

Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Board of Trustees Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Trustees was held at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke (HLY) on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 in Conference Room A. The meeting began at 4:00 PM.

- **Members Present:**
Kevin Jourdain, Chairman; Christopher Dupont, Cindy Lacoste, Cesar Lopez, , and Carmen Ostrander
- **Also Present:**
Bennett W. Walsh, Superintendent; Dr. Barry Smith; Deb Foley, Director of Communications and Volunteer Services; Norm an Gousy, Chief Financial Officer; Mark Yankopoulos, Legal Counsel; Vanessa Lauziere, Chief Nursing Officer; Stuart Ivimey, Legal Counsel (DVS); and Nancy Shimel, Recording Secretary.
- **Pledge of Allegiance** - All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- **Public Comment**
Kevin Jourdain asked if any member of the public wished to address the Trustees. No public comment was offered.
- **Regular Minutes**
Upon motion by Cesar Lopez and seconded by Chris Dupont, it was unanimously VOTED to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 14, 2020.
- **Executive Committee of the Medical Staff Meetings**
Dr. Smith presented the report of the Executive Committee of the Medical Staff Meeting held on Thursday, February 13, 2020. He reported a recent modification in formularies for blood thinners, changing from Coumadin to Eliquis, which is more cost effective. In addition, Dr. Smith sought approval to reappoint Dr. Robert Byrne. Upon motion by Carmen Ostrander and seconded by Cindy Lacoste, it was unanimously VOTED to approve the above mentioned appointment.
- **CFO Update**
Norman Gousy presented the "Trustee Fund-Summary of Receipts and Disbursement Report for FY20 for the period ending January 31, 2020. He noted the small decrease in Investment Gains due to two minor dips in the market in January 2020. He also noted that the UBS check is outstanding, as the UBS account is in process of being set-up. Westfield Bank checking account being closed out. These are both expected to be processed by close of February 2020. Norman suggested that the evaluation of a new location for the Homes' checking account be addressed at the Finance Committee. Kevin Jourdain agreed and would also like to include the review of the Investment Policy and Trustee Policy at the Finance Committee. Michael Ravosa, from UBS, will be invited. Norman also reviewed process for Canteen coupons. Kevin Jourdain inquired on Receipts/Disbursements entry on commission percentage donation. The Home received a percentage of commission from a local realtor upon house sale. Kevin Jourdain asked if there are contracts in place for outside entertainment vendors. Norman Gousy stated that each vendor sets specific rate amount per performance. There are not currently contracts in place for these vendors. Chris Dupont inquired how fee is based. Bennett Walsh offered that entertainment vendors and rates are reviewed annually. Vendors are brought back if good match for veterans. Kevin Jourdain requested that the CFO provide an entertainment summary rate sheet to be presented to the Board of Trustees at the 3/10/20 meeting and thereafter, on an annual basis. Kevin Jourdain also requested a monthly statement be provided to the Board of Trustees for the UBS account and checking account.

CFO Update (cont'd):

Norman Gousy also presented the "FY Expenditures through January 31, 2020 Report". He stated that as the FY budget comes to a close, expenses will be moved to where funding is in the 12 Bed RR Account. Kevin Jourdain inquired on amount of funding in account for the remainder of the fiscal year. Norman confirmed amount. Kevin Jourdain asked if the remainder of funding for the EMR project is expected to be taken out of the License Plate RR Account. Norman confirmed that is correct. Chris Dupont inquired whether the Home is reimbursed for utilities. The Holyoke Police/Fire departments also utilize this tower, for which they are not charged a fee. Kevin Jourdain asked if we have approached any cell phone companies for their interest in utilizing this tower for services, and if DCAMM is advertising this as a potential location, as this is a possible source of revenue for the Home. Chris Dupont suggested we send out notice to cell phone companies regarding their interest. He also requested a copy of the contract be provided to the BOT for the agreement that the Home has with the FBI for the Antenna account.

- **Superintendent's Report**

Bennett W. Walsh presented the Superintendent's Report via a PowerPoint Presentation and copies were distributed to each Trustee. He reviewed his recent visit to Washington D.C. as part of the NASVH Conference, meeting with all 11 Congressmen/Congresswomen of the Commonwealth. He noted that the Legislators recognized the positive work done by the Home. Bennett Walsh also noted a recent \$19,000 donation made to the Home by a deceased veteran's family. He reviewed capital projects underway at the Home. Kevin Jourdain requested an updated DCAMM report be emailed to Board of Trustees. He reported data on flu shot compliance. Kevin Jourdain inquired on employee flu shot compliance rate as well as policy for volunteers. Deb Foley reported that a flu shot policy for volunteers is currently in process. Volunteers have been asked to suspend coming to the Home until the end of flu season if they have not received a flu shot, unless a mask is worn while at the Home.

Bennett also reviewed the initial findings from the recent V.A. survey. The Homes' process for veterans' laundry is expected to change, with responsibility for cost being on the Home, which will result in a significant expense for the Home. Chris Dupont inquired what mechanism the Home has to request general funding for laundry expense, as increase given to Home in this year's budget is 1%. Norman Gousy stated that this increase is given to cover collective bargaining increases and some COLA. Kevin Jourdain stated that he would like to explore process at the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea. Discussion followed on whether data is available on funding from the state per resident for the Home and how it compares to the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea. Bennett Walsh to obtain this information for the next Board of Trustees meeting on 3/10/20, Stuart recommended consulting with the Superintendent at Chelsea on this matter. Bennett Walsh stated there may be justification to request increase to veteran's daily rate of stay – suggest making request to legislative body at the upcoming Joint Commission Hearings. Stuart Ivimey noted that any change we make to funding structures would have to go through EHS/DVS, being mindful of what Governor has set. Cesar Lopez inquired on the feasibility of having laundry facilities on the premises as opposed to sending it off-site. Bennett Walsh stated that we will be exploring both options.

Chris Dupont inquired on feasibility of developing an on-site Adult Day Health Care program. Bennett Walsh stated that consideration is under discussion as there is a need for this type of program. Norman Gousy stated that if we were to get approved for this, the V.A. would pay for 65% of the cost. Kevin Jourdain noted that this would also be a topic to be addressed at the Joint Commission Hearings.

Superintendent's Report (cont'd):

The V.A. noted that a Sharing Agreement should be in place as of 1/1/20. Cesar Lopez inquired if a sample Sharing Agreement is available from another area to review. Bennett has been in discussion with V.A. Director Andrew McMahon, who offered his assistance with the development of a Sharing Agreement once we have the official V.A. survey report. Discussed V.A. audit of Trustee Account. Kevin Jourdain inquired on process of audit and what documents were provided to the surveyor. Bennett Walsh stated that the Trustee Account process was verbally reviewed with the V.A. surveyor – no documentation was provided. Norman Gousy stated that he had verbal discussion regarding our Internal Control System, reviewing transaction process with the surveyor. Cindy Lacoste confirmed mechanism of what was provided to surveyors in this review. The V.A. noted that they would be available for further review if requested. Cesar Lopez asked why the V.A. involved with Trustee Account review as this is not a state account. Mark Yankopoulos reported that the Trustee Account is state funded, as any money we take in becomes state property. Kevin Jourdain stated it was inappropriate to call what was called “an audit” of the Trustee Account.

Upon motion by Cindy Lacoste and seconded by Christopher Dupont, it was unanimously VOTED to accept the Superintendent's Report as presented.

- **Old Business**

Electronic Medical Record – no new business to report.

- **New Business**

Conference Request – Conference request was presented for newly appointed VCC to attend 3-day Nursing Leadership Conference in Portland, OR. Discussed if similar conference could be found within the state. Kevin Jourdain noted that we need to be cognizant of use-rule of Trustee Fund and also, whether there is a work commitment requirement if conference funds are approved. Upon motion by Cesar Lopez and seconded by Chris Dupont, it was recommended that the conference request be referred to the Finance Committee for further consideration. It was unanimously VOTED to approve this recommendation.

St. Patricks' Day Volunteer Gear – Bennett Walsh requested approval to purchase St. Patricks' Day Gear for the veterans and volunteer staff who will be marching at the St. Patrick's Day Parade on 3/22/20, representing the Home. It was approximated that we have between 20-40 volunteer marchers each year. Kevin Jourdain suggested an inquiry to staff who marched last year to see if they have gear that could be utilized again this year if they will be marching. A motion was made by Cesar Lopez and seconded by Cindy Lacoste to support volunteer gear for anyone that doesn't currently have it, and authorize purchase of items for marchers with a total cost to be less than \$2,000. It was unanimously VOTED to approve this.

Change Authorized Signer of the People's Bank Money Market Trustee Account from Erin Spaulding, former CFO, to Norman Gousy, current CFO, effective immediately – Upon motion by Cesar Lopez and seconded by Cindy Lacoste, it was unanimously VOTED to approve this.

Disburse the sum of \$9,922.00 to New England Funeral and Cremation Center, representing the funeral expenses for the anonymous donor which estate attorney omitted from the final statement. Upon motion by Cindy Lacoste and seconded by Chris Dupont, it was unanimously VOTED to approve this. An update to this VOTE was made by Mark Yankopoulos, who made recommendation that payment be made to the estate attorney, rather than directly to the funeral home. Upon motion by Kevin Jourdain and seconded by Carmen Ostrander, it was unanimously VOTED to approve the update to disburse the sum of \$9,922.00 to decedent donor in care of the estate attorney for payment of funeral expenses.

Appointment of Operations Committee – Appointment was made of Operations Committee – Cesar Lopez, Chairperson, Carmen Ostrander and Christopher Dupont.

New Business (cont'd):

Creation of Charter for Each of Three Committees:

1. Finance Committee: Review of Trustee Account/Budget. Make recommendations on Investments and budgetary matters.
2. By-Laws Committee: Review of internal rules and By-Laws. By-Laws required to be reviewed every 3 years. Due for review this year.
3. Operations Committee: Working with Superintendent on operational leadership of Home; Review of accreditation surveys.

Meetings to initially meet 1x/month at start, then left to discretion of individual chairpersons regarding frequency of meetings. These are public meetings – please notify Nancy Shimel of date/time/agenda items of meeting so public meeting notice can be posted at least 2 business days prior to meeting to stay in compliance with open meeting law.

Staff Roster – Cesar Lopez requested an executive team staff directory listing that includes business phone and email address be provided to the Board of Trustees. This will be provided.

Veteran Interview – Deb Foley was contacted by Channel 9 News to set up an interview with in-house veteran. This was approved by EHS and the interview will take place tomorrow at the Home.

- **Adjournment**

Chris Dupont made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Carmen Ostrander; the meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bennett W. Walsh
Secretary for the Board of Trustees