

TAOS HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
August 30, 2023
2:00 p.m.

Present: Abe Balsamo, Robyn Chavez, Lucille Gallegos, Carl Gilmore, Cipry Jaramillo, MD, Cristina Martinez, Don Mooney, Paul Sands, Peter Selzer, MD, Chris Stagg, and Trinidad de Jesus Arguello

Members Absent: Lynn Skall

Administration: James Kiser, Connie Prewitt, Sue Romansky, Renee Laughlin, Brittany Lamendola, Vivian Santistevan and Mitsy Carruth

Guests: Eric Jones, Ovation Healthcare, Max Moulton, Kevyn Gilbert, and Dayna Duran

- I. **Call to Order** - Holy Cross Hospital, a division of the Taos Health Systems, Inc., Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, August 30, 2023, by Paul Sands, Board Chair. Attendance was recorded and a quorum was present.
- II. **Approval of Agenda** - The agenda was presented for review and approval. Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- III. **Public Comments** - There were no public comments presented.
- IV. **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** – There were no conflicts of interest reported.
- V. **Approval of the July 26, 2023 Taos Health Systems (THS) Board Minutes** - Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the July 26, 2023 THS Board Minutes as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- VI. **GRT Campaign Plan** – Max Moulton and Kevyn Gilbert from Gizmo Productions/Marketing presented an update on the GRT campaign plan. Presentation attached to minutes.
- VII. **Lifewings Quality & Safety Council Report – Misty Carruth, Quality Director – July 2023**
 - Lifewings Quality & Safety Council Report – July 2023 – July S & Q Card

Quality Report

- Overall hospital rating score increased to 76.90%.
- Left without being seen increased to 4.20%.
- Inpatient Readmission Rate decreased to 3.48%.
- Patient Satisfaction: Communication w/Doctors increased to 94.90%.
- Patient Satisfaction: Communication w/Nurses increased 87.20%.
- Patient Satisfaction: Instructions for Care at Home decreased to 90.90%.
- Survey return numbers:
 - Outpatient – 174
 - Inpatient – 13
 - ER – 98
 - Ambulatory Surgery – 36

Misty presented an update on Press Ganey:

- 399 out of 2895 returned completed (16.7%)
- Investigating undeliverable rates
- Leader and Staff Dept. Surveys

- Leadership training August 31st
- Spanish and Tewa survey update

Following review and discussion, motion was made and seconded to accept the Lifewings Quality & Safety Council Report as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

VIII. **Finance Report** - Connie Prewitt, CFO

- July 2023 Financial Statements – Connie Prewitt, CFO, presented the July 2023 financials for review and acceptance. (Refer to CFO's Narrative Report).

Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to accept the July 2023 financials as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

IX. **CNO Report** – Brittany Lamendola, CNO reported on the following:

- The nursing leadership is now fully staffed.
- Our Clinical Educator Katrina Sayre has accepted a managerial position for us. She will be taking a lot of HR type work for our travelers.
- Adrienne Reynolds, new ER Manager is doing a great job.
- To date we have recruited 18 nurses.

IX. **HR Report** - Vivian Santistevan, CHRO reported on the following:

- Presented the HCMC employee stats:
 - We currently have a total of 489 employees.
 - HR, Finance, IT, Admin., Maintenance, EVS. etc. = 37%
 - Travelers = 9%
 - RN's – 20%
 - Medical Staff = 7%
 - Ancillary = 27%
- HR Updates
 - We have hired 8 more nurses under Team Taos initiative, which brings us to a total of 18.
 - Increased advertising and recruiting efforts.
 - Transitioned all Traveler onboarding to CNO and Nurse Education.
 - Voter Registration focus initiative for employees. Veterans Day employees and community initiative.
 - Pre-meetings for CBA renewals ongoing.
 - Personnel and Labor Relations Committee start up in September.
 - The HR Office has completed their office purge.
- Challenges
 - HR Policies need a complete overhaul. September is Policy month for HR.
 - HR/Payroll software does not meet the needs of our unique organization.
 - Slowly making changes to ensure legal compliance in all employment decisions.

XI. **Medical Staff Report** – Susan Romansky, COO reported on the following:

Cardiology

- Dr. Tiziano Scarabelli started August 21st, and Carol Chen-Scarabelli, NP, to join us September 5th.
- New echo tech Michael started and our current traveler, Rex, would like to stay giving us five day a week coverage.
- Considering a second echo machine to keep up with the volume.
- Looking at a second echo station for remote reading in the clinic.

Surgery

- Dr. Robert Brown withdrew 8/21/23, citing that he was unable to find the appropriate school support for his special needs child.

We are actively recruiting again. So far, Sue has made calls to the following:

- Dr. Nizzi – Might be interested, he is a friend of Dr. Slikkers. Has a high school age daughter that is holding him back from moving. Suggesting doing 10 days a month until he could move full time.
- Dr. Silk – Practicing in upstate NY moving to Santa Fe and wants to work 10 days a month.
- Dr. Singleton - Currently practicing in Alabama waiting for a call back.

Pediatrics

- Dr. Patterson is providing locum coverage for the clinic.
- Dr. Cynthia West experienced pediatrician, is scheduled for an onsite interview in September. Currently in Oklahoma and wanting to make a move.
- Morgan Verkuilen –NP program, starts September 5th.
- Dr. Jeremy Hassan - Pediatrician is showing interest, Sue spoke with him on the 23rd.
- Hospital call is being covered by locums, Rembecki, Mullen, Williams, Lujan, Mannheimer and we may add others if needed.

OB/GYN/FPOB

- Dr. Moore has given his official date of retirement as October 8th. He will be winding down and turn over patients to Dr. Casey Smith. He is open to work PRN after he retires.
- Dr. Smith is starting October 16th. She has already met with the WHI medical staff and the dynamic is very positive.
- Dr. Ouellette will be taking more OB call and reducing her pediatric calls. FPOBs will take first call with OB/GYN backup.

Hospitalist

- Dr. Adam Spring, Hospitalist has been working in CAH in Whitefish Montana, interviewed 8/22 and seems like a good fit with the team. We need to check his references and if they are good, we will make him an offer.
- We are also working with Dr. Nesh to see if he would be interested in employment vs. independent contractor.
- Dr. Bassat, one of our independent contractors may also be interested.

ED

- Melissa Tingue, NP, PRN started and training is going well.
- Lisa Spero, NP also PRN, waiting for credentialing to be completed.
- Staci West, NP signed waiting for credentialing to be completed.
- Waiting for Dr. Townley, independent contractor, to get her NM license. Once she has her license she will sign her offer. She will be moving to Taos this Fall and wants to start as a PRN. She is currently working in Phoenix and Flagstaff.

Radiology

- Recruiting for local radiologist- no applicants yet.

Primary Care

- Dr. Mary Jo Young's start was delayed due to licensing; she is scheduled for September 5th.
- Ernest de Bourbon M.D. – Experienced primary care doctor is ready to move to NM. He has his NM license and is excited for the opportunity to have an onsite interview in September 25th.

- Speaking with Dr. Laura Welch and Dr. Robert Whipple both strong primary care doctors. Our limiting factor is office space; we have outgrown our current location. We looked at an office building on Salazar that is being converted to a medical office. The space would be able to house six plus practitioners. We may be able to combine Primary Care and Cardiology in this space.

XII. **CEO Report** – James Kiser reported on the following:

- NM rural hospitals continue to face many financial challenges.
- Reported on Senate Bill 7
- Continue to address the ground transport issues at the state level. James met with the physician group (ACO) to see how they can benefit especially ground transport.
- James attended and spoke at the Taos Roundtable.
- Reported on the delays in physicians being able to get their NM Medical Licenses.
- Met with the Net Zero Committee groups.
- Presented an update on the Medical Malpractice issues in the state. We are looking at Yellowstone insurance as an alternative since Coverys has informed us that they will no longer be writing policies in NM.
- KRQE reached out to James to inquire about the DiVinci robot that the hospital is looking at.
- Attended the Touch a Truck event representing the Lions Club.
- James and Dr. Jaramillo gave an update on the Taos Health Care Center employee walk out and the challenges HCMC continues to have relating to patient care.
- Gave an update on the continued efforts with Ovation Healthcare on their support for a new EMR.
- Dr. Jaramillo reported that in the past two weeks the hospital has run into our capacity, meaning that because of our critical access status, we could not take in any more patients due to our bed capacity. She also mentioned that it is very challenging to get patients appropriate disposition due to not being able to get patients transferred to other facilities, rehab., or home. We have also had to hold the patients in the ED until they have discharges in the morning. This is very challenging for everyone. Dr. Jaramillo's biggest concern that this occurred in August and not in the middle of the cold, flu or covid season. The other big issue is that we cannot send patients anywhere even when we need to send them out, due to no bed availability. There is a shortage of beds in the whole state.

XIII. **Ovation Healthcare Report** – Eric Jones, Ovation Healthcare, AVP – Eric Jones reported on the following:

- Presented a consulting update:
 - *Strategic Planning* – There has been work through August and going into September on the Medical Staff Survey. They received 19 responses (25%), which is still significantly low from the benchmark goal of 50% responses. The ongoing analysis of the results of the Medical Staff Development Plan data work is ongoing.
 - *Key Stakeholder Interviews* are coming up on September 19th and 20th. The medical staff and board members will be involved in the interviews. Invites will be sent out.
 - *Supply Chain* – Have been tracking the last few months the improvements in the Laboratory. Compliance has been historically low due to constraints in certain lab supplies. The supply chain has identified some additional savings opportunities that the hospital is pursuing which is a little over \$56,000 of incremental savings.
 - *Board Leadership* – The next webinar is on Physician Contracting and Compensation and is scheduled for September 12th at 11:00 a.m.
 - *Hospital Land* – Ovation did a preliminary master facility planning work when Bill was at HCMC and brought in an architect to look at the MOB, possible surgery center and possible behavioral health unit. He emphasized the importance and value of the land to any expansion opportunities. Ovation will be working with HCMC on a true Master facility Plan in the next coming months.

XIV. Medical Staff Recommendations – Cipry Jaramillo, MD, COS

- Credentialing – A motion was made and seconded to accept the Medical Staff recommendations to the Board for privileges and memberships as listed below. All were in favor and the motion carried.

INITIAL APPOINTMENTS:

Locums

- Mills, Galen MD (Ortho Fellow) - Appointment in the Surgery and Anesthesia Department
- Smuin, Dallas MD (Ortho Fellow) - Appointment in the Surgery and Anesthesia Department
- Thompson, Jay DO (Ortho Fellow) - Appointment in the Surgery and Anesthesia Department
- Ismail, Mohammed MD (Telenuero) - Appointment in the Pediatric and Adult Medicine Department

Concord Teleradiology:

- Syed, Almas MD - Appointment in the Pediatric and Adult Medicine Department.

REAPPOINTMENTS:

- Van Willigen. Deborah MD – Reappointment in the Pediatric and Adult Medicine Department.

XV. New Business

- Taos Orthopedic Memorandum of Understanding Approval – Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the Taos Orthopedic Memorandum of Understanding as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- Approval of the 2022 Annual Clinical and Non-Clinical Contract Evaluations – Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the Annual Clinical and Non-Clinical Contract Evaluations as recommended by the Medical Executive Committee and Administration. All were in favor and motion carried.
- Monthly Board Committee Mtg. Calendar - Informational. The consensus of the board is to move the September board meeting to September 25th at 2:00 p.m.

XVI. Old Business

- HCMC Land Discussion - After review and discussion, the consensus of the board is to keep the land for future hospital development. James will inform the town that the board appreciate the offer, but the hospital is not in the position to do it right now.

XVII. Executive Session

- a) A motion was made and seconded at 4:34 p.m. to enter into Executive Session discuss legally protected matters. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- b) A motion was made and seconded to reconvene into open session at 4:53 p.m. All were in favor and the motion carried.

XVIII. **Adjournment** - There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:54 p.m. All were in favor and motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:  Approved by: 
Lenora Cisneros, Recorder Cristina Martinez, Secretary