



Board of Trustees Meeting
Regular Meeting
February 26th, 2026
Minutes
10:00 am

Members Present:

Rod Waeckerlin, *President*
Jerry Steele, *Vice President*
Garry Goergen, *Treasurer*
Lisa Engstrom, *Secretary*
Dr. Stephanie Chiu, *Trustee*

Absent Members:

Administration:

Kerry Ashment, *Chief Executive Officer*
Stephanie Hinkle, *Chief Operating Officer*
Joy Coulston, *Chief Financial Officer*

Guests:

Abbi Forwood, *Legal Counsel* (via Zoom)
Dr. Duane Abels, *Guest*
Dr. Lincoln Westfall, *Chief of Staff*

Rod Waeckerlin, President, called the Memorial Hospital of Carbon County Board of Trustees meeting to order at 10:00 am. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence followed.

Amendment and Approval of Agenda:

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

Approval of Consent Agenda Items: Attachment (A)

Lisa Engstrom made a motion, and Garry Goergen seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: Mr. Waeckerlin thanked the Managers for their reports. Mr. Steele noted the clinic report was missing and Mr. Ashment stated that the report will be submitted to the Board next month as there is now a Clinic Director in place. Mr. Waeckerlin asked for the Clinic Director to be present at the next meeting for introductions.

Approval of Board of Trustees Open Session Minutes from January 22nd, 2026:

Garry Goergen made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to accept the minutes from the regular meeting on January 22nd, 2026, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Employee of the Month presented by Rod Waeckerlin, *Board President*:

President Waeckerlin recognized Audra Gruetzmacher as the Employee of the Month. Ms. Gruetzmacher has been a key part to Emergency Room registration throughout the years and has gone above and beyond her role in assisting patients and staff.

Open Discussion/Citizen Participation

- No business was brought before the board.

Medical Staff Report: Dr. Lincoln Westfall, *Chief of Staff*

- Dr. Westfall presented the Medical Staff Report. He shared that the clinic providers are excited about the new Clinic Director, Jared Frakes, and reviewed the clinic stats and gross revenues for the previous month with the Board of Trustees. Dr. Westfall updated the Board of Trustees of the Annual Wellness Visits, noting many patients are declining the appointment offerings when called. Dr. Westfall noted that he is not aware of the scripting for the calls but may need to be vetted out.

Discussion: There was a question posed regarding how outpatient lab orders are handled to which Dr. Westfall explained the difference between typical lab orders and Health Fair lab orders. There was further discussion regarding how a patient could have lab orders done prior to a visit with their provider. Both Dr. Westfall and Dr. Chiu weighed in and explained that it's typically not the case as an examination and assessment of the patient would need to be completed prior to any orders being placed. Dr. Westfall noted that clinic staff could improve on closing the loop with result notification to their patients.

Operational Report: Kerry Ashment, *Chief Executive Officer* & Stephanie Hinkle, *Chief Operating Officer*

- Mr. Ashment presented his Operational Report, noting that workforce stability is slowly improving. Leadership continues to focus on recruitment and retention, training and orientation programs, and open communication. Mr. Ashment shared that by supporting our employees with the same care and respect we strive to show our community is essential to our long-term success.

Financial highlights were shared by Mr. Ashment for January 2026. He provided the days cash on hand, which was slightly up from December. He reviewed the total patient and net revenues and noted the operation expenses decreased from December. Mr. Ashment noted the average census for the month of January and provided an update on the legacy debt.

Mr. Ashment provided a brief update on marketing and business development initiatives – he stated that Business Breakfasts are very well attended and meetings with the Patient and Family Advisory Council and Community Town Hall events continue to be a focus to maintain factual information throughout the community, dispel rumors and give the public a chance to ask questions.

Discussion: Mr. Waeckerlin inquired about the status of the Rural Health Transformation Funds. Mr. Ashment stated that there are still many unknowns as to how the funds will be divided out. He offered his thoughts about the matter but should have more information at the next meeting with the State leadership. Mr. Goergen requested follow-up information from Mr. Ashment.

Ms. Hinkle provided a Marketing update, echoing Mr. Ashment's comments about the strong attendance for the Business Breakfast. Ms. Hinkle reported that Ms. Jill Aucoin will start seeing patients on her own next month; a new training structure has been implemented for providers, and it is being tested on Ms. Aucoin.

Ms. Hinkle shared the training plan for Mr. Frakes as he begins his onboarding. Like Ms. Aucoin, Mr. Frakes will have a structured training schedule and will be meeting with many key departments to learn about processes and workflows.

The Orthopedic program will be slightly different than due to losing Mr. Keel. Ms. Hinkle reported that leadership is working with our Orthopedic vendor, inReach to assist with temporary placement of a PA that is familiar with Dr. Allred and can help support our Orthopedic program until a permanent placement is found. Leadership has been working with an internal candidate, Ms. Chanel Thrasher, who will be graduating with her Nurse Practitioner degree in May.

Ms. Hinkle provided a status update about the Sleep Studies digital marketing campaign. She will have data to share at the March Board meeting.

There will be a Strategic Plan quarterly update presented in April. Ms. Hinkle noted that several project teams have been implemented and are meeting biweekly.

Discussion: Mr. Steele asked if there was timeline on the SLIB grant funding and inquired what it would cover. Mr. Ashment stated that we have not heard about when MHCC would receive the funding and explained that the funding would support the replacement of the mechanical pieces of several elevators. He further explained that the funding will unfortunately not cover a full replacement and installation of a new elevator. Mr. Goergen asked who would be managing the elevator project. Ms. Hinkle explained that there is a dedicated committee who will oversee it and provided a few examples of what would be involved regarding the management of the project. Mr. Waeckerlin asked for a thank you card to be sent to the County Commissioners.

Mr. Waeckerlin commented that the recent Business Breakfast was well attended and would like to see participation from the Board of Trustees on a rotating basis.

Commissioners Report: Gwynn Bartlett, Carbon County Commissioner Liaison

- Ms. Bartlett was absent; a report was not presented.

Financial Report: Joy Coulston, Chief Financial Officer

- Ms. Coulston presented the Financial Summary Report for the month ending January 31st, 2026.

The average census including Observation was 1.84, below the prior month of 4.93, and above the last 12 months average of 3.51. Emergency Department, Ambulance and Clinic visits were down from prior month with Lab and Radiology holding steady.

Gross revenue for December was \$3,997,379 versus the prior month of \$5,593,650, a difference of \$1,596,271. As compared to budget, gross revenue was below budget by \$1,224,369 or 23.4%. As compared to prior year, \$518,617 above January 2025.

Deductions from revenue were 47.4% for the month. Our prior year historical average is 48.7%.

Net revenue was \$2,100,618 down from the prior month, and above budget 22.4%. Net revenue remains above January 2025 by \$161,612.

Overall operating expenses were \$2,774,688 below the prior month of \$2,982,578 below the fiscal year 2025 average of \$2,858,919. As compared to budget, operating expenses are \$37,181 or 1.3% below budget. Depreciation was higher due to 7 months depreciation for the Ambulance.

Additional details related to expenses: Benefits are 9.6% over budgets. We have seen lower health claims in the month and continued with increased Workers Compensation rate. Salaries and contract labor are under budget.

For the month, we had an operating loss of \$590,198 and a net loss of \$628,360 This operational loss is a reflection of the low census creating low gross revenue.

Jerry Steele made a motion, and Garry Goergen seconded the motion to approve the Financial Summaries for the period ending January 31st, 2026, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Jerry Steele made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to approve the vouchers for the period ending January 31st, 2026, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board of Trustees took a break from 11:17 – 11:29 am.

New Business:

• **Approval of Contracts**

1. **Rural Family Physicians Hospitalist Agreement**, Janessa Mann, *Director of Inpatient Services*

Dr. Stephanie Chiu made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to approve the Rural Family Physicians Hospitalist Agreement as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Virtual Radiologic Corporation (vRad) Credentialing Letter of Understanding** Jan Gulbrandson, *Director of Ancillary Services*
Ms. Gulbrandson presented the above contract to the Board. She informed the Board that vRad will be utilized for overnight reads in Radiology through Casper Medical Imaging. This Letter has been reviewed and approved by Legal Counsel.

Lisa Engstrom made a motion, and Garry Goergen seconded the motion to approve the Virtual Radiologic Corporation (vRad) Credentialing Letter of Understanding as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **First Amendment to the PACS Use and Archive Agreement**, Jan Gulbrandson, *Director of Ancillary Services*
Ms. Gulbrandson presented the agreement to the Board. This amendment would allow MHCC to add a feature for AI pre-reads for mammography imaging (via VolPara). Ms. Gulbrandson stated that this would require an interface and would be able to capture the patient's history and any necessary report items. The cost of this would be \$3,000 monthly. Legal Counsel has reviewed the amendment.

Dr. Stephanie Chiu made a motion, and Jerry Steele seconded the motion to approve the First Amendment to the PACS Use and Archive Agreement as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Summit Imaging Inc. Agreement**, Josephine Stratton, *OR Manager*

Lisa Engstrom made a motion, and Garry Goergen seconded the motion to approve the Summit Imaging Inc. Agreement as presented. Motion carried with three nay votes and one nay vote.

Old Business:

- **Approval of Policies**

1. Death in the OR, Josephine Stratton, *OR Manager*

Ms. Stratton presented the revisions of the agreement per Legal Counsel's request. One noted change that Ms. Stratton spoke to was regarding the term "circulating nurse". That term will be struck and noted as nurse. Ms. Webster will update the wording in MCN prior to approving the policy.

Jerry Steele made a motion, and Dr. Stephanie Chiu seconded the motion to approve the Death in the OR policy as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Board of Trustee Bylaw Review**

Discussion: Mr. Waeckerlin clarified the procedure of notification if Board members are not going to be present for a meeting. Mr. Waeckerlin noted those who will be absent from the March Board meeting and that Mr. Steele will be running the April Board meeting in his absence.

Ms. Webster informed the Board that Legal Counsel is still compiling a draft of the Board of Trustees Bylaw for review and plans to present them in May or June. Going forward the Bylaws will be aligned with the Fiscal Year end.

Motion to Move to Executive Session & Recess Board of Trustees Public Meeting

Lisa Engstrom made a motion, and Garry Goergen seconded the motion to move the Board of Trustees to Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board convened to Executive Session at 11:51 am to discuss personnel issues and to consider or receive any information classified as confidential by law.

Motion to Move to Board of Trustees Public Meeting & Recess Executive Session:

Dr. Stephanie Chiu made a motion, and Jerry Steele seconded the motion to resume the Board of Trustees Public Meeting at 3:42 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Credential Request for Memorial Hospital of Carbon County Privileges

- **Initial Appointments**

1. Carol Snider, NP – Nurse Practitioner (Holistic Pain Management) – Recommend Appointment to Allied Health Staff
2. Jill Aucoin, NP – Nurse Practitioner (Family Practice Clinic) – Recommend Appointment to Allied Health Staff
3. Veronica Ortiz, MD – Hospitalist (Rural Family Physicians) – Recommend Appointment to Active Staff
4. Leo Simpson, MD – Cardiology (Valley View Hospital) – Recommend Appointment to Telemedicine Staff
5. Lincoln Westfall, DO – Request for Emergency Room Privileges – Recommend Approval of Privileges Requested

Jerry Steele made a motion, and Dr. Stephanie Chiu seconded the motion to approve the Initial Appointment requests as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Approval of Contracts**

1. **TrueBridge Statement of Work to MSA, Business Service: Complete Business Office**

Jerry Steele made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to approve the TrueBridge Statement of Work to MSA, Business Service: Complete Business Office agreement as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment:

Dr. Stephanie Chiu made a motion, and Lisa Engstrom seconded the motion to adjourn Board of Trustees public meeting at 3:43 pm with no further business coming before the Board. Motion carried unanimously.

The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for March 26th, 2026.

Respectfully submitted.

Abbie Webster, *Executive Assistant*

Lisa Engstrom, Board of Trustees, *Secretary*