

TAOS HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES
January 31, 2024
2:00 p.m.

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

Members Absent:

Administration: James Kiser, Connie Prewitt, Sue Romansky, Vivian Santistevan, Brittany Lamendola, Margaret Lynch, Mitsy Carruth, Mercedes Burns, and Lenora Cisneros

Guests: Eric Jones, Blake Seitz, Ginnie Berg - Ovation Healthcare, Shawn Duran, COO, Eileen Lujan, Community Representative, Margaret Lucky, and Dayna Duran, HCMC Controller

- I. **Call to Order** - Holy Cross Hospital, a division of the Taos Health Systems, Inc., Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m., Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 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 amended to add CNO Report as Item XIII. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- III. **Approval of the December 6, 2023 Taos Health Systems (THS) Board Minutes** - Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the December 6, 2023 THS Board Minutes as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- IV. **Public Comments** – Ms. Cristina Martinez reported that the Auxiliary will be donating \$25,000 to the hospital in February. They have requested that this donation be earmarked towards more flooring at the front lobby area. The Board thanked the Auxiliary for the donation and for all that our volunteers do for Holy Cross Hospital.
- V. **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** - There were no conflicts of interest reported.
- VI. **Welcome and Introduction – Taos Pueblo Governor’s Office** – Mr. Sands welcomed Ms. Eileen Lujan, Taos Pueblo Governor’s Office Community Representative and Ms. Shawn Duran, Taos Pueblo COO to the board meeting. The Board members introduced themselves. Mr. Sands reported that he and Mr. Kiser had gone to visit with members of the Taos Pueblo governor’s office and were very warmly received. Ms. Duran and Mr. Sands spoke regarding advocacy and how the Taos Pueblo can partner with Holy Cross Hospital and the community. The conversation revolved around the importance of collaboration and leadership in rural healthcare, with a focus on addressing the unique challenges faced by Holy Cross Hospital and the Taos Pueblo. Discussion was held regarding strategies for advancing self-determination and sovereignty, including cultural sensitivity training for hospital staff and involving members of the Taos Pueblo. Ms. Cristina Martinez recommended that the Picuris Pueblo also be included. Ms. Vivian Santistevan, CHRO reported that a training is scheduled for the HCH leadership team on February 27th and she will be including cultural sensitivity training.

The board encouraged Ms. Lujan to apply for a seat on the hospital board if she is interested. Mr. Sands reviewed the application process.

Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to pass a resolution to work with the Taos Pueblo going forward. All were in favor, and motion carried.

- VII. **Final Review and approval of the HCMC Strategic Plan – Ginnie Berg and Eric Jones, Ovation Healthcare** – Ms. Ginnie Berg presented the final Strategic Plan for review and approval. She gave a brief summary of the Strategic Planning and Medical Staff Development process for the guests present at the meeting. Mr. Sands mentioned that he is charging the Senior Leadership Team and Mr. Kiser to report to the board on a monthly basis referencing the Strategic Plan and what they are working on. The Strategic Plan document will be published and posted on the hospital website for the public to view. Ms. Berg was asked to put together a 1-2 page summary of the plan listing the foundation and priorities of what the hospital is working on to share with the media and our stakeholders. The board thanked Ms. Berg for all her hard work and efforts.

Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the HCMC Strategic Plan as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

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

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

Ms. Prewitt touched on the financial performance, quality metrics, and ongoing challenges faced by rural hospitals. Discussion was held regarding the need to address difficulty in scheduling appointments, improving medical imaging and prior authorization processes, and long wait times for tests and procedures.

Ms. Prewitt mentioned that TRICARE patients are now being seen at HCH, but require a referral to join. The board asked Ms. Prewitt if she can report on the total TRICARE volumes for November and December at the February board meeting.

Other items discussed were the need for a software upgrade for the CT scanner, which is \$54,000, to increase volume and ease of use, with the additional volume expected to cover the cost of the upgrade. She also mentioned the importance of addressing the pharmacy IV hood and spec system, which is out of compliance, with a cost of \$312,000.

- Approval of Capital Equipment –
 - Brilliance 64 CT Software Upgrade – Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the capital equipment purchase at the cost of \$54,000 as presented. All were in favor, and the motion carried.
 - Pharmacy IV Hood and Spec System – Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the capital equipment purchase at the cost of \$312,000. All were in favor and the motion carried.

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

- Review of the Leadership Risk Based Compensation Program – This item was moved into executive session.
- Approval of Professional Services Agreement for Elizabeth Lynch, MD (Emergency Medicine) – Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the Professional Services Agreement for Elizabeth Lynch, MD as presented by Administration. All were in favor and motion carried.
- Approval of Physician Employment Agreement for Cynthia Carter, DO (Emergency Medicine) - Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the Physician Employment Agreement for Cynthia Carter, DO as presented by Administration. All were in favor and motion carried.

- Approval of Physician Employment Agreement for Keith Krist, MD (Pediatrician) - Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the Physician Employment Agreement for Keith Krist, MD as presented by Administration. All were in favor and motion carried.

IX. **Approval of the Consent Agenda**

- Risk Management Q4 2023 - Renee Laughlin, VP Risk Mgmt./Compliance

Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

X. **Lifewings Quality & Safety Council Report – Misty Carruth, Quality Director** - January 2024

- Lifewings Quality & Safety Council Report – November/December 2023 – November/December S & Q Cards

Quality Report

- Overall hospital rating score – Nov. 72.20%, Dec. 53.30%.
- Left without being seen – Nov. 2.10%, Dec. 2.90%.
- Inpatient Readmission Rate – 5.82%, Dec. 2.78%.
- Patient Satisfaction: Communication w/Doctors – Nov. 69.80%, Dec. 75.60%.
- Patient Satisfaction: Communication w/Nurses Nov. 79.60%, Dec. 61.30%.
- Patient Satisfaction: Instructions for Care at Home – Nov. 75%, Dec. 80%.
- Survey return numbers:
 - Outpatient – Nov. 137, Dec. 113
 - Inpatient – Nov. 18, Dec. 15
 - ER – Nov. 59, Dec. 58
 - Ambulatory Surgery – Nov. 45, Dec. 43
 - Scorecard Response Rates – Nov. 14.9%, Dec. 14.1%

Patient Experience Responses

- Response rate = Nov. 14.9%, 2749 Sent, 341 returned 458 undeliverable
Dec. 14.1%, 2993 sent, 350 returned, 508 undeliverable
- Concise Inpatient, Surgery, Emergency Dept. surveys started January 1st
- HCAHPS (Inpatient Medicare patients) realistic goals set twice yearly

Mr. Balsamo recommended that when the star ratings come out, that we get the information to our marketing folks to publish to the community that we are doing better in comparison to the national average. Ms. Carruth will reach out to Press Ganey on what the national average is for CAH.

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

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

- Many of our new nursing grad students will be getting ready to come off of orientation and are getting ready to be full-fledged on their own.
- Had 11 ER Open positions and now only have the night position open.
- Adrienne Reynolds, ER Manager is doing a great job.
- Have the UNM Students starting to do their clinicals at HCH.
- Education Director is working on getting instructors trained to do clinical training for our staff.
- Scott Grassel, our Pharmacist has resigned. Tamara Brown will step in as Interim Pharmacy Director until a permanent Pharmacist is hired.
- The LDRP department is almost full staffed.

- Working with UNM Albuquerque and their EMT students are going to start coming up and doing clinicals and not just in the ER but in the OR where they will be shadowing the CRNA's on intubations.
- Our transfer rate is still at 5%.

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

- Presented the HCMC Employee Stats as of January 26, 2024.
- HR Update:
 - Have 519 total employees at HCMC.
 - Team Taos initiative remains steady at 26 nurse hires with several offers in the works.
 - HR Policy redo are about 70% complete.
 - 2024 Benefit Enrollment was overall successful.
 - Community Veterans continue to share their gratitude for the TriWest initiative.
 - Shout out to our Marketing Team "the Gizmos" for successful GRT, Veterans Day and Recruiting efforts.
 - Ongoing HR Initiatives:
 - Social media Based Recruiting efforts are paying off with the number of applicants we are seeing.
 - Working with Marketing on Spring Break ads for TSV.
 - Job Fair at Taos HS on Feb. 8th.
 - HR collaboration with NM Workforce Development Program.
 - Activities Committee and HR are working on a fun filled Super Bowl Week February 7-9th.

XIII. **Chief of Support Services Report** – Margaret Lynch, Chief of Support Services reported on the following:

- Shared her family history, including her cultural heritage.
- Highlighted key team members and their areas of focus and recognized their efforts.

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

Medical Staff Leadership

- Dr. Foster – Hospitalist Medical Director
- Dr. Marshall – ED Services Medical Director
- Dr. Selzer – Radiology Medical Director
- Dr. Theresa Smith – Laboratory Medical Director
- Dr. Parker – TCCCY Medical Director
- Dr. Casey Smith – WHI/Primary Care Medical Director
- Dr. Scarabelli – Cardiology Medical Director

Recruitment Update

Surgery

- Dr. Maks Gold is currently at the University of Utah, available to start fall of 2024. Scheduling interview.
- Dr. Lindsay Deveraux, currently at the University of Alabama also available fall of 2024. Scheduling interview.
- Dr. Liam Knott practicing in NY and wants a change of lifestyle, very active outdoors person. Five years of experience. He needs to have a robot to perform general surgery. Doesn't want to go backward.
- TSS/Urology APC- Blair Feldhaus, PA-C currently working in Sonora, CA in Urology. She and her husband like Taos and would like to move here. Interviewed on 1/5/2024 and team agreed they would like her to come and interview in person. She declined to come after her husband was promoted.

Pediatrics

- Dr. Keith Krist is interviewing on site January 19th. He has spent most of his career in the Southeast but eager to relocate to the rocky mountain region. Currently in Mississippi. Working since 2019 to present (24 Yrs). Very used to working in rural communities and taking call. Interviewing on the 19th and we have made him an offer. Medical staff unanimously recommended hiring.
- Dr. Alfonso Robles currently working in a Phoenix Arizona practice. He is uncertain but would like to interview. He is scheduled for February 13th.
- Dr. Rebecca Wallig is currently finishing her residency at UNM and will graduate this spring. She was scheduled to be on site January 15th for an interview, but family all got COVID so rescheduling for March 4th.
- Dr. Jeremy Hassan – Pediatric resident in Philadelphia, Albert Einstein Medical Center. Graduates June of 2024. Interviewing in March.
- Dr. Joann Couch practicing in Carlsbad, NM. She is considering a move. Former AF pediatrician. Has home in Southern NM. Looking for a large horse property. Withdrew her application.
- Dr. Michael Vieira phone interview we are setting up a site interview. Practicing in a rural setting now taking call and working in clinic in Kingman, AZ. Looking for a long term opportunity to raise his children. Will give us dates for interview.

OB/GYN/FPOB –

- No changes in OB/GYN/FPOB this month.

Hospitalist

- Dr. Adam Spring started on the 15th. He finally got his NM license on the 4th.

ED

- Elizabeth Lynch signed a 1099 contract. She is ED physician who is currently at UNM completing a Critical Care Fellowship.

Radiology – Recruiting for local Radiologist - no applicants yet.

Primary Care –

- Connie submitted request for funding through the state. Senator Gonzales's office has been providing guidance. We are asking for \$15 million. We met with Doug Patterson to update the MOB plans.
- In conversation with several doctors and NPs. Waiting to move forward until we have office space we can commit to Primary Care.
- Dr. Lawrence Devereux FMP practicing in Birmingham AL. He is being scheduled for a site visit. He has been practicing for two years.

MOB

- Connie submitted required documents for the capital outlay and has been working closely with the county. We believe it is very likely we will get funding for the MOB. Connie and I met with Doug Patterson and decided that the old MOB plans are out of date and do not meet the needs we have. We are starting over and developing a new design. The timeline to complete the full project would be 1.5 to 2 years. In the meantime, we are looking at a modular building for primary care. The building would be near the TCCY building. The building would be used for primary care until the MOB is completed and then other services such as diabetes management would move into it. We can't see us waiting another 2 years for primary care when we know how much our community needs the services now.

Oncology

- Met with Presbyterian this month and they are not currently in a position to support a joint venture with Holy Cross. We are continuing forward with planning and getting estimates for pharmacy and infusion buildout. St. Vincent's is still a potential partner.

Children's Heartline Consortium/Pediatric Echo Project

- Connie, Gary and Sue met with the Pediatric Cardiology Project Team on the 12th. Dr. Brian Etheridge wrote the proposal and UNM and Presbyterian Cardiology are participating. This is one of the projects that is being funded by SB7. We were the first hospital they met with and want to be the first site to go live. We will get a new echo machine, training for our echo techs, telehealth interaction with the pediatric cardiology, reading in real time etc. We will be meeting with the team every few weeks until go live.

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

- Gave a legislative update on Senate Bills SB17, the Healthcare Delivery and Access Act; and SB161, Acute Care Facilities and Subsidies;
- Highlighted the community needs for primary care and urgent care, citing a recent survey over 200 responses.
- Big thanks to Senator Gonzales who worked tirelessly to secure funding for a medical complex in the county, meeting with county officials and testifying before the legislature.
- Highlighted the need for rural hospitals like Holy Cross to address operational challenges and improve services.
- Discussed the potential benefits of a new healthcare partnership, including independence from larger systems and improved decision-making for the community.
- Administration will be seeking input on Electronic Health Record system for rural hospitals, weighing Cerner, Oracle, and Meditech.
- Expressed optimism about Medicaid reform, mentioning progress in getting the word out and understanding the challenges faced by the hospital.
- Discussed the ambulance service challenges and management.
- The GRT money will not be available till September 2024. We will have to go through a bonding process and the County will need to pass a resolution approving it.
- All Staff Meetings were held last week. We will not be having them bi-annually.

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

- Reviewed the GPO Compliance Report – HCH had an 85.9% cost savings overall.
- The Board Education Series have been updated.
- 2024 Leadership Conference
 - The registration has been closed, but if anyone is still interested in attending the conference in Austin, TX on February 20-22, 2024, please let Eric know and he can help to get you registered.

XVII. **Medical Staff Recommendations – Jonathan Moran, 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 (December 2023):

- **Amelia Hinds, CRNA** - Appointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.
- **Kateland Townley, MD (Emergency Medicine)** – Appointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.
- **Cynthia Carter, MD (Pediatrician)** – Appointment in the Perinatal, Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.
- **Andrew Carlson, MD (Tele Neurosurgeon)** – Appointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.
- **Chad Cox, MD (Concord Tele Radiology)** – Appointment in the Pediatric & Adult Department.

- **Bosten Miller, MD (Concord Tele Radiology)** – Appointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.

INITIAL APPOINTMENTS: (January 2024)

- **Akshita Mehta, MD (Concord Tele Radiology)** – Reappointment in the Pediatric & Adult Department
- **Stephen Johnston, MD (Concord Tele Radiology)** – Reappointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.

REAPPOINTMENTS:

- **Robert White, MD (Internal Medicine)** – Reappointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department
- **Camille Doan, MD (Emergency Medicine)** – Reappointment in the ED Services Department.
- **Dan Guttman, MD (Surgery, Orthopedic)** – Reappointment in the Surgery & Anesthesia Department.
- **David King, PA (Emergency Medicine)** – Reappointment in the ED Services Department.
- **Neal Friedman, MD (Endocrinology)** – Reappointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.
- **Jana Mullen, MD (Pediatrics)** – Reappointment in the Pediatric & Adult Medicine Department.

XVIII. **New Business**

- Ms. Cristina Martinez reported that the Auxiliary will be hosting their annual Valentine's Tea Party for the hospital staff on February 14th at 2:00 p.m. in the cafeteria. She invited the board to come.

XIX. **Old Business** - No old business was presented.

XX. **Executive Session**


- A motion was made and seconded at 5:07 p.m. to enter into Executive Session to discuss legally protected matters, and CEO Performance Evaluation. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to reconvene into open session at 6:20 p.m. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- CEO Contract Extension – Following review and discussion in Executive Session, a motion was made and seconded to approve the extension of Mr. James Kiser, CEO employment contract through December 31, 2026. All were in favor, and the motion carried.
- Board Seat Expansion – Following review and discussion in Executive Session, a motion was made and seconded to table this item. All were in favor and motion carried.
- Risk Based Compensation – Following review and discussion in Executive Session, a motion was made and seconded to table this discussion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

XXI. **Adjournment** - There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. All were in favor and motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:


Lenora Cisneros, Recorder

Approved by:


Cristina Martinez, Secretary