



PORTAGE COUNTY

MEETING MINUTES

HEALTH CARE CENTER COMMITTEE

PORTAGE COUNTY ANNEX
CONFERENCE ROOMS 1 & 2
1462 STRONGS AVENUE
STEVENS POINT, WI 54481

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

5:00 PM

REMOTE ATTENDANCE & COMMENT

To attend this meeting by telephone : dial 1-608-338-1399, after dialing the number you will then be asked to enter in a meeting number. Use the following meeting number: 936 404 170, then press #

To attend this meeting by video: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Due to COVID-19 and the potential risk to members of the public who attend meetings in-person, any person who plans to attend the meeting remotely, but wishes to comment on an agenda item can send their comments via email to lingforl@co.portage.wi.us. The deadline for sending comments by email is 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting. Emailed comments will be delivered to committee members at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Remote comment by the public during the meeting will be at the discretion of the Chair.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members attending in-person: V. Miresse, D. Jankowski, S. Przybylski, L. Weaver

Members attending on-line: G. Hakala

Members absent: None

Members excused: None

PUBLIC NOTICE

Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their request at this time, with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. September 14, 2022

A motion was made by S. Przybylski, seconded by L. Weaver to approve the minutes from September 14, 2022. The motion carried on a voice vote with no negative votes.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

REPORTS

2. Chairperson

Chair V. Miresse said he has been receiving phone calls asking if PCHCC is closing. Miresse encouraged everyone to be careful in how we speak about PCHCC. We do not want to spread rumors. Community questions should be directed to the Committee members.

3. Administrator

M. McDonald, NHA, provided an update on various items. The CMS Five Star report was received and PCHCC continues to remain a 5-star rated facility. We have a strong core team that provides great quality of care. In preparing for 2023, we are taking October-December 2022, as our internal timeline. We will be tracking referrals and admissions and human resource data. This information will help determine what is the next best step for PCHCC. Wold/Tegra toured the facility this week. McDonald said two years ago, the

census was at 48. Today we are at 22. She spoke about the decreased census in her administrator's report in 2020. We will be interviewing two candidates for the RN manager position. We hope the increased wages for RN and CNA positions will draw candidates and new team members. We have not received any applications yet but it has only been three days since the increased wages were announced. McDonald said there were internal meetings with the LPN staff. LPN staff did not receive an increase in wages. The McGrath salary study showed LPN wages were already at market rates currently.

McDonald said that PCHCC is currently operating on only one unit, Timber Trail. We have five rooms ready on another unit to increase the census if staffing increases. We are in the window for our state survey. Some new survey regulations have been implemented. The State of Wisconsin has hired temporary state surveyors to help with their staffing shortages. PCHCC has been citation free for several years. We continue to utilize our internal staffing and have not needed to use temporary staffing. McDonald said that trends show a decrease in the number of people entering health care fields. There will be two MSTC classes doing their clinical rotation at PCHCC. There will be a class of CNAs and a class of RN students. McDonald said there were 51 facilities that have closed in the State of Wisconsin, which includes 15 recent closures.

The number of licensed skilled nursing beds is declining because of the many opportunities in the community for other types of health care services. McDonald spoke with the regional director for Leading Age. He was the administrator for Homme Home. He worked with their accounting firm to set benchmarks for determining viability. Homme Home closed their skilled beds in 2022.

McDonald said the pulse continues in the facility. We continue to provide quality of care for our residents. We are starting to prepare for the holiday season.

4. Business Manager

L. Lingford, Business Manager, provided census data from 2017 to the current. 2017 year-to-date census was 67.7, 2020 year-to-date census was 45.5 and through August 2022 the year-to-date census is 25.9. The 2023 budget was based on a census of 32. That continues to be our census goal, if we have appropriate staffing. The length of stay report was included in the packet. This report is based on residents who have been discharged from the facility. The number of short-term residents discharged in 2018 was 319 compared to 81 in 2021. The long-term residents include those with stays over 100 days.

Lingford provided information on the number of referrals. In August, there were 39 referrals. Twelve of those referrals could have been possible admissions, if there were sufficient staff. Lingford said there were 9 additional referrals for hospice services but we could not review them because of not having a bed available, due to lack of staffing. In September there were 26 referrals for possible admission if appropriate staffing were available.

5. County Executive

County Executive J. Pavelski restated some of his campaign messages. He said "I see the need to bring fiscal responsibility to Portage County and restore decision policy-making procedures back to the Committees." He suggested that sustainable thinking be the lens by which decisions are made that affect our citizens. Executive Pavelski reiterated the wage increases for RN and CNA positions. He highlighted the value of the County benefit package in addition to the wages. He said the health care industry is changing very rapidly and it is not the same as it was when we were preparing for the referendum. The need for skilled nursing is declining.

DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

6. Discussion/Possible Action Re: Regarding Special Meeting Attendance (Portage County Ordinance 3.1.47 & 3.1.48)

- Request for special meeting attendance
- Approval of attendance of special meetings
- Special meeting attendance reports

Chair V. Miresse has attended special meetings. He submitted the attendance reports to L. Lingford. He attended a special meeting yesterday with the architects.

7. Discussion Only: Regarding Clifton Larson Allen Long-Range Strategic Plan Report From September 16, 2020

The Clifton Larson Allen (CLA) Long-Range Strategic Plan Report from September 16, 2020 was included in the packet. There have been changes to the number of licensed beds. In 2020, PCHCC had 70 licensed beds compared to 48 currently. Stevens Point Health Services had 60 licensed beds compared to 50 currently. CLA predicted the need for 88 licensed beds in 2025 for the Community. L. Weaver said the report had a statement that indicated the availability of qualified workers had reached a crisis level. He said it is not a new issue we are dealing with.

D. Butkowski commented that we are putting the cart before the horse. These important variables were not brought out before the referendum: critical work-force and number of residents. He is concerned we will struggle and suggested postponing the building. A. Kessler commented that we should continue with the building project. Staffing concerns are not new. People will need to start finding employment again after the pandemic ends. N. Roppe said the referendum passed and the Committee needs to move forward with building.

8. Discussion Only: Regarding Leading Age Long Term Care's Workforce Crisis Report

A motion was made by L. Weaver, seconded by S. Przybylski to coordinate the discussion of agenda items 7,8,9,10. The motion carried on a voice vote with no negative votes. M. Neville said it would not be a problem to get to a census of 32. The need for skilled care will increase over time. We need to continue to move forward for the needs of the community. Questions were asked: Was the referendum binding or non-binding? Could the project be stopped if the referendum was passed? Can the funds be used for operations? Can the funds be used for other departments?

9. Discussion Only: Regarding The Long-Term Care Workforce Crisis Report: A 2022 Report

10. Discussion Only: Regarding Wisconsin Provider Survey: Workforce Shortage Intensifies Report

11. Discussion Only: Regarding Salary Adjustments and Starting Wage Rate Adjustments for Nursing Staff at the Health Care Center and Overview of Current Open Positions at the Health Care Center

L. Belanger-Tess, Director of Human Resources said the County Executive approved pay rate adjustments within the grade based on market comparable for RN and CNA positions. This is allowable per the HR ordinance. The increases are effective October 2nd. The McGrath salary study provided preliminary information and a proposal was created for the highest needed positions. CNA wages increased by \$1.50 per hour. The starting wage will be advertised at grade 15, step 9. The CNAs were reclassified from grade 14 to grade 15 last year. LPN wages were closer to the market rate and will not be adjusted. All County employee wages will be looked at in 2023. The starting wage for LPN will be advertised at grade 21, step 3. RN wages increased by \$3.50 per hour. The starting wage for RN will be advertised at grade 25, step 12.

Portage County uses several modes for recruitment. A radio ad has been created. The cost is \$5,000 for one month of advertising. Previous advertisements have highlighted low health care costs, workplace culture and a PM shift differential of \$2.00 per hour. The starting wage is based on experience. Effective July 1, 2022, all staff received a 1% wage increase plus an applicable step in the salary schedule. Belanger-Tess asked how much we wanted to put toward advertising and would it produce results.

S. Przybylski said this is a large increase in wages. We hope this works for recruiting staff. If it doesn't work, is there a plan B? S. Przybylski asked what was the next step for recruiting. Belanger-Tess said we could advertise on billboards, make signs or continue spending on recruitment advertising. We could look into creating higher wage positions without benefits. Other options may require ordinance changes, such as holiday pay for on-call casual people. The County currently does not allow anyone to opt out of benefits. D. Jankowski said we have to be careful as changes could have County-wide effects.

L. Weaver asked if there was a road map or actual plan to address staffing issues and over what period of time. Belanger-Tess said we are following what is in the ordinance. Future steps would be ordinance changes. We created an internal document that we are following. We are looking at what we have done for wage increases, advertising and results. A motion was made by L. Weaver to have a coordinated plan with PCHCC and HR that lays out some options over a time period to address the staffing issues at PCHCC so that it can be brought to this committee. The motion was withdrawn. A motion was made by S. Przybylski, seconded by D. Jankowski to ask staff for a report of strategies for recruitment at the HCC to be available at the next meeting. The motion carried on a voice vote with no negative votes. *Note: The Chair recognized afterwards that this was an inadvertent action on a discussion only agenda item, which will be addressed at a future committee meeting.*

12. Discussion/Possible Action: Regarding Intent to Award Contract for Construction Manager At Risk for New Health Care Center

C. Schultz, Procurement Director provided an update on the construction manager at risk (CMAR) contract. The CMAR is the third leg of the stool. Tegra assisted with the creation of the document. A committee of five people chose three vendors to interview. The committee unanimously approved Pepper as the CMAR. A motion was made by S. Przybylski, seconded by L. Weaver to pass to Space & Properties recommending awarding the contract to Pepper. The motion carried on a voice vote with no negative votes.

NEXT MEETING DATE

13. October 19, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in Annex Conference Room 1 & 2

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by V. Miresse, seconded by D. Jankowski to adjourn at 6:42 p.m. The motion carried on a voice vote with no negative votes.

NOTICES

Notice: Any person who has special needs and plans on attending this meeting in-person or remotely should contact the Facilities Office at 715-346-1598 as soon as possible to ensure that reasonable accommodations can be made.

Notice: A quorum of the Portage County Board of Supervisors, or any committee thereof, may be present at this meeting.