



**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Regular Meeting**  
January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Minutes  
10:00 am

**Members Present:**

Rod Waeckerlin, *President*  
Mark Kostovny, *Vice President*  
Jerry Steele, *Secretary*  
Garry Goergen, *Treasurer (absent)*  
Lisa Engstrom, *Member*

**Administration:**

Rex Walk, *Interim Chief Executive Officer*  
Wayne Colson, *Interim Chief Financial Officer*  
Woody White, *Ovation Healthcare*  
Alexis Martinez, *Executive Assistant*  
Stephanie Hinkle, *Director of Strategic Operations (absent)*

**Guests:**

Abbi Forwood, *Legal Counsel (via zoom)*  
Christina Baugh, *Director of Quality and Infection Control*  
Dr. Duane Abels, *Medical Executive Chairman*  
HIM Department Team Members

Rod Waeckerlin, President, called the Memorial Hospital of Carbon County Board of Trustees meeting to order at 10:04 AM. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence followed.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Mark Kostovny made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

Mark Kostovny made a motion, Jerry Steele seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gary Goergen has been excused from the Board of Trustees meeting for January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Approval of Board of Trustees Open Session Minutes from January 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024:**

President Waeckerlin requested if there are any additions that need to be applied to the Board of Trustees Minutes for January 4<sup>th</sup> and January 11<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Engstrom stated that the January 4<sup>th</sup> minutes did not reflect that she was absent. President Waeckerlin believes that is minor.

Mark Kostovny made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to accept the minutes from the regular meeting and continuation on January 4<sup>th</sup> and January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Employee Recognition Presented by Rod Waeckerlin, *Board of Trustees President*:**

President Waeckerlin recognized Lisa Hardy, as the January Employee of the Month. Ms. Hardy is currently Social Services and the Patient Care Coordinator at MHCC. In addition, Sherry Longog was recognized for Supervisor of the Quarter. Mr. Waeckerlin and the Board of Trustees congratulated Ms. Longog and Mrs. Hardy for a job well done.

**Department Highlight of January 2024:**

President Waeckerlin welcomed the Health Information Management staff members. Mrs. Hardy, Health Information Manager/Privacy Officer introduced all HIM staff members to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees thanked the HIM Department for their hard work and dedication to the organization.

**Introduction to Eric Boley, President of the Wyoming Hospital Association:**

Mr. Boley provided an annual report and a value statement for the Board of Trustees. He started the presentation reviewing underfunded crises. The Wyoming Hospital Association has recently received approval from CBS to help care for two facilities in the state for adolescences. He continues to review different bills, as there are over 150 bills that have been introduced. He believes that some of them are “cutting edge” prior to authorization bills. This will streamline processes before insurance companies can deny claims. This will not impact the Medicare Advantage plans. Federal recently have rolled out new rules and regulations for commercial plans. Mr. Boley continued to review the different levels with the Board of Trustees and guests. It was stated that the governor of Wyoming is trying to push hard to ensure that healthcare facilities and hospitals are supported by all means. He also explains the term, “white bagging” and the process for it. He foresees a controversial projected budget and in the upper category, there are over 300 bills that are scheduled for review.

President Waeckerlin questioned if we are getting lobbied out of the various bills. Mr. Boley stated that he did not believe so and that MHCC has unanimous support. He continues to review commercial insurance companies. President Waeckerlin has reviewing the PBM very closely. He believes it is an instrumental process. Mr. Boley and President Waeckerlin communicated about the PBM briefly.

Mr. Boley continued with the presentation. Most critical care hospitals around the state are trying to break even. They have been seeing constriction and have had to get rid of services that were no longer needed. Mr. Boley stated that he has collaborations with healthcare places. The governor has formed a healthcare task force that consists of an extensive amount of members and 4 subgroups. There are legislative members who serve on the healthcare task force.

Discussion continued. Mr. Boley reviewed previous processes and stated that the past year, payments will be retroactive. Wyoming was attempting to mirror the state of Utah. Uncompensated healthcare will continue to grow and worsen. Medicaid expansion may not help. Mr. Boley invited the Board of Trustees to attend a meeting in May in Cody, Wyoming for all Board of Trustees across the state. He encourages the MHCC board members to get involved. News briefs have gone virtual and there is opportunity to receive onboarding and trainings for the Board of Trustees as well. There are trustee’s education counsels, round tables, etc. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, a public officer training will be held. These are created courses and webinars for new members. Once members have completed the courses and trainings, they have the

ability to become certified. They can take the test once and become certified for a lifetime. Many of these are provided through virtual online training. An annual meeting will be held in early August, late September in Casper, Wyoming for the Board of Trustees. Mr. Boley indicated that this may be a great opportunity to network.

WHA resources were able to keep the dues at a flat rate. Mr. Boley indicated that rates have not increased. Wyoming has generated other funding resources. There are endorsed vendors to choose from. If you utilize the endorsed vendors, the vendors will pay the WHA and the WHA continues to fund those specific resources. Mr. Boley wrapped up the presentation and stated that he promises to continue to work hard with Mr. Walk to continue to push through all of the struggles that MHCC is facing. Dr. Abels' stated that he is very appreciative of the Board of Trustees. They put many hours into our hospital (without pay) and are like family to us. Mr. Boley agreed. He believes that the County Commissioner's office need to understand that it is vital to keep the hospital afloat. President Waeckerlin thanked Mr. Boley for assisting MHCC with loans and such to do so. Mr. Boley continued to discuss a group calling REDI. He stated that they will be a great resource and their payment will go through FLEX funding.

The Board of Trustees and Mr. Boley continue conversation. Mr. Steele and Mrs. Engstrom indicate that they are newer board members. Mr. Steele inquires if Mr. Boley can speak with the county commissioners in the future. Mr. Boley stated that it is a tough situation, but he believes Burkhart is MHCC's allies. He promises that he will speak with them and assist MHCC in strategies.

#### **Fremont Therapy Group, Lori Ridgeway & Brent Kauffman (via zoom):**

Mr. Kauffman greets everyone via zoom. He was personally excited to hear from Mr. Eric Boley, as he believes he is an excellent resource.

Mr. Kauffman and Ms. Ridgeway review their new staff that will be onboarding soon (February.) OT-coming soon, PT- coming from nursing home. The Women's Health Presentation did not have a great turnout. Mr. Kauffman stated that everything is going well with the partnership. There are 2 different groups from the Women's Health visits. They have continued adding to the partnership. The swing bed program has started to pick up. Fremont Therapy Group has regular inpatients in the hospital. Mr. Kauffman added that Fremont Therapy Group has not been losing any monies in the partnership. There is revenue coming in, some are reimbursements.

Mrs. Mann spoke with Fremont Therapy Group. She stated that the swing bed has all-inclusive stays (global.) She broke down and explained the processes and how it is billed out to everyone. She previously had requested data from Amplify. Amplify has never provided the information to her. President Waeckerlin questioned where we are at with the joint OT. Ms. Ridgeway stated that they may have a lead. Mr. Kauffman provided assurance to President Waeckerlin regarding the OT, indicating that they are still seeking an OT. Mr. Walk joined the conversation. He stated to the board members that we are committed to having a great relationship. We need to ensure that we remain current on payments with Fremont Therapy Group. He continued to apologize to Fremont Therapy Group for not paying the invoices timely to them. He pledged that he will assure this does not happen again. Mr. Kauffman understood with great sympathy. He questioned the REDI program and Mr. Walk explains further what/who they are. Mr. Walk stressed the need to analytics. President Waeckerlin questioned Mr. Kauffman and Ms. Ridgeway if they are happy with the partnership. Both parties are satisfied with the partnership.

#### **Medical Staff Report Presented by Dr. Mikesell, *Chief of Staff***

Dr. Mikesell apologizes for his recent absence. The Board of Trustees and all present staff indicated that MHCC is happy to see him back at work. Dr. Mikesell reviews different items that have been ongoing

issues. Switch to Medline, billing concerns, Amplify telephone processes, Medicaid issues, CRNA part B reimbursements, staffing, hospitalist group, swing bed options, and the new bladder scanner. Mr. Walk indicated that the new bladder scanner has arrived and is in the building. This was paid by HF Sinclair. Mr. Kostovny stated that HF Sinclair has been a great partnership throughout the years. Board members are in agreement. Mrs. Mann entered the Board of Trustees room with the newly purchased equipment. She explains the processes and how the bladder scanner and accuvien finder work. The total amount for a charge is \$150, which is cheaper to utilize than the typical ultrasound. The accuvien finder was purchased by the Memorial Hospital of Carbon County Foundation. The cost was \$6,900.00. It highlights the blood flow throughout the targeted area. Dr. Abels questioned how long MHCC has had the device. Mrs. Mann stated that MHCC has had it for a few months. Dr. Abels would like documentation to see if later down the road, it reduces the amount of “pokes” in patients. Mrs. Mann agreed. On February 1<sup>st</sup>, a training for the accuvien finder will be held. It will take place at MHCC in the classroom and they will have a zoom link available for anyone who would like to attend.

Dr. Mikesell continued with the Chief of Staff report. Dr. Mikesell reviews Amanda Jones (FPC provider.) He believes that she is doing better with her charting but is starting to “slip” again. This may become problematic as Dr. Mikesell indicated Amanda’s position is to see patients and bill patients. Dr. Abels added that MEC has an eye on this as well. The Board of Trustees thanked Dr. Mikesell for his presentation.

President Waeckerlin addressed the All-Provider Meetings. He feels as though the Board of Trustees should make onsite visits to the clinics to discuss any issues with the providers. He would like adjustments made to these meetings, going forward.

#### **Ovation Board Report, Suzette Duhe, *Ovation Healthcare*:**

Mrs. Duhe presented the Ovation Board Report in place of Mr. White, who was absent during the Board of Trustees meeting. She indicated that they are scheduled to interview a CFO candidate in the morning. President Waeckerlin requested that Mrs. Duhe keep the Board of Trustees posted, as that is an MHCC board decision to make. Mr. Walk requested if Mrs. Duhe had anything further to present. Mrs. Duhe stated that she had 1 update and Amplify will report on Rev Cycle.

#### **Operational Report Presented by Rex Walk, *Interim Chief Executive Officer*:**

- **Provider Updates:**

Active recruitment efforts have been in effect. Mr. Walk has interviewed two new providers, Dr. Eric Jernigan and Dr. Ali. Dr. Eric Jernigan graduates in June of 2024. MHCC is hoping to bring him on to take the place of Dr. Lumb. Dr. Jernigan is the lead resident of his residency. Mr. Walk stated that he may have been one of the best surgeons he has interviewed before. Dr. Ali graduated 2 years ago. She is an excellent candidate and would be a great asset. Mr. Walk would like to create a plan to bring forth to the Board of Trustees prior to final decisions. Additionally, he commended Mrs. Stratton, Mr. Grant, and Mrs. Seldomridge for a job well done during the interviews with all providers.

An internal medicine physician approached MHCC for a position. She is from Colorado Springs, Colorado. She recently married and her husband is currently working at HF Sinclair. She anticipates to move to Rawlins, Wyoming. Mr. Walk would like to put a plan in place, as she would be an excellent resource and asset as well. She would also have the capabilities to assist with hospitalists. Mr. Walk has interviewed another FPC provider that will graduate soon from Montana. He anticipates to bring forth proposals

- **All Provider Meetings:**

Mr. Walk has also held his bi-monthly All Provider Meetings (Slideshow to follow.)

- **Miscellaneous/Other:**

- HIPAA Trainings have commenced.
- Mr. Walk has started extended 1:1 meetings with his staff members. He has provided surveys to the management team to complete.
- SHIP Grant Program: HCAHPS- for \$13,000.00.
- Mr. Walk reviews several maintenance updates with the board members. Rocky Mountain Boiler needs to be paid \$11,000 in order to service the boilers. Mr. Walk requests what his signature authority limit is to sign off on specific purchases. President Waeckerlin stated that he will review and look into what the limit is. Mr. Kostovny questioned if MHCC utilized the money from the County Commissioners to buy the snow removal equipment. Mr. Walk indicated that MHCC did purchase a skid steer for the snow removal and the rest of the money was allocated to repair the elevators. He also stated that the Wyoming Hospital Association has set expectations for MHCC to pay off the loan that had been given to us by June or July.
- The University of Colorado has provided feedback regarding the RHC. They had indicated that MHCC would have further problems if we went into rural health clinics.
- Mr. Walk reviewed the new recent organizational changes. Aimee Hickman has taken the role of the Director of Human Resources. Autumn Hardy has taken the role of Health Information Manager/HIPAA Privacy Officer, and Stephanie Hinkle has taken the role of the Director of Strategic Operations.
- Mr. Walk continues to present his operational report and the 90 day goals that he has set.

### **Amplify Report Presented by Lindsay Gabbert:**

Mrs. Gabbert informs the Board of Trustees that Mrs. Lynch is out and she will present. Amplify has taken on a cleanup of the old AR. December was the “cleanup focus month.” The coding has been cleaned up. Mrs. Gabbert believes that things are improving and working with Revenue Cycle. There has been a continuance of good processes in place. She foresees the number to rise within the next 90 days. Dr. Abels questioned if the goal is in (3) months. Mrs. Gabbert responded that 3 months is correct, collecting 80% is the conservative rate. Dr. Abels inquired if that goal will be obtained by the end of the 2024 year. Mrs. Gabbert stated that she would like to see it above 85% by the end of the year. Mrs. Gabbert continued to present with the Continued Process Improvements. UHC Medicare denial appeals continue to be upheld. AR is over 360 excluding sp \$820k.

October successes were 3M- current is at \$700,000. Mrs. Gabbert would like to give kudos to Abbie and Dr. Mikesell for addressing specific charting issues with Amanda Jones. Amplify has increased staffing to assist with collecting. Mrs. Gabbert believes with the early out vendor (Revenue Enterprises), this will be a huge win for MHCC. Mrs. Gabbert reviewed the December Improvement Recommendations. Case management, late charge and charge captures, and registration training monthly to continue to reduce

registration errors. President Waeckerlin questioned Mrs. Gabbert if Amplify is making any headway. Mr. Kostovny also questioned if there are “improvements,” why are they not reflecting on the clean claim rates. If the changes are permanent, we should not have to reinvent. Mrs. Gabbert stated the goal is for March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Mr. Miller intervened by stating that we are learning how to “not do things horribly, unfixing things.”

**Financial Report by Scott Miller, *Interim Chief Financial Officer*:**

Mr. Miller reviews with the board members that the cost report has been completed. FEMA has been completed. FEMA has one additional closeout meeting. They would like to review operations. This will be very helpful to work with. Mr. Miller indicated that Ms. Keplinger is working on retrieving items for the auditors. Mr. Kostovny questioned how much longer MHCC will be working with DZA. Mr. Miller stated that he cannot close out November and December until AP invoices have been paid out. He is navigating through everything. The ultimate goal is to have financial statements that are correct by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Mr. Miller reported that Ms. Pam Evert has returned to MHCC. Ms. Evert was the former controller for the organization. DZA has assisted with November, December, January, and February. He anticipates the close of the relationship with DZA will be February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 after month end close. Mr. Miller reviewed what was available for financials. It is down 20% in revenue (reviewed the top line.) President Waeckerlin stated MHCC must drive the top line revenue and start bringing patients in. He believes that we need to push forward. Mr. Miller stated that currently, MHCC is bringing in \$86,000 per day of net revenue. The DNFB is down 5 days, but continues to improve. At the end of the day, AP will be completed. The AP inbox had been overloaded with emails and voicemails left unattended. 98% of payables have been entered into the system. Mr. Miller indicated that simple communication pushes vendors back. Cardinal is below the 60 day window. Paymerang has been reset and is moving forward with processes as before. AP items are running through the Paymerang system again. Mr. Miller feels as though the Finance Department is making progress. He stated that Ms. Keplinger is great to work with.

President Waeckerlin questioned if there is a possibility to review every vendor at some point in time. Mr. Miller indicated that he can do that for the board members. President Waeckerlin also questioned if Memorial Hospital of Carbon County is still utilizing Brentwood. Mr. Miller stated that MHCC is. He has reviewed that some of the invoices are old, but he believes that the organization should review. President Waeckerlin thanked Mr. Miller and Ms. Keplinger for their time, services, and transparency. Mr. Kostovny questioned if the \$1.28M will be the total for invoices in December. Mr. Miller agrees with the total.

Mark Kostovny made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to approve the financial summary as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Kostovny made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to approve the Revenue Cycle board report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Kostovny made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to approve the AP check listings as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Lunch Break: 12:29 PM

**Motion to Resume Board of Trustees Public Meeting for at 12:58 PM**

**Senior Life Solutions, Presented by Pete Underwood:**

Mr. Underwood has promised to provide pertinent information to the Board of Trustees. As discussed in previous board meetings, Senior Life Solutions is a group therapy program. It assists with the elderly who are suffering from depression, anxiety, etc. This program will allow them to collaborate with others. Mr. Underwood emphasized that depression is a part of being older and elderly. Once the patients have completed the group therapy program, the patients will graduate. They will continue to score in normal ranges/score levels. These changes will progress after 9 months into the program. Patients will visit with a psychiatrist monthly. Senior Life Solutions will observe and monitor all psychotropic medications. Mr. Walk indicated to the board members that he is very familiar with the program, as he has previously worked with Mr. Underwood in his previous hospital, carrying out Senior Life Solutions which ended up very successful. The program essentially became integrated with the community.

Mr. Underwood continued with his presentation and reviewed different scenarios with the Board of Trustees. He also explained that Senior Life Solutions' services. The program offers rides along with meals on wheels. Anyone in the community can be referred by any source. However, Senior Life Solutions mostly intakes Medicare patients. Patients will have zero out of pocket costs incur. Mr. Underwood reviewed the interim rates (reimbursements.) He believes there is potential for revenue. Senior Life Solutions will have a full time nurse and a full time office coordinator. They will recruit and staff. Marketing strategies will be inclusive with the program. Mr. Miller questioned whose patients they will belong to- Senior Life Solutions or Memorial Hospital of Carbon County. Mr. Underwood stated that they are billed under MHCC. Mr. Underwood expressed that the program cannot exceed more than 10 people in a room at a time. Mr. Walk adds that the Senior Life Solutions program was extremely successful in Phillipsburg, Kansas where he previously worked. Mr. Underwood estimated to have the first patient within the first 5 months of the program implementation. His goal is to outreach the community. Virtual access to participate will be available as well. President Waeckerlin questioned if the recruitment is handled off-site. Mr. Underwood indicated that the offsite staff members would eventually need to re-locate to Rawlins, Wyoming.

The costs for MHCC will be a management fee to Mr. Underwood. Everything is will go to reimbursements. Reimbursements can range from lunch reimbursements to vehicle reimbursements. He explained with vehicle reimbursements, it only will apply if the patient is inside of the vehicle during that time. President Waeckerlin stated that Carbon County has 10 municipalities. He questioned how much space is needed for this program. Mr. Underwood indicated that the space will be required to be within 250 yards of the Emergency Department. Discussion furthered. Mr. Underwood explained that there are various ways to save on overhead. Flipping unused space and flipping used space are qualifying factors.

As the presentation commenced, there were no further questions from the Board of Trustees. President Waeckerlin indicated that MHCC would need to review further contractual from legal, as well as sending a copy to management for review. The Board of Trustees thanked Mr. Underwood for his presentation and his time. However, they would like to explore it prior to making any official decisions.

**Motion to Recess Board of Trustees Public Meeting to go to Executive Session 1:45 PM**

**Motion to Recess Executive Session to go to Board of Trustees Public Meeting at 4:04 PM**

Mark Kostovny made a motion, and Jerry seconded the motion to follow the MEC recommendations and approve credentialing. Motion carried unanimously. MEC recommendations are the following:

- Daniel Long, MD: Pathology – Recommend Reappointment to Courtesy Staff
- Myka Veigel, DO: Radiology – Recommend Reappointment to Courtesy Staff
- Erin Baumgartner, MD: Pathology – Recommend transition to full, unrestricted Courtesy Staff
- Nancy Bergquist, MD: APW (Hospitalist) – Recommend transition to full, unrestricted Courtesy Staff
- Jason Sutherland, MD: Pathology – Recommend transition to full, unrestricted Courtesy Staff

Mr. Kostovny requested that the board minutes reflect the names of approved credentialing.

Mr. Walk briefly reviewed the hospitalist agreement with RFP. The contract is in process. Mr. Walk commended Ms. Keishah Edwards for her work with physician recruitment. Mr. Kostovny questioned if MHCC has requested RFP's from Ovation. He believed that there is 1 year left of the contract. He advised that it is reviewed at some point. Ms. Forwood indicated that MHCC can retain that information from the Wyoming Hospital Association. Vendors can be re-reviewed every 5 years. Mr. Kostovny reviewed with the Board of Trustees that it was his understanding there may be disturbing news on the way to a potential upgrade of ICD-11 code. Dr. Abels stated that it may be 2 years delayed.

**Adjournment:**

Mark Kostovny made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to adjourn the Board of Trustees public meeting at 4:07 pm and to reconvene on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 10:00 am.

***Respectfully Submitted,***

Alexis Martinez, *MHCC Executive Assistant*  
Abbi Forwood, *Legal Counsel*