



Ferry County Health

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

April 1, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Board Chair DiAnne Lundgren called the meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 10:31 a.m., on February 25, 2025 in the HUB and via Zoom.

Commissioners in attendance were DiAnne Lundgren, Nancy Giddings, Sarah Krausse, Susan Solomon-Hopkins and Ron Bacon.

Emmett Schuster, Interim CEO; Zane Gibbons, CNO; Amber Gangon, Executive Coordinator; Adam Volluz, Facilities Manager; Melinda Michaels, Revenue Cycle Manager, Rosh Moore, Patient Access Supervisor; and Colton Myers, Care Coordinator/MIH Supervisor were also present.

Zoom participants: Spencer Hargett, Compliance Officer; Debbie DeCorde, COO; James Davidson, IT Manager; Wendy Johnson, RN; Mena Cassell, Controller; Lacy Sharbono, HR Coordinator; HarmonJI (Julie Twamley, ALF Manager); Matt Barnett, Patient Account Rep; Christina Beckwith, Lab Manager; and Mila Polevoy, Payroll/AP Clerk were present.

GUESTS: Carmen Peterson, Melissa Rose, Charlotte Coombes, Randy Sage, Debbie Almquist, Sarah Lawrence (Zoom), and Greg Sheffield (Zoom) were present.

QUORUM ESTABLISHED: A quorum was present.

REVIEW, AMEND, ACCEPT AGENDA: A motion was made by Giddings and was seconded by Krausse to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BOARD AND GUESTS: Introductions were made

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Giddings and was seconded by Krausse to accept the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE: No correspondence was received.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Public Comments were shared: Debbie Almquist shared her concern about issues with her mother's care after a fall. Carmen Peterson asked about our current days cash on hand. Giddings responded that today the District has 23 days cash on hand. Charlotte Coombes asked if anyone had followed up with the Ultrasonographer who resigned. She also shared that she believed we were out of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and that anything with the building of the new facility should be open to the public. She also asked what would happen to the MRI if the building did not move forward. Randy Sage stated that he was at the meeting simply to observe. Melissa Rose shared information about her family's care and issues with our referral process. She also asked about the Outfitters building lease and if we would be renewing it after the May 31st termination date.

ENVIRONMENT OF CARE/ SAFETY UPDATE: Volluz gave his report: Alarms have been added to the front doors which is closed 5 pm – 8 am. Employees will need to enter the building through the emergency doors during those hours. This change should help alert staff at the nurses' station and prevent unknown access in and out.

COMPLIANCE REPORT: Hargett gave his report: The committee met last Friday and discussed Policy and Procedure reviews, the creation of a Management of Portable Devices policy, review of any open HIPPA/Compliance Events and preparation of any updates coming out of the most recent legislative session.

DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT: Colton Myers, gave his MIH program report (see MIH handouts at www.fcphd.org). Waiting to find out if grant that will fund the program for four (4) additional years is secured. Short-term program goals are transportation and specialty medical services. Working closely with other state programs on creating a model that resembles Home Health Care or being able to take over the Certificate of Need (CON) for Ferry County.

Lundgren called for a break in session at 11:35 a.m. Open session resumed at 11:41 a.m.

CNO: Gibbons gave his report: New beds on loan from the DOH have arrived and we were able to swap out 10 beds in LTC/NSS and then re-bed the Acute Care Unit so that we are now able to provide care at full capacity. We have 10 beds to store and the Facilities Manager will be reaching out to our local Emergency Management team to inquire if storage of the beds is possible there. Gibbons shared our Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) scores (see CNO slides in the board packet at www.fcphd.org). We are doing better than the state/benchmarks in some areas and definitely have areas for improvement. Gibbons shared that RN, Jamie Marin, has been promoted to Nurse Manager and that RN, Teresa D'Lerma begin her new position as Clinical Coordinator next week. Gibbons shared that his team is working with HR on staffing additional Temp RNs so that we have a pool of staff ready when we need coverage and utilizing the Rural Health Enterprise staffing agency to reduce staffing costs. He also shared that his team was working on updating their staffing plans and orientation so that they were more in-line with the staffing changes set to take effect July 1. Gibbons announced that the Omni-Cure Telehealth Intensivist services will go live 4/7. Gibbons shared that his team is working to improve marketing and utilization of our swing bed unit and he asked for board approval to add a RN Utilization Review position to take up the Care Coordination duties left open when the current staff member is promoted to MIH Supervisor and to assist with authorizations and referrals. (see the CNO slides in the board packet at www.fcphd.org for additional information)

A motion was made by Giddings and was seconded by Krausse to approve the addition of the RN Utilization Review position as presented by the CNO. The motion passed unanimously.

Lundgren called for a break in session at 12:03 a.m. Open session resumed at 12:25 p.m.

COO: DeCorde gave her report: DeCorde shared that the Radiology candidate they had originally decided to extend an offer to, declined to move forward in the process so the search is still on-going. Steve Bradshaw, Radiology Manager from Snoqualmie Hospital will be assisting with oversight until a manager is hired. Mr. Bradshaw was on-site March 17-18 and he checked in with the team, reviewed policies, looked at equipment and spoke with the CEO. DeCorde reported that Laboratory employee and community respiratory testing shows that COVID and Flu testing show a decrease and a small spike in RSV cases. DeCorde notified the board of staffing changes at the Republic Drug Store. Elizabeth Monnin has moved into the HIM department to take over for a retiring staff member. This move will help gain valuable experience as she works through her healthcare administrative school program. The RDS welcomed Jen Duprie as a PRN Pharmacy Assistant who once trained, will be able to assist the store both in the pharmacy and retail areas. The drug store and hospital pharmacy are also working on cross-training pharmacists across both locations to allow for better balance when staff are out or on vacation. DeCorde also welcomed Teresa D'Lerma into her new role as Clinical Coordinator at the Republic Medical Clinic. For the HR department, DeCorde reported that staff licensing audits have been done and that there were four (4) renewals in April that they were monitoring to avoid any lapses. She also reported that the Shift differential issue had been resolved to the UFCWs satisfaction. DeCorde congratulated Julie Twamley on her promotion to ALF Administrator and shared that they had recently remodeled a couple of units, they had a full house of residents and the new Administrator and staff were working through annual assessments and updated paperwork in preparation for their yearly audit. (see the COO slides in the board packet at www.fcphd.org for additional information)

Interim CFO: Spindler gave his report: Spindler reported that the District ended February with 23.98 days cash on hand. He indicated there was a payer settlement coming which will add about five (5) days to that so we should be closer to 30 days. He stated the District is in a good position right now and hopes to improve that position once our Revenue Cycle Consultant, Nichole Hunt, is on-site and can help to improve processes. Spindler also reported that the billing office is re-billing \$750,000 in previously denied Long Term Care (LTC) claims as Extended Skill Nursing per DSHS. Spindler informed the board that he was holding our billing company, TruBridge/HRG to contract standards, and if they were unable to satisfy contractual obligations, that moving to another billing company is absolutely possible. He is currently meeting with other vendors as he works through the issues with TruBridge/HRG. Spindler requested board approval for a services rate increase of 9% in 2025. He shared that because the hospital had not adjusted its rates since before 2022, the 9% is a catch-up rate and that he would hope to see the District create a process for smaller annual increases to keep up with the yearly costs of services and supplies. (see the CFO slides in the board packet at www.fcphd.org)

A motion was made by Giddings and was seconded by Solomon-Hopkins to approve the hospital services rate increase of 9% as presented for 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

MEDICAL STAFF REPORT: No report was given by Chief of Staff, Dr. Weifelspuett.

CEO: CEO gave his report: Schuster reported that the CEO/CFO Taskforce had met and had reviewed all of the applicants for the CEO position so far received. They had it narrowed to eight (8) and would review any additional candidates received until the posting closes Friday, April 4, to find top three to present to the Board for their vetting process. Schuster notified the board that he is working with Compliance/Risk Consultant Spencer Hargett

and Amber Gangon on a process for public comments and once finalized would bring to the board for review. Schuster provided an update on Project HOME: The project continues to move forward at this point in Phase 1. Cardboard mock-ups will be assembled in the rented Outfitters building downtown which will allow for staff to view the area and suggest any changes they think would make providing services more efficient. The mock-ups will be up until the lease expires at 11:59 pm May 31, 2025. Information is also being shared with the community via Facebook. Schuster shared with the board concerns from The Rural Collaborative that were expressed at the Northwest Rural Health Conference he recently attended in Spokane: Capital Funding – with grants and loans frozen, hospitals are worried about necessary projects and equipment needs, the need for increase Revenue Cycle education to keep up with the changes in healthcare billing, payers selling plans in areas with no contracted providers, and medical transport – this is big for us because Stevens and Okanogan counties will no longer come here to transport patients for us. We are working on setting up a program for our Nurses to receive EMT training so they can transport patients when needed. (see the CEO slides in the board packet at www.fcphd.org)

ON-GOING BUSINESS:

- **Board QI:** Board provided pizza to the IT department and it was very appreciated by the staff.
- **Project HOME:** The current Phase of the project ends in June and at that time, the financials should be clear and a decision made about continuing to move forward with the build or putting it on pause without losing any of the work done to date.
- **Rural Resources Building:** There was a discussion about signage for the building/campus and an Open House.
- **Board Self-Assessment:** The Board requested additional time and will add this to the agenda for the next meeting.
- **New Hire Orientation Schedule:**
 - 04/07 – Susan Solomon-Hopkins
 - 04/21 – DiAnne Lundgren

BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:

- **Finance:** No concerns to report at this time. Krausse is excited for the Revenue Cycle Consultant to come on board and help clean up our billing processes so we can get more out of the door and hopefully increase our reimbursement.
- **Quality Improvement:** Giddings reported the next meeting is April 9th. Gibbons reported that the DOH trainer that was here for Trauma OB Training in March stated that inspectors are starting to directly ask board members about QI.
- **Compliance/Risk Management:** No concerns. Bacon reported that Hargett runs a great meeting with clear action items. Spindler reported his one assignment from the Committee was to update required Financials with the state. Krausse thanked Hargett for the Board Public Disclosure deadline reminders.
- **Medical Staff:** Solomon-Hopkins reported on the Demo with OmniCure telehealth Intensivists 4/7. Providers are excited for the new services. Gibbons shared that the initial intensivist services will be a huge assist when we are unable to transport patients. Gibbons will have the MIH referral process and available at the next meeting. Gibbons reported if the initial services go well, the next specialty could be orthopedics. Solomon-Hopkins shared that there is a new traveling OT at Republic Rehab who will also assist with rehab services in the hospital.
- **EMS:** Giddings was unable to attend the last meeting due to a scheduling conflict.
- **PFAC:** Gibbons reported that after the break between the recent staffing changes, the meetings will resume 4/14 and hope to continue to have 5-7 community members included with Gibbons, Rebecca Thompson and board representatives Krausse and Bacon.
- **Building Committee:** No concerns to report at this time. Mock-up construction is currently taking place at the Outfitters building and information has been shared with the community via Facebook.
- **Credentialing Committee:** No concerns.

A motion was made by Giddings and was seconded by Krausse to approve the request for Re-Appointment of Courtesy Medical Staff Privileges by Proxy for the following Integra Imaging Provider(s):

David Holznagel, MD	David Keaton, MD	Douglas Murrey, MD	Logan Bebee, DO
Marc Bruce, MD	James Buratto, MD	Terry Chun, MD	Patrick Davis, MD

Seth Gillham, MD

Eric Graham, MD

David Holt, MD

Ben LeCheminant, DO

Rupinder Penna, DO

The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

TREASURER APPOINTMENT: A motion was made by Bacon and was seconded by Giddings to appoint Lance Spindler, Interim CFO, as Treasurer of the District. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP: A motion was made by Krausse and was seconded by Bacon to approve an allowance of \$2250.00 for 2025 community event sponsorship use. The motion passed unanimously.

DISTRICT AUDITOR(S) APPOINTMENT: A motion was made by Krausse and was seconded by Solomon-Hopkins to appoint Lance Spindler, Interim CFO and Mena Cassell, Controller as auditors for the District. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING DOCUMENTATION AND EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE: Krausse presented a draft Board Public Comment policy for review. The board will review the policy and it will be added for continued discussion during next month's meeting.

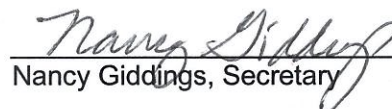
ORGANIZAITONAL UPDATES: Lundgren called for this topic to be discussed during Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Chair called for an executive session Pursuant to RCW §42.30.110(1)(g)- Performance of a Public Employee at 2:15 p.m. The Chair requested thirty (30) minutes with open session to resume at 2:45 p.m. The CEO and CNO were invited to attend.

OPEN SESSION: Open session resumed at 2:45 p.m. No decisions were made and no actions taken.

ADJOURNMENT: As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

 4/22/25
DiAnne Lundgren, Chair Date

 4/22/25
Nancy Giddings, Secretary Date

 4/22/25
Amber Gangon, Recording Secretary Date