr. Taylor Jones, Sweetwater Board of County Commissioners.

Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Sowada led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mission and Vision

Mr. Rood read aloud the mission and vision statements.

Mission Moment

Dr. Sowada thanked the I.S. Department for their help with her new iPad. Ms. Deb Sutton, Marketing Director, said she recently filmed new advertisements with the help of over 30 willing, enthusiastic participants. Mr. Ron Cheese, Patient Financial Services Director, shared an experience involving a family member in the Emergency Department and thanked the ER Staff, Dr. Khadar, and the University of Utah staff for taking care of everything to make it a much better experience. He said the care received in our ER was amazing and it's one of the best ER experiences he has ever had. Ms. Richardson said she was here visiting with a patient on New Year's Day and the ICU patient was so complimentary of the care she received and of the doctors and nurses. The patient told Ms. Richardson she felt all were top-notch. Ms. Richardson shared the patient's feedback with the staff. She said she visited with her the following day and the patient couldn't stop talking about her good experience. Ms. Richardson recognized the ICU staff for doing a great job.

AGENDA

The motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Ms. Pendleton; second by Mr. Rood. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The motion to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2024, regular meeting as presented was made by Mr. Rood; second by Judge James. Motion carried. The motion to approve the minutes of the December 23, 2024, special meeting as presented was made by Ms. Pendleton; second by Mr. Rood. Mr. Kelsey abstained and the motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION

Commissioner Jones said Commissioner Liaison duties will be appointed at the next meeting. He said he has requested to stay as the Hospital's Liaison.

OLD BUSINESS

Medical Staff Bylaws

The motion to approve the changes to the Medical Staff Bylaws as presented was made by Judge James; second by Ms. Pendleton. Motion carried.

Health Equity Plan

The motion to approve the Health Equity Plan as presented was made by Ms. Pendleton; second by Judge James. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Employee Health Plan

Dr. Ann Marie Clevenger, Chief Nursing Officer, said Ms. Nicole Burke is the Employee Health RN and is supervised by Ms. Patty O'Lexey, Education and Employee Health Director. Dr. Kari Quickenden, Chief Clinical Officer, said hazardous materials information is included in other plans. They said they will look at including links and references to other policies within this policy. Mr. Kelsey asked about the section related to volunteer costs being covered. Mr. Phillips suggested adding some definitions. The Plan will be brought back following revisions.

SENIOR LEADER REPORTS

Dr. Sowada thanked staff for the reports. Ms. Pendleton asked for an update on the nuclear medicine and fluoroscopy equipment updates in Dr. Quickenden's report. Ms. Tracie Soller, Medical Imaging Director, provided an update. She said we can use a mobile C-arm but that has limitations. She said we are on hold for approximately five months of construction and won't have fluoroscopy so limited to the C-arm. She said nuclear medicine patients are on-hold. Ms. Soller said GE was scheduled to have a service rep here that day but they did not arrive. There is a financial impact. The referral is to Utah. It is also difficult getting in for services in Utah. Ms. Soller said we are usually booked out up to two months. Salt Lake City can be booked out up to four months. Ms. Pendleton asked for an update on the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) status. Dr. Clevenger said we are still orienting but have coverage now 24/7. Ms. Pendleton gave a shout-out to the Emergency Department staff for the reduction in travel staff. Dr. Sowada asked about plans for CT. Dr. Quickenden said we are preparing a capital expenditure request to bring to the Board to provide another machine. Dr. Sowada stressed the importance of medical imaging for patients. Dr. Quickenden provided an overview of activity in that area and noted the importance of redundancy. Dr. Sowada asked about expansion into Farson. Dr. Clevenger provided additional information. She said we responded to a request from Farson. She said we provided services there in the past. We will have a Provider there one day a week with a Medical Assistant to provide services. She said it is a community service. Ms. Tami Love, Chief Financial Officer, said the service will be similar to what we provide in Wamsutter. She said we charge them a flat fee for sending someone and we do not do the billing. Dr. Clevenger said Farson is really looking forward to that service again.

Ms. Love said we received a letter from CMS that we have a new billing number effective December 6, 2024. She said we considered appealing to use that number back to October 1. We are waiting now for a rate letter from Noridian. Ms. Love said if we appeal, Noridian has up to 90 days to review. Ms. Love said we are going to bill everything from October 1 thru December 6 under the old billing number. We have investigated and made the decision to move forward. Ms. Love said there is a chance we will see some of that reimbursement by the end of the month. Approximately \$18M has been held during that time frame. Ms. Love said we are confident it will go out clean because we had time for a second look. She said the average daily census is 10.7 and the average length of stay is 2.6. Surgeries were up again. She said respiratory season has really hit us. Ms. Pendleton noted the employee engagement survey is complete. A high-level overview will be provided to Committees. Dr. Sowada asked about the impact of the PEAK Leadership Training. Dr. Clevenger said her staff is really appreciative of the opportunity. She said we have seen some positive changes. Ms. Amber Fisk, Human Resources Director, said the training has been so good and she has noticed a difference, also. She said leaders are using the tools provided. Ms. Kayla Mannikko, Foundation Director, said she finished her final session earlier that day and has found it very useful. Leaders are held accountable to their different roles and responsibilities.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Ms. Richardson wished everyone a happy new year. She said she is starting her 40th year at the Hospital. She provided a report on strategic pillars. We continue working on the patient experience. We posted for a Patient Experience Director and will begin interviewing soon. Staff continues working on quality and safety improvements. The Patient Culture of Safety Survey is complete and results are under review. We had a goal in our community outreach and growth pillar to have an online Google rating of 2.3 and we have recently achieved a 4.1 rating. In the employee experience pillar, we completed a salary review and were able to provide a success sharing bonus. We have completed PEAK training and conducted an Employee Engagement Survey. We continue working on financial stewardship goals. Ms. Richardson thanked Ms. Mannikko and staff for the community Christmas event, also for the gifts provided at the holiday lunch and dinner. She thanked Unidine for the great food. Ms. Richardson said we met with Rock Springs Policy Chief Bill Erspamer to develop a plan to mitigate workplace violence and work together to keep our staff safe. Ms. Richardson said we are not filling the Chief Medical Officer position at this time or in the foreseeable future. She said Wyoming Hospital Association legislative meetings are being held in Cheyenne and they are having weekly calls. She hopes to attend some sessions in Cheyenne. The Rock Springs Boost Leadership Academy will tour our hospital January 24. A Master Plan Workshop is scheduled with the Board January 28. Ms. Richardson briefly reviewed Becker's Hospital Review "10 Headwinds for Health Systems in 2025":

- 1) Continued staff shortages
- 2) Financial pressures
- 3) Federal administration
- 4) Technology integration
- 5) Medicare Advantage
- 6) 340B program
- 7) Supply chain
- 8) Cyberthreats
- 9) Access to care
- 10) Private equity

Ms. Richardson announced the new Medical Staff Officers for 2025:

Chief of Staff: Alicia Gray
Vice Chief of Staff: Israel Stewart
Secretary/Treasurer: David Liu

Medicine Department Chairman: Joshua Binks
Vice Chairman: Rasheel Chowdhary

Surgery Department Chairman: Tony Pedri
Vice Chairman: Benjamin Jensen

Ms. Richardson invited everyone to attend the Red Tie Gala February 1. We will present at the Green River Chamber of Commerce on February 19. A group of leaders and Trustees plan to attend the American Hospital Association (AHA) Rural Health Care Conference in San Antonio in February. The AHA Annual Meeting is in Washington D.C. in May. The AHA Leadership Summit is in Nashville in July. Ms. Richardson thanked the staff, physicians, Board of Trustees, and County Commissioners for all they do for our community.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Buildings & Ground Committee

Mr. Rood said the Committee had a robust discussion regarding the oncology suite project and said completion work continues.

Governance Committee

Mr. Kelsey said the Committee did not meet in December. They are scheduled to meet in January to discuss the policy on policies and review the Board Self-Evaluation.

Quality Committee

Dr. Sowada said her notes are in the packet.

Human Resources Committee

Ms. Pendleton said the wage and salary information was in the Committee meeting packet. She said we had moved meetings to quarterly but there is a lot of policy work happening so we are moving meetings back to monthly.

Finance & Audit Committee

Capital Expenditures:

Mr. Kelsey asked Ms. Soller to review the two requests presented. Ms. Soller and Ms. Nicole Mann, PACS Manager, said the systems go together but the quotes are separate. The last system lasted 14 years. It will require about eight months to build. Ms. Mann said we have a good working relationship with the vendor. She said PACS (Picture Archiving and Communication System) has a huge impact on getting

information to providers and patients. Part of the build-out is to transfer historical information into the updated system. The motion to approve FY25-27 and 28 for \$506,298 and \$263, 418.75 as presented was made by Mr. Kelsey; second by Judge James. Motion carried. Ms. Love said there is a third component on hardware for approximately \$500,000. We hope to have that information to the Finance and Audit Committee for their next meeting.

Ms. Love said all Clifton Larson Allen related policies and procedures are in review with departments and then will be rolled out to staff. Mr. Kelsey said the Committee did not meet in December. We essentially broke even for November. Mr. Kelsey said expenses are within the budget but are going up. He said we are keeping a close eye on it. He said contract FTE's have jumped up. Ms. Pendleton said more details are included in the HR Committee meeting packet. Dr. Sowada said she thinks it would be good to share that information in both the HR Committee and Finance and Audit Committee.

Bad Debt: The motion to approve the net bad debt and recoveries as presented of \$2,106,212.93 was made by Mr. Kelsey, second by Judge James. Motion carried.

Information Services Report: Mr. Kelsey said Information Services is a very important part of our organization. He asked Mr. Terry Thompson, I.S. Director, to provide a short report. Mr. Thompson introduced his staff and shared the results of the SWOT Analysis the group conducted. He said executive leadership of Ms. Richardson and Ms. Love is a strength. Staffing resources are the greatest weakness. He said they are extremely busy. HIPAA added 19 new requirements recently. Mr. Thompson said he is looking to add an additional FTE with the sole purpose of security. He said an opportunity is embracing AI to teach, coach, monitor. A threat is a successful cyber-attack. We had successes in 2024 of mitigating threats. We are currently working on a Windows 11 rollout. We completed data center redundancy. Mr. Thompson said there is never a dull moment in I.S. He thanked his engaged staff.

Foundation Board

Mr. Rood said there is a lot going on and thanked Ms. Mannikko for her nice report in the packet. Ms. Mannikko introduced Ms. Cory Darlington as the new Foundation Coordinator.

CONTRACTS

Consent Agenda

There were no questions or comments.

GOOD OF ORDER

There were no comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The motion to go into executive session at 3:17 p.m. to discuss legal, personnel, and items considered confidential by law was made by Judge James; second by Mr. Rood. Motion carried.

RECONVENE INTO REGULAR SESSION

The motion to leave the executive session and return to the regular session at 4:28 p.m. was made by Judge James; second by Ms. Pendleton. Motion carried.

ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to the notice provided in the agenda, the Board of Trustees held discussions and action was taken.

The motion to grant clinical privileges and appointments to the medical staff as discussed in executive session was made by Judge James; second by Mr. Kelsey. Motion carried.

Credentials Committee Recommendations to the Board of Trustees for Granting Clinical Privileges and Granting Appointment to the Medical Staff from December 10, 2024

1. Initial Appointment to Associate Staff (1 year)
 - Dr. Shayna Wood, Pediatric Hospitalist
 - Dr. Barabara Divish, Pediatrics
 - Dr. Jack Tsao, Neurology
2. Initial Appointment to Active Staff (2 year)
 - Dr. Aaron Blau, Emergency Medicine
3. Reappointment to Active Staff (2 year)
 - Dr. Razvan Ducu, Hospitalist
 - Dr. Weston Jones, Pediatric Dentistry
4. Reappointment to Consulting Staff (2 year)
 - Dr. Vivek Reddy, Tele-Stroke (U of U)
 - Dr. Muhammad Chauhan, Tele-Stroke (U of U)
 - Dr. Lucy DeWitt, Tele-Stroke (U of U)
 - Dr. Edward Kimball, Tele-ICU (U of U)
 - Dr. Ravinder Sohal, Tele-Radiology (VRC)
 - Dr. Amy Federico, Tele-Radiology (VRC)
 - Dr. Nathan Blue, Maternal/Fetal Medicine (U of U)
5. Modification of Privileges
 - Dr. Joshua Binks – Additional Privileges for radiation therapy to treat osteoarthritis

The motion to approve contracts and authorize the CEO to sign as discussed in executive session was made by Judge James; second by Ms. Pendleton. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Dr. Barbara Sowada, President

Attest:

Judge Nena James, Secretary