



Vision

The North Dakota Hospital Association will take an active role in major Healthcare issues.

Mission

The North Dakota Hospital Association exists to advance the health status of persons served by the membership.

North Dakota Hospital Association Board of Directors Meeting Minutes December 13, 2022

Directors Present*: Tim Blasl, Todd Forkel, William Heegaard, M.D., Mariann Doeling, Jeff Herman, Dan Kelly, Tiffany Lawrence, Nikki Lindsey, Alan O'Neil, and Todd Schaffer, M.D.

Others Present*: Kelly Cermak, Melissa Hauer, Troy Nelson, Erik Rasmussen, Lori Wangler, Elizabeth Summy.

*Participated via video conferencing.

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA) was called to order at 9:01 a.m., Central time, on December 13, 2022, at the NDHA office located at 1622 E. Interstate Avenue, Bismarck, ND, by William Heegaard, M.D., Chair of the Board. A quorum of directors was present.

Dr. Heegaard called for any perceived or known conflicts of interest as per items listed on the meeting's agenda. There were none.

Agenda Approval: Dr. Heegaard asked for any proposed changes to the meeting agenda. A financial investment update by Troy Nelson, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones, was added.

Investment Update: Mr. Nelson presented an update of NDHA's financial investments. He reported that NDHA's investment portfolio's balance between stocks and bonds was adjusted due to high inflation. He reported that the NDHA portfolio has outperformed 95% of hedge funds and inflation is lasting longer than was expected so he recommended no further change in the allocation strategy.

Action Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes was postponed to later in the meeting to allow board members to review the revised minutes of the September 27, 2022 meeting.
- b. Approval of Financial Reports: Kelly Cermak, NDHA Finance Manager, presented NDHA financial reports as of September 30, 2022. Upon a motion duly made, seconded, and adopted, the September 30, 2022 financial reports were approved as presented.
- c. Chair-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer Elections: Tim Blasl, President, stated that a Chair-elect and Secretary-Treasurer need to be elected. He contacted Mariann Doeling, who is interested in serving as Chair-Elect and Nikki Lindsey, who is interested in continuing to serve as Secretary/Treasurer. Upon a motion duly made, seconded, and adopted, Mariann Doeling was elected Chair-elect.

Upon a motion duly made, seconded, and adopted, Nikki Lindsey was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

- d. Appointments to Fill Board Vacancies:
 - i. Upon a motion duly made, seconded, and adopted, the appointment of Reed Reyman, Executive Vice President of Altru Health System, to fulfill the remaining term of Debra Mohesky's at-large position beginning on January 1, 2023 and contingent upon his assuming the position of chief executive officer of CHI St. Alexius was approved.
 - ii. Mr. Blasl explained that with Dan Kelly's departure from the board due to his term as AHA delegate expiring at the end of this year and Alan O'Neil starting as the new AHA delegate on January 1, 2023, there will be an open at-large director position. There was discussion regarding various CEOs who have expressed interest in serving on the board. There was discussion regarding ensuring state-wide representation on the board and attempting to find someone from the western half. The Board directed Mr. Blasl to discuss with Brian Williams, CEO, Sakakawea Medical Center, and Jody Nelson, CEO, St. Luke's Medical Center, their interest in filling the vacant at-large board position when Alan O'Neil's term as the American Hospital Association Region 6 delegate begins on January 1, 2023, and report back at the next board meeting.

- e. Mr. Blasl reported NDHA subsidiary Hospital Services, Inc. (HSI) recently elected two new directors, Tammy Miller and Brian Williams, and that this Board has the right to refuse new directors. There was no refusal.
- f. NDHA Health Benefits Trust Trustee Appointment: Mr. Blasl reported that the current term of NDHA Health Benefits Trust Trustee Chelsey Tetrault, Human Resources Manager, Pembina County Memorial Hospital Association, which is the unexpired term of former Trustee Nathan Stadheim, is expiring on January 1, 2023. Ms. Tetrault is willing to continue to serve on the Board of Trustees. Upon a motion duly made, seconded and approved, Ms. Tetrault was appointed as Trustee for the NDHA Health Benefits Trust for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2023.

Conflict of Interest Policy/Statement: Melissa Hauer, General Counsel/VP, reviewed with the Board NDHA's current Conflict of Interest policy and requested members review and sign the conflict of interest statement and send it to Lori Wangler, NDHA Executive Assistant.

Legislative Platform—Mr. Blasl reviewed the Association's legislative platform for the upcoming legislative session as approved at the last board meeting which includes advocating for appropriate Medicaid reimbursement, especially with the state's recent implementation of value-based purchasing programs, improving workforce, prior authorization reform, and abortion law clarification. Mr. Blasl reported that Ms. Hauer, NDHA Vice President and Legal Counsel, and Courtney Koeble, Executive Director, North Dakota Medical Association, have been educating legislators and meeting with religious groups regarding proposed abortion legislation. Mr. Blasl recapped that, at the last board meeting, it was decided to defer the discussion regarding the Association's position on telehealth payment parity. NDHA convened a subcommittee composed of Alan O'Neil, Drs. Heegaard and Schaffer, and Mr. Blasl to further discuss the subject. The subcommittee discussed the fact that requiring payment parity for telehealth services would only apply to commercial carriers and that Medicare and Medicaid already pay parity for telehealth services and the state's major commercial carrier, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota, pays telehealth parity for behavioral health services. These payers represent approximately 85% of the market in North Dakota so only 15% of the

market could potentially be affected by such a requirement. Mr. Blasl presented two options the subcommittee recommended for consideration: 1) propose legislation to require commercial health insurers to pay parity for telehealth behavioral health services; or 2) allow NDHA to work directly with the commercial payers that are not currently paying parity for telehealth behavioral health services to see if they are open to discussion to start doing so. A motion was duly made and seconded that NDHA support legislation to require commercial carriers to pay at parity for telehealth services. There was discussion. The motion failed. A motion was duly made, seconded and approved that NDHA negotiate with the Sanford Health Plan to attempt to secure payment parity for telehealth behavioral health services.

Reports:

- a. American Hospital Association (AHA) Update: Elizabeth Summy, AHA's Region 6 Executive, reviewed the results of the federal elections and outlined AHA's areas of focus for the coming year.

- b. Federal Update: Eric Rasmussen, NDHA's federal affairs consultant, gave a summary of the November election results, the status of the 2% and 4% Medicare sequesters cuts, government funding extension, the status of the COVID-19 public health emergency which is currently set to expire at the end of March 2023, and the 150-day extension of the Medicare telehealth flexibilities.

President's Report: Mr. Blasl reported that the NDHA PAC distributed \$7,300 in October 2022 to twenty North Dakota legislators who support healthcare.

He reviewed the letter sent to Chris Jones, Director of North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services, regarding the Association's concerns about the Medicaid value-based purchasing proposal. The letter was signed by six North Dakota hospital CEOs and Mr. Blasl.

Mr. Blasl informed the Board that 21 Critical Access Hospitals in the state have formed a clinically integrated network.

Mr. Blasl reported that NDHA has contracted for an analysis of Critical Access Hospital finances and is also analyzing PPS financials.

Mr. Blasl stated that NDHA will again hold a weekly call on Friday afternoons starting the week that the state legislature convenes. This call updates members on what is

happening at the legislature and issues we may need members to testify on or contact their legislators about.

Approval of Minutes:

Upon a motion duly made, seconded, and adopted, the minutes of the September 27, 2022, meeting were approved.

There being no further business, the board meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m., Central time.

Lori Wangler

Lori Wangler
Recording Secretary