

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors  
Lakeland Health Care Center Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, July 17, 2019  
Walworth County Government Center, County Board Room 114  
100 West Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

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Chair Ken Monroe called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Roll call was conducted, with the following members present: Chair Ken Monroe, Vice Chair Tim Brellenthin, and Supervisors Kathy Ingersoll, William Norem and Charlene Staples. A quorum was declared.

**Others in attendance:**

County Board members: County Board Chair Nancy Russell

County staff: County Administrator David Bretl; Lakeland Health Care Center (LHCC) Administrator Timothy Peek; LHCC Assistant Administrator Taya Walk; Human Resources Director Kate Bishop

Members of the public : Gary Wagner, Lake Geneva; Tammy Fonseca, Genoa City; Nicole Henning, Burlington; Karen Voss, Burlington; Roger Engelhardt, Elkhorn; Christine and Lyle Eichman, Darien; David Schutte, Delavan; Judith Adkins, Delavan; Veronica VanAntwerp, Delavan; Ashley Olson, Elkhorn; Lauren Sullivan, Genoa City; Annette Fariss, Williams Bay; Lynette Dybowski, Darien

**Supervisor Norem made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Ingersoll, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**On motion by Supervisor Norem, seconded by Supervisor Staples, the minutes of the June 19, 2019 Board of Trustees meeting were approved by voice vote.**

**Public Comment**

Veronica VanAntwerp, Delavan, expressed her concerns about the ongoing staff shortage in the Secure Memory Unit, where her husband resides. She stated working on the unit with not enough Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) and unplanned overtime have led to staff overwork and fatigue, which can affect resident care and well-being. She does not believe raising resident fees will solve the staffing shortage.

Karen Voss, Burlington, has been a CNA at Lakeland Health Care Center (LHCC) for 21 years. She stated that in addition to the staffing shortage, staff experiences difficulty obtaining equipment needed to properly care for residents. Because of the lack of CNAs, routine resident care, such as baths and oral hygiene, are not being met. Having only three CNAs on a unit is not enough to provide quality resident care. She added that new hires have left because of the current workload.

Annette Fariss, Williams Bay, a Registered Nurse (RN) at LHCC, concurred that the lack of staffing is a serious concern. CNAs work hard physically and the job is emotionally stressful. She believes recruitment is difficult because other less demanding jobs pay more money. She requested that licensed administrative personnel provide assistance to the RNs when patients are admitted during a shift. The admission process takes 2-3 hours, and RNs have other critical duties, such as passing medications and direct patient care, which takes more than 8 hours. Fariss asked management to consider hiring an admissions nurse.

Lauren Sullivan, Genoa City, has worked at LHCC for seven years. She said she and the other CNAs continue working at the facility because they care about the well-being of residents and family members. She urged the Board to take action to relieve the staffing shortage.

## **New Business**

- Correspondence from Gary Wagner concerning staffing and pay issues at Lakeland Health Care Center (LHCC)

Gary Wagner, Lake Geneva, referred to his June 17<sup>th</sup> email which was included in the agenda packet. He said LHCC has been his wife's home for the past five years, and he believes because of the lack of staffing, current conditions in the unit are the worst he has experienced. He commended the dedicated work of staff for their efforts to fill the gaps. He suggested management utilize more creative means to recruit employees, such as hosting open houses at LHCC in conjunction with an in-house job fair so applicants and citizens can tour the facility. He also encouraged staff attendance at local job fairs. Wagner requested that LHCC administration spend more time on the floor after business hours, and suggested that administration and office staff complete necessary training to assist on the units in emergency situations. He said private pay rates for residents have risen considerably and he does not believe the current level of care warrants the fee increases.

- Correspondence from Supervisor Staples concerning staffing and pay issues at LHCC  
County Board Supervisor Charlene Staples stated she is aware of the wages paid at LHCC and of comparable studies of other facilities. Some private nursing homes provide sign-on bonuses and other perks that cannot be offered by the County. She believes that LHCC, as a public entity, should be the premier facility in the County; it is owned by our taxpayers. The low staffing ratio has to be addressed. She spoke with the Human Resources Director about attending job fairs, and developing promotional brochures and information, and hopes that there will be more far-reaching and innovative recruiting tools to attract employees. Supervisor Staples encouraged management staff to review pay practices, such as not paying overtime after an eight-hour shift. Supervisor Ingersoll said that the Board of Trustees is listening to the concerns of staff and family members, and are sensitive to everyone's concerns. The staffing shortage has not been created deliberately by management, and it will take time to resolve current issues. Supervisor Ingersoll noted the burden on LHCC administration with ever-changing State and federal requirements, budgetary concerns and new policies is tremendous; however, they are doing everything possible to address staffing issues. Supervisor Norem commented that developing a long-term plan and sustainable funding is critical to continued operation of the facility, as well as addressing staff shortages. Chair Monroe said recruiting has been an ongoing problem, despite the fact that the County provides a good insurance plan and retirement package for employees. He is not certain what else could be offered to attract candidates. County Administrator David Bretl noted that 20% of all nursing positions in the nation go unfilled.

- Correspondence from Tammy Fonseca concerning the admission policy, staffing and compensation at LHCC

Tammy Fonseca, Genoa City, a pool nurse at LHCC, stated staffing has been a critical issue for years. She concurred with Ms. Fariss about the problems with the admissions process. She agreed with Mr. Wagner's suggestion that if licensed personnel in administration would adjust their schedules, they could provide much-needed assistance. Fonseca believes that mandated overtime is one of the requirements that keep candidates from accepting employment at LHCC.

- Staffing patterns at LHCC

LHCC Administrator Timothy Peek thanked everyone who was willing to go on record with their concerns and suggestions. He said because of staffing shortages and the decline in Medicaid reimbursement, it has been a difficult time. He agreed with Mr. Wagner that different methods of recruitment need to be considered.

- Wage analysis at LHCC

Peek gave a presentation on staffing and a wage analysis. Currently, there are 160 employees at LHCC. Desired staffing benchmarks are to staff each of the four units at LHCC with four CNAs and 23 total nursing staff on each shift. He displayed the current staffing on each of the four units. He noted that the facility has spent \$66,000 on agency staffing to reach desired staffing ratios; however, because of call-ins, that has not been achieved. Peek showed the provider rating report from CMS, which shows the total of hours in minutes worked by nursing staff in facilities within Walworth County. LHCC's total was 94 minutes per person, per day. Supervisor Staples said that two CNAs on a household is not nearly enough to cover resident care duties, and that the established minimum required staffing standards are far lower than they should be. Bretl asked Supervisor Staples if she was suggesting the nursing staff minutes have been manipulated by staff. Supervisor Staples replied that she does not know how the time is calculated, and asked if licensed administrative staff were included in the totals. Assistant Director of LHCC Taya Walk said the statistics are based upon in-punches, which is extracted directly from MUNIS. Administrative staff with licenses are not included in the totals for floor time. Peek showed a wage comparison compiled by Glass Door, which shows CNA pay scales in the Madison, Milwaukee and Kenosha areas, and in Elkhorn. LHCC wages are higher than the other regions. He also obtained statistics from ZipRecruiter on hourly wages and salaries in each state. Wisconsin's wages rank in the lowest third of the country. The average hourly pay for a CNA in the U.S. is \$13/hour, which is lower by a dollar than the first step of the LHCC CNA pay range. He provided a list of all hires to date in 2019. Chair Monroe said he believed job fair attendance might provide beneficial, and asked if the Gateway Training program at LHCC has been successful in attracting and retaining staff. Peek said many of the CNAs in training go directly to hospitals for employment; some feel the work is too physically and/or emotionally demanding and do not pursue a career as a CNA. As a result of the ongoing issues, no new residents have been admitted into the Memory Care unit since April; there are only 51 people on the 60-bed unit. Supervisor Staples suggested the County's pay scale may be a roadblock to attracting candidates because of the number of steps in the pay range until employees reach the highest pay level. Supervisor Ingersoll expressed concern over the admissions process. She understands that people working in administration choose to do so; they were not hired to work on the units. However, she suggested that perhaps they might be willing to fill in occasionally during evenings and weekends to process admissions. Peek said their Admission Coordinator's responsibility is to do assessments in the hospital before an individual is admitted to LHCC; staff is made aware of pending transfers, but not a specific time of arrival. Peek said he would prefer to hire a unit medical manager and a second shift supervisor to help process admissions. Bretl said the compensation topic will be considered by the Human Resources Committee. He thanked Peek for his comprehensive report. From the presentation, it is apparent that LHCC wages are highly competitive with the region. To address Supervisor Staples comment on the 13-step pay scale, Bretl said the speed at which people can progress can be reviewed. As for the staffing data, one has to trust that the data is entered correctly with no manipulation by staff. Bretl said that Peek has acknowledged several times what his desired staffing vision is; wages are only a part of the solution to recruit and retain qualified staff. When staff is overworked and stressed, call-ins go up, which creates a cycle which is difficult to break. Bretl agrees that an open house/job fair at LHCC might prove beneficial to recruitment efforts.

- Quarterly Write-Offs – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter

Peek reported that the second quarter write-offs of \$12,500 were from 2017-2018 accounts receivable. Outside counsel is working on collecting aging balances. **Supervisor Ingersoll made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Brellenthin, to approve the second quarter write-offs. Motion carried 5-0.**

### **Reports**

- Report of Department Head concerning June 2019 Business Activities

June mandatory overtime hours were 38, and there were 48 call-ins. The census is at 105, with 9 admissions and 16 discharges in June. Expenses exceeded revenue by \$100,000. Supervisor Ingersoll asked about the call-in rates, and whether staff has to give a reason when calling in. Peek said infection control protocols are the primary reason for absences; others are sick family members and FMLA.

**Correspondence** – There was none.

**Announcements** – There were none.

**Upcoming Events** – The list of events was included in the agenda packet.

**Confirmation of next meeting:** The next regular business meeting was confirmed for Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

**On motion by Vice Chair Brellenthin, seconded by Supervisor Staples, Chair Monroe adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.**