

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

**June 4, 2025**

The Board of Trustees of Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County met in regular session on June 4, 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, and Dr. Barbara Sowada. Excused: Mr. Craig Rood.

Officially present during the meeting: Ms. Irene Richardson, Chief Executive Officer; Dr. Alicia Gray, Chief of Medical Staff; and Mr. Geoff Phillips, Legal Counsel.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**Mission and Vision**

Dr. Sowada read aloud the mission and vision statements.

**Mission Moment**

Ms. Richardson shared a mission moment related to Dr. Joseph Oliver. She said he has been here since 1977 and has been a cornerstone of care at the Hospital. Ms. Richardson said we could not be more grateful to him for his service to our community. The Medical Staff did a wonderful job recognizing him at their May meeting. Ms. Richardson said Dr. Oliver is well-loved and well-respected. She thanked Dr. Oliver and wishes him the best in his retirement.

Mr. Kelsey shared an experience where he had some trouble getting a blood draw request from Huntsman to the Hospital. He said Heather in the MHSC office was really helpful and called the Huntsman more than once. Mr. Kelsey thanked Heather and the MHSC Lab for making it happen. He said he was told the Hospital does not accept electronic requests, only faxed requests. Dr. Gray said the electronic health record (E.H.R.) platforms don't always communicate well and seamlessly together. She reported the Informatics Department is continuously working on improvements.

**AGENDA**

Dr. Sowada asked for requests for any items to be moved from the Consent Agenda to New Business. There was a request to move the Credentialing Policy to New Business. Dr. Sowada asked if there were requests for Senior Leader or Board Committee Reports to be moved to New Business. There was a request for the Chief Financial Officer Report and Building and Grounds Committee Report to be moved. The motion to approve the agenda with the items noted as moved to New Business as requested was made by Ms. Pendleton; second by Judge James. Motion carried.

## **COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION**

Mr. Ron Cheese, Director of Patient Financial Services, thanked Dr. Sowada for all the years of service to our Hospital during different terms. He said she helped us through some difficult times. Dr. Sowada said it has been her pleasure to serve.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Quarterly Progress Report on Strategic Plans and Goals**

Dr. Sowada said the next quarterly update will come through the Quality Committee in July.

### **CAH – Plan of Care & Scope of Services**

Mr. Kelsey said Mr. Phillips incorporated Dr. Sowada's suggestions from the previous meeting. The motion to approve the Plan as presented was made by Judge James; second by Ms. Pendleton. Motion carried. Dr. Sowada thanked everyone who worked on the Plan.

### **Professional Practice Review Plan**

The information is still under review.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

The motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Ms. Pendleton; second by Judge James. Mr. Kelsey abstained from the meeting minutes approval because he was not present. Motion carried. Ms. Pendleton recognized Dr. Kari Quickenden, Chief Clinical Officer, and staff for their work on the Critical Access Hospital-related policy updates work. Items approved: May 7 Meeting Minutes; Bad Debt; BOT-MHSC Meeting Guidelines; BOT-Senior Leadership Plan: Filling CEO Absences & Vacancies, Filling Senior Leader Absences & Vacancies, Identifying & Developing Internal Senior Leaders; CAH-Employee Health Plan; CAH Policies (Sterile Preparations: Redispensing Unused Compounded Sterile Preparations, 22-06-20 Previously 22-27; Sterile Preparations: Transporting Compounded Sterile Preparations to Patient Care and Procedural Areas, 22-06-19 Previously 22-26; Sterile Preparations: Final Verification of Preparations, 22-06-18 Previously 22-25; Sterile Preparations: Aseptic Technique, 22-06-05 Previously 22-17; Pharmacy: Sterile Preparations: Sterile Compounding Procedures, 22-06-01 Previously 22-18; Pharmacy: Sterile Preparations: Hand Hygiene and Garbing, 22-06-03 Previously 22-19; Pharmacy: Hazardous Drugs: Preparing Parenteral Medications, 22-06-02 Previously 19-07; Pharmacy: Hazardous Drugs: Preparing Non-Sterile Medications, 22-05-02 Previously 19-08; Pharmacy: Sterile Preparations: Intrathecal Medications 22-06-09 Previously 22-35; Pharmacy: General Storage of Medications, 09-01; Pharmacy: Compounding - General: Radiopharmaceuticals 22-01-07; Partial And Crushed Tablets, 11-14; Pharmacy: Administration: Administration of Medications – Pediatric Patients, 13-07; Pharmacy: Administration: Administration of Medications - General, 13-01; Medication Reconciliation; Administration of Medications by Provider Type MM.06.01.01 EP 1-9; Study Participant Screening & Enrollment CTO 003-21v2; Clinical Trials Research Related Individual Conflict of Interest); Requests from the Credentials Committee (Invasive Health Questions; Health Statement Form).

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Credentialing Policy**

Ms. Kerry Downs, Director of Medical Staff Services, reviewed the changes. Dr. Sowada asked that all questions be directed to Ms. Downs prior to the next meeting.

### **CFO Report**

Mr. Kelsey asked Ms. Tami Love, Chief Financial Officer, to explain the potential impact the proposed reconciliation bill would have on the Hospital if passed. Ms. Love referenced the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace and enhanced tax credits as well as concern about people dropping coverage due to being unable to afford it. She said we are preparing for our medical assistance to increase as well as bad debt. Another item of concern is Medicaid cuts. Ms. Love said we won't see the full impact of our change to Critical Access if there are no changes to the proposed bill and it passes.

### **Building & Grounds Committee**

Mr. Kelsey said we heard from the Strategic Facility Master Plan consultant in January and the Board also heard from Senior Leaders. There were discussions about Critical Access Hospital funds and the need for space. Staff are working on the Plan and Mr. Kelsey said the Board needs to stay on top of this and needs to look at assumptions and changes since January. Mr. Kelsey said he is looking forward to the work.

## **REPORTS**

### **Chief Executive Officer Report**

Ms. Richardson reported we continue to work on our strategic plan and are getting ready to set our PIPS (Performance Improvement and Patient Safety) priorities for FY 2026. She gave a shout out to the Human Resources Department – Ms. Amber Fisk, Ms. Amy Lucy, Ms. Ruthann Wolfe, Ms. Shawn Bazzanella, and Mr. Eddie Boggs - for putting on a wonderful Hospital Week including the service award recognition event. Ms. Richardson said she has heard lots of positive comments and lots of gratitude from the staff. She thanked Dr. Sowada, Ms. Pendleton, and Mr. Rood for attending the service event. As part of the employee experience pillar, Ms. Richardson said she meets with all new physicians, locums, and students to discuss our person-centered care culture. This past month, Ms. Richardson met with Dr. Eden Henry, a locum Pediatric Hospitalist, Dr. Shailey Patel, a locum Neurologist, and Ms. Hayden Halley, a Physician Assistant student. Ms. Richardson said the Medical Staff Services Department does an incredible job arranging for their orientation. Ms. Richardson also meets with all new hires to explain our culture including our mission, vision, and values. She said this is where new hires attend the Planetree workshops and she stays for the first exercise where we learn more about the new hires. Ms. Richardson said we have reopened a search for a Pediatrician following the physician we signed having to leave the area due to her husband's loss of job due to downsizing at his company. Ms. Richardson said Mr. Josh Hannes from the Wyoming Hospital Association (WHA) invited her to serve on a panel that Healthy Wyoming was putting on for discussion about what will happen if the federal Medicaid cuts go into effect and also the expiration of the premium tax credits that are available through the ACA plans. She said it was a great discussion and there were about 80 people in attendance. Ms. Richardson said both of these things will impact us. She also was invited to be on a panel on a Becker's Advisory Call with about a dozen CEOs from around the country. The topic of discussion was patient

access as a growth engine and how health systems are competing, innovating, and advancing equity. She said it was a great discussion and it was recorded. Ms. Richardson said Mr. Gerry Johnston, Facilities and Security Director, and the Facilities team walked a group through the new Lab expansion area. Ms. Richardson said the group has been doing an excellent job. Ms. Richardson will present at the June 5 Rock Springs Enterprise Committee breakfast meeting. She will be giving an update about our services and what we are doing at the Hospital. She said we are honored the group meets at the Hospital every month. Ms. Richardson will present an annual report to the Board of County Commissioners on June 17 where we provide a reconciliation of all funds received from the County. Ms. Richardson thanked Dr. Sowada and Mr. Rood for attending the WHA CEO and Trustee Spring Conference. Ms. Richardson will attend the WHA Region 4 CEO meeting in Afton followed by the WHA Board Meeting in Jackson in June. She invited Trustees to attend the WHA Annual Meeting in Laramie and The Governance Institute (TGI) Leadership Conference in Colorado Springs in September. Ms. Richardson said she has invited the Medical Executive Committee members and Trustees to attend TGI so we can have the collaboration of Board, Administration, and Medical Staff. Ms. Richardson again thanked Dr. Oliver for his many years of service and dedication to our hospital, our community, and our patients. She said he first arrived here in 1977 and started working at the old hospital. He has been a part of our hospital for almost 50 years and we want to thank him for everything he has done for our community and patients. Ms. Richardson shared a photo of a recognition brick to be placed in the Dr. Pryich Healing Garden in honor of Dr. Sowada. Ms. Richardson said she has known Dr. Sowada since she was first appointed to the Board in 2008. She remembers meeting her for the first time and welcoming her to the Board and our hospital. She said she felt they had an instant connection. Ms. Richardson said Dr. Sowada's love of all things healthcare shows in everything she does. Dr. Sowada always goes above and beyond to ensure that MHSC is providing the highest quality, safe, affordable, accessible care that we can. Ms. Richardson read aloud a message to Dr. Sowada including an analogy of gardening. She said Dr. Sowada loves gardening and loves healthcare. She said both share many parallels. Ms. Richardson said planning leads to success and referenced nurturing, patience, managing through a crisis, impact, leadership, strength, passion, bringing light, and the beauty in the process. Dr. Sowada said this is an end of an era for her. She said a lot has been accomplished due to the grit the people at the Hospital have. Dr. Sowada said the foundation is all here and a new chapter is coming. She extended best wishes and thanked everyone for all you have done for her. The Trustees presented her with a card and gift.

### **Medical Staff Services Chief of Staff Report**

Dr. Gray began by recognizing three exceptional providers who exemplify the quality, compassion, and commitment we value at the Hospital. She said their dedication not only improves the lives of their patients but also strengthens the collaborative spirit within our care teams. Dr. Gray said it is an honor to highlight the meaningful impact they continue to make in our community.

- Dr. Astrid Haaland – University of Utah Emergency Room Physician: Dr. Gray said she has had the pleasure of working with Dr. Haaland over the past six years and said she is a steady and thoughtful clinician, always diligent and following up with patients even those transferred elsewhere and a voice of reason for clinical teams. A patient shared with us that Dr. Haaland was knowledgeable about treatment. The patient said it is a scary experience to go there, but she made it comfortable, and they felt they were taken very good care of. The patient said Dr. Haaland checked on them often.
- Ms. Desiree Stofferahn - Adult Geriatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner in the Family & Occupational Medicine Clinics: Dr. Gray said Desiree is a provider she has worked with for several years, including her time in infection control. Dr. Gray said it has been a pleasure watching her grow and expand her medical knowledge. Her patients consistently speak highly of her care. A patient wrote that Ms. Stofferahn has their complete confidence. She has, and is, helping the patient through very

emotional times. She listens, offers opinions, suggestions. The patient said they work together for the patient's healthcare.

- Dr. Joseph Oliver – Orthopedics: Dr. Gray said Dr. Oliver is retiring this year and the Medical Staff honored him at their recent medical staff meeting for his decades of service. A patient recently shared that Dr. Oliver has been their doctor for years and they have nothing but respect for him. The patient said he has helped them for many ailments. Dr. Gray said we thank Dr. Oliver for his nearly 50 years of dedicated service to Sweetwater County

Dr. Gray reported we have seen significant improvements in quality and safety initiatives including sepsis. She said we thank the providers for their continued commitment to evidence-based care. Dr. Gray said we also remain focused on supporting the patient journey, both during inpatient stays in and the transition to outpatient care. Dr. Gray said in the area of physician engagement, we recently held our quarterly medical staff meeting, where the group discussed several topics. One of Dr. Gray's goals continues to be improving collaboration across specialties to strengthen continuity of care and ensure robust support for our patients as well as our staff. Dr. Gray said we continue to strengthen our relationship with the University of Utah. Dr. Gray said she requested feedback from staff on how we can further improve communication outreach services and inpatient specialties we commonly share patients with. She said these conversations are especially important for our complex patient population, who may require specialized procedures at higher care facilities at times. Dr. Gray said this feedback session also became a valuable learning opportunity for providers, showing how seamless institutional communication can improve care coordination. In the area of recruitment and staffing, Dr. Gray said we are pleased to welcome Dr. Tristan Mele as a new orthopedic surgeon. Dr. Gray said his experience will benefit both our inpatient and outpatient orthopedic services, and we are excited to have him on board. Regarding strategic priorities, Dr. Gray said we continue efforts to build stronger collaboration with the University of Utah. One current initiative involves improving processes between our walk-in clinic and emergency department, particularly for patients with overlapping care needs who may require higher-level acuity assessment and planning. In closing, she thanked the Board and staff for their continued support and shared commitment to improving care for our community. Dr. Gray said that as we continue to grow, she remains grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside such a dedicated team of providers. Dr. Gray thanked Dr. Sowada for her service to the Hospital. Dr. Sowada thanked Dr. Gray and said the strong relationship between MHSC and the U of U is a gift to the community.

## **CONTRACTS**

Ms. Richardson thanked Dr. Quickenden for her diligence and care in working with Dr. Fred Matti with Advanced Medical Imaging (AMI) and Mr. Phillips on the contract. She said they gave great attention to detail as we looked at options and she said we feel this is our best option for imaging services at our Hospital. The motion to approve the AMI agreement as presented was made by Mr. Kelsey; second by Judge James. Motion carried.

## **EDUCATION**

Dr. Ann Marie Clevenger, Chief Nursing Officer, presented a PowerPoint presentation for the Family Medicine, Occupational Medicine and Walk-In Clinics. She thanked Ms. Misty Cozad, Practice Manager, and Ms. Lena Warren, Community Outreach Director, for the presentation and said it is an honor to review with the Board. Dr. Clevenger said she and Ms. Cozad presented the information at a recent Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce luncheon. She said we have physical constraints with the building and are utilizing some creative provider scheduling to keep things moving well. Dr. Clevenger said we believe we will grow if we have the available space because everyone is very busy and doing an

excellent job. She invited the Board to tour in the area. Ms. Pendleton asked if we can break out the patient visit data by walk-in-clinic visits and family and occupational medicine clinic visits moving forward.

### **GOOD OF ORDER**

Ms. Pendleton said she will make committee assignments in July. She asked Trustees to please let her know if they have thoughts on changes.

Dr. Sowada noted the July meeting has been moved to July 9 and the September meeting has been moved to September 11. The September meeting is traditionally conducted in Green River.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

### **RECONVENE INTO REGULAR SESSION**

The motion to leave the executive session and return to the regular session at 4:49 p.m. was made by Ms. Pendleton; second by Judge James. 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 Ms. Pendleton. Motion carried.

#### **Credentials Committee Recommendations to the Board of Trustees for Granting Clinical Privileges and Granting Appointment to the Medical Staff from May 13, 2025**

1. Initial Appointment to Associate Staff (1 year)
  - Dr. Jacob Galindo, Emergency Medicine
  - Dr. Harshit Singh, Emergency Medicine
  - Dr. Eden Henry, Pediatric Hospitalist
  - Dr. Shaily Patel, Neurology
2. Initial Appointment to Consulting Staff (1 year)
  - Dr. Elizabeth Vogler, Tele-Radiology (VRC)
3. Reappointment to Active Staff (3 year)
  - Dr. Cameron Kesler, Hospitalist
  - Dr. Julie Widdison, Emergency Medicine (U of U)
4. Reappointment to Consulting Staff (3 year)
  - Dr. Jumana Alshaikh, Tele-Neurology (U of U)

- Dr. Nicholas Frost, Tele-Neurology (U of U)
  - Dr. Kyle Mahoney, Tele-Neurology (U of U)
  - Dr. Sindhu Richards, Tele-Neurology (U of U)
  - Dr. Veronica Moreno-Gomez, Tele-Stroke (U of U)
  - Dr. Anees Daud, Cardiovascular Disease (U of U)
  - Dr. Libo Wang, Cardiovascular Disease (U of U)
  - Dr. Aaron Shoskes, Tele-Stroke (U of U)
  - Dr. Marcela Smid, Maternal Fetal Medicine (U of U)
  - Dr. Lauren Theilen, Maternal Fetal Medicine (U of U)
  - Dr. Jeffrey Hare, Tele-Radiology (VRC)
  - Dr. Michael Seymour, Tele-Radiology (VRC)
5. Reappointment to Advance Practice Provider Staff (3 year)
    - Brian Barton, Physician Assistant Family Medicine
  6. Reappointment to Non-Physician Provider Staff (3 year)
    - Michael Bauer, Professional Counselor (SWCS)

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.

The motion to approve the CEO evaluation and FY2026 CEO compensation of \$418,700 (6%) 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 4:51 p.m.

*Ms. Kandi Pendleton, President*

Attest:

*Judge Nena James, Secretary*