

TAOS HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES
January 29, 2025
2:00 p.m.

Present: Trinidad de Jesus Arguello, Abe Balsamo, Andrew Chavez, Robyn Chavez, Lucille Gallegos, Carl Gilmore, Jonathan Moran, DO, Don Mooney, Paul Sands, and Peter Selzer, MD

Members Absent: Eileen Lujan, Cristina Martinez Chris Stagg

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

Guests: Dayna Duran, Alfredo Vigil, MD, Eric Jones, Ovation Healthcare; Casey Carlton, e4h Architecture; Jessie Neitzer, and Brent Murray

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, January 29, 2025, by Paul Sands, Board Chair. Attendance was recorded and a quorum was present.

- I. **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 table item 15.1 Board Compliance Education until March. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- II. **Approval of the December 4, 2024 Taos Health Systems (THS) Board Minutes** - Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the December 4, 2024 THS Board Minutes as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.
- III. **Public Comments** – Ms. Jeannie Ross, Outreach Director presented information on 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey. She distributed the 2025 survey packets and encouraged the board to complete. She mentioned that the survey is also located on the hospital website in both English and Spanish. The deadline for the survey is Monday, February 3rd.
- IV. **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest** – There were no conflicts of interest presented.
- V. **Medical Office Building (MOB) Update - Casey Carlton, e4h Architecture** – Mr. Carlton presented an update on the Medical Office Building project, outlining a 10-12 month construction timeline and a detailed project schedule. Mr. Carlton reported that the project is wrapping up the construction documents phase and will enter the procurement phase. The construction documents should be completed by February 17th, and the County will then be putting out the request for public bid, with bids due back on March 19th. The construction timeline is estimated to be 10-12 months, depending on bid results.
- VI. **THINK NM Presentation** – Alfredo Vigil, MD discussed the shortage of health professionals, including doctors, dentists, nurses, and EMT's. He mentioned that the shortage attributed to the aging baby boomer population and the retirement of healthcare professionals. NM faces severe shortages, with competition from other states and countries for healthcare professionals. Dr. Vigil highlighted the need for legislative efforts to address the shortage, including setting up a health trust and expanding tax credits for rural areas. He also addressed the impact of medical malpractice on recruiting healthcare professionals.

New Mexico's medical malpractice laws are seen as unfavorable compared to other states. The state charges gross receipts tax to doctors in private practice, which is not done by most other states. Dr. Vigil suggested eliminating the gross receipts tax and making other legislative changes to improve the situation. Dr. Vigil told the board they could get more information on the Think NM website at thinknm.org. The board thanked Dr. Alfredo Vigil for his presentation.

- VII. **Comprehensive Plan Presentation** – Michelle Sanchez, Scheduling & Prior Authorization Manager presented a comprehensive plan to improve access to care and scheduling efforts. The plan includes reducing turnaround times, developing standardized examination protocols, and creating a comprehensive scheduling manual. Ms. Sanchez mentioned that additional staff have been hired to handle the high call volumes and specific services like cardiology. The board commended Ms. Sanchez in her efforts and work on the comprehensive plan.

Access to Care – Sue Romansky, CAPS reported on the following:

- Discussed the success in recruiting physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners.
- Recent recruits including a General Surgeon, Pediatrician, and Primary Care PA.
- The hospital continues to work on recruiting for Radiology, Primary Care, and Urology.
- The hospital has secured office space in Montevideo Plaza to accommodate additional practitioners.
- Emphasized the need for support staff to assist medical staff.
- The hospital has signed an agreement with an online school to train medical assistants.
- The hospital has partnered with inReach to help cover calls and expand the Orthopedic Program.
- Discussion held regarding patient access to lab services and use of Quest Diagnostics. Ms. Romansky mentioned that the hospital aims to provide patient choice and improve access to care along with improving patient access to results and reducing delays.
- Cardiology - The hospital will start offering FFRct starting this next quarter. This is a fractional flow reserve, CT and it identifies exactly where low blood exists and indicates how severe the blockage may be. The test delivers unparalleled visibility of any blockages in the arteries and identifies coronary artery disease earlier in the cycle to limit risk of heart attack and prevent further disease.

VIII. **Approval of the Consent Agenda**

- CNO Report
- CAPS Report
- CHRO Report
- CSO Report

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.

IX. **Lifewings Quality & Safety Council Report** – Misty Carruth, Director of Quality, Risk & Compliance

- Lifewings Quality & Safety Council Report – November & December 2024 – Q & S Cards

Quality Report (November/December) – The board discussed various metrics including hospital ratings and survey response rates. Inpatient overall hospital ratings improved from 40% in November to 57.1% in December. The inpatient readmission rate was 4.8% in November and 1.9% in December. The communication with doctors' goal was met in December at 78.6%.

- Scorecard Response Rates – 16.7

- Patient Experience updates and the inpatient patient comments were presented by Ms. Carruth. A recommendation was made to have the patient comments presented on a quarterly basis rather than monthly.
- Ms. Carruth presented the Health Equity CMS Measures for Quarter 4 - 2024

The board discussed the various ways to improve survey response rates and gather more meaningful patient feedback. Ms. Carruth mentioned that as of January 1, 2025, the surveys will be sent to the patients via e-mail first. If there is no response, it will then go to their regular mail.

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.

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

- December 2024 Financial Statements – Ms. Prewitt, CFO, presented the December 2024 financials for review and acceptance. (Refer to CFO's Narrative Report).

Ms. Prewitt provided an overview of the Health Care Delivery and Access Act (HDAA) and its impact on the hospital's finances. The HDAA fund will provide significant financial support, with the first payment expected in March. There is a discussion about the distribution of funds and the requirements for using the funds within NM. Ms. Prewitt also mentioned the challenges with the new Medicaid portal and its impact on revenue.

Ms. Prewitt gave an update on the GRT and Bonding by the County. She mentioned that this is what is going to pay for our \$22M of capital. The hospital has not bought a lot of capital this year. We have been in a break fix mode. As far as the bonding, we are going through the NM Finance Authority, and so they are going to price those bonds on February 11th. There will be a bond purchase agreement in which the county will need to sign on February 11th. The bond should then close on February 25th and the funds would be available. The funds will reside at the NM Finance Authority and we will be able to access those funds in two ways. We can provide a quote on a piece of equipment and request those funds, or we can pay for it and then request those funds.

Ms. Prewitt discussed the current cash balances and the need to re-establish an Investment Committee to increase income. She mentioned the importance of having liquid investments to cover potential financial needs.

Approval of the Physician Employment Agreement for Michael Rossi, MD (Primary Care) – Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the agreement as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to accept the October 2024 Financial Report as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

XI. **CEO Report** - Mr. James Kiser reported on the following:

1. Orthopedics: Dr. Jonathan Moran and Ms. Sue Romansky gave an update on orthopedics.
2. EHR – Ms. Margaret Lynch provided an update on the Meditech implementation project, including the signing of the agreement and the formation of subject matter expert teams. The project is expected to go live in April 2026, with a focus on building teams and preparing for the transition.

Ms. Lynch also highlighted the support from Meditech and importance of investing in a project manager and clinical and financial leads.

XII. **Medical Staff Recommendations** – Jonathan Moran, DO, Chief of Staff

Initial Appointments - December 2024

- **Scott, Clifford T., MD (Pediatrics)** - Appointment in Perinatal Department.
- **Balise, Stephen, MD (General Surgery)** - Appointment in the Surgery & Anesthesia Department.

Initial Appointments – January 2025

- **Bush, Sara, MD (ED)** – Appointment in the Emergency Medicine Department.

Re-Appointments – January 2025

- **Nylund, Justin, DDS (Dentistry)** – Re-appointment in the Surgery and Anesthesia Department.
- **Krudewig, Thomas, CRNA** – Re-appointment in the Surgery and Anesthesia Department.
- **Lis, Sarah, CRNA** – Re-appointment in the Surgery and Anesthesia Department.
- **Stevens, Wendy, CNP (Hospitalist)** – Re-appointment in the Pediatric and Adult Medicine Department.
- **Wright, Masina, DO (Hospitalist)** – Re-appointment in the Pediatric and Adult Medicine Department.

Locums

- **Creitz, Brenda, CRNA**

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

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

- Board Compliance Education – Phillip Stubblefield, Director Compliance Advisory – Tabled until the March Board Meeting.

XIV. **New Business**

Holy Cross Medical Center Resolution with the Taos Tribal Government - Mr. Mooney presented a resolution between Holy Cross Medical Center and the Taos Tribal Government for review and approval. Following review and discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the resolution as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried. Mr. Paul Sands made a recommendation to invite the Tribal Council to the next board meeting to present the resolution and get their approval. Once we get the approval, we can contact the Taos News to publicize.

Inclusivity Policy Discussion – Mr. Abe Balsamo presented a draft copy of the Inclusivity Policy for discussion. He mentioned that there is a need for an inclusivity policy to address fears amongst undocumented immigrants and other vulnerable populations. Discussion also ensued regarding the importance of protecting patient rights and following existing policies to ensure care is provided without compromising safety. Ms. Lynch mentioned that she has reviewed the draft policy and reported that most of the components mentioned are already in current policies. A suggestion was made by Mr.

Mooney to combine and highlight the items address and include them in one document and bring it back to the board for review.

XV. **Monthly Board Committee Meeting Calendar (February & March)** – Informational. Mr. Sands reminded the board members to review the monthly Board Committee Meeting schedules and participation.

XVI. **Old Business**

XVII. **Executive Session**

a) A motion was made and seconded at 5:00 p.m. to enter into Executive Session to 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 5:30 p.m. All were in favor and the motion carried.


c) There were no actions taken in executive session.

XVIII. **Review Meeting Effectiveness**

There was a brief discussion about the need for updated photos of board members and medical staff to be displayed in the hospital. The meeting concluded with a reminder to continue working on improving communication and support for staff and patients.

XIX. **Adjournment** - There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 p.m. All were in favor and motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by: 
Lenora Cisneros, Recorder

Approved by: 
Cristina Martinez, Secretary