

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, January 14, 2020 in Conference Room A. The meeting began at 4:00 PM.

- **Members Present:**
Kevin Jourdain, Chairman; Brian Corridan, Christopher Dupont, Cindy Lacoste, Cesar Lopez, Isaac Mass, and Carmen Ostrander
- **Also Present:**
Bennett W. Walsh, Superintendent; Secretary Francisco Ureña, DVS; Anthony Preston, DVS; Dr. David Clinton, Medical Director; Deb Foley, Director of Communications and Volunteer Services; Jeremiah Laplante, Director of Operations; Norm an Gousy, Chief Financial Officer; Mark Yankopoulos, Legal Counsel; 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 Brian Corridan, it was unanimously VOTED to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on November 26, 2019 with the following changes:
 - Under CFO Update: Change last sentence to “A motion was made by Kevin Jourdain, and seconded by Cesar Lopez to approve an audit/financial review from an independent auditor of the Trustee Account and to empower EOHHS and DVS to prepare an RFP, and to expense the audit cost to the Trustee Account.
 - Under New Business-Employee Gift Cards: Change second sentence to “Discussion took place to ensure the purchase of these is in conformance with Human Resources and Ethics/Legal guidelines.
 - Under New Business-Board of Trustees By-Laws: Change last sentence to: “Kevin Jourdain will request members of the Board to assist himself and Legal Counsel to review.
 - Under Board Chairman Discussion: Approved to strike out the following statement from the minutes: “Kevin Jourdain reported that Brian Corridan has resigned from the Board of Trustees. He will request that Mr. Corridan submit a written letter of resignation. He thanked Mr. Corridan for his services with the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke.”
 - Under Adjournment: Change sentence to “Kevin Jourdain made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Carmen Ostrander; meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.”
- **Executive Committee of the Medical Staff Meetings**
Dr. Clinton presented the report of the Executive Committee of the Medical Staff Meetings on Thursday, December 12, 2019, and January 9, 2020. He reported that a lock box has been installed in the Outpatient Department for the storage of prescription pads that are not in the possession of a physician. Dr. Clinton also presented a status update on the Westfield State College Physician Assistant (PA) program, which has been very successful to date, with all the physicians participating in this training. He also welcomed Vanessa Lauziere to her new position as CNO. The Pharmacy has a student internship program with Western New England University. As part of this program, the pharmacy interns will present an educational topic at the Medical Staff Meetings. Dr. Clinton also reported that the Medical Reconciliation Form has been updated. Contracted services were reviewed – no current issues with any contracted services. In addition, Dr. Clinton sought approval for a two (2) year appointment for Lisa Planetta, MD, general surgeon, as a Wound Care consultant to the Medical Staff. Upon motion by Brian Corridan and seconded by Cindy Lacoste, it was unanimously VOTED to approve the above mentioned appointment. Upon motion by Christopher Dupont and seconded by Carmen Ostrander, it was unanimously VOTED to accept the report of the Executive Committee of the Medical Staff Meetings.

- **CFO Update**

Norman Gousy presented the “FY20 Expenditures through November and December 31, 2019. He also presented the newly formatted “Trustee Fund-Summary of Receipts and Disbursements Report for FY20 for the periods of November and December 2019”, which includes detailed information on each donation. Copies were distributed to each Trustee. Kevin Jourdain inquired if thank you letters are sent out to those making donations. This was confirmed. Chris Dupont asked if restricted donations are tracked. These are tracked in-house. Kevin Jourdain noted it is necessary to honor any known donor restrictions that have been made to date. Kevin Jourdain stated that for every expense on the report, there should be a purpose assigned. He also requested the date of the Board of Trustees vote on the Trustee approval for any expense over established threshold. An inquiry was made regarding the \$80,000 facility operation expense last year, which Bennett Walsh believes is for the replacement of fuel tanks that had expired. Norm Gousy to confirm and report back to Trustees. Chris Dupont inquired if there is a reimbursement for electric utilities. Jeremiah Laplante will refer to contract and report back to Trustees. Total paid out Fiscal YTD to Ripples Group is \$100,000, depleting the total Trustee allocation to the EMR project. Discussion followed regarding cost variance between last year and this year in the License Plate Retained Revenue Account. This fund is split between the Soldiers’ Home in Chelsea (60%) and the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke (40%). Discussion on 12 bed appropriation revenue. Cindy Lacoste inquired whether this appropriation can be reallocated to another area. Norm Gousy stated that it cannot be moved to another area, but that expenses can be allocated to this appropriation. Isaac Mass inquired about percentage of reserves for emergency expenses. Norm Gousy stated that a budget review was conducted, including inflation, estimated result being that it would come in just under budget.

Norman Gousy reported he is exploring purchasing an automated ledger program package to improve efficiency.

- **Superintendent’s Report**

Bennett W. Walsh presented the Superintendent’s Report via a PowerPoint Presentation and copies were distributed to each Trustee. Kevin Jourdain inquired if there are national benchmarks available on fall rates. Bennett to obtain 2019 data on falls to report at the February Board of Trustees meeting. Kevin would also like to do a percentage rate comparison of falls between the Soldiers’ Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke. Bennett to follow-up with this information. Brian Corridan noted that Secretary Bonner (former Secretary of Elder Affairs) had formerly reported comparisons between the National Fall Average and our rate here at the Home, and the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke had substantially lower fall rates. Isaac Mass suggested that Insurance companies may be able to provide falls data. Kevin Jourdain inquired if there have been any insurance claims made against the Home for falls. Mark Yankopoulos reported that there is one pending claim due to a fall that occurred in 2012.

Bennett W. Walsh presented the Annual Report for 2019 via a PowerPoint Presentation and copies were distributed to each Trustee. He reviewed the Home’s achievements in 2019 and goals for 2020. Brian Corridan recognized the positive accomplishments of the home and recommended that the Board of Trustees compose a letter of recognition to the staff, thanking them for their hard work and dedication to the home.

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

- **Old Business**

NASVH Winter Conference Participation – Bennett Walsh is attending the NASVH Winter Conference being held 2/10/20-2/14/200 in Alexandria, VA. If any Trustee would like to attend, please let Bennett know.

Old Business (cont'd):

Employee Gift Cards – Bennett Walsh requested the consideration of the Board of Trustees on the approval of the employee gift cards as he feels it is important relative to employee morale. Stu Ivimey reported that the gift cards would be considered additional compensation that is not given to any other state agency employee. We must stay consistent with all other state agencies. Brian Corridan questioned whether there is anything in the law that prohibits this practice. The funds would be coming out of Trustee Account. Kevin Jourdain reiterated that the Trustee Account would be considered state funds and we need to follow the same rules, and that we must stay consistent and comply with the legal/ethical opinion, who have advised to discontinue the gift card practice. Isaac Mass suggested an alternative funding source with a request for assistance from the Friends of the Soldiers' Home. Bennett Walsh had previously approached them on this. Will look at this as alternative option.

- **New Business**

Asset Re-Allocation and Simplification:

A1: Reallocation of funds in Morgan Stanley to UBS. In an effort to decrease costs and increase fund performance, a recommendation is being made that our funds currently with Morgan Stanley be moved to UBS Financial Services, which is the company that currently manages funds for the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea. Michael Ravosa, certified financial planner at UBS Financial Services, gave a presentation on their services for managing our financial accounts. He presented that their fees (.75%) would be lower than our current financial services company, Morgan Stanley (1%). Brian Corridan inquired on fund performance with UBS. Mr. Ravosa stated that performance is solid. A motion was made by Cesar Lopez and seconded by Brian Corridan to reallocate the funds currently with Morgan Stanley to UBS Financial Services. It was unanimously VOTED to approve this.

A2: Reallocation of Peoples Bank Account to UBS. A recommendation was made to reallocate the funds in the Peoples Bank account to UBS Financial Services. Brian Corridan suggested reducing funds in Peoples Bank, rather than eliminate the account. Carmen Ostrander inquired why the funds are located in multiple accounts. Kevin stated that we are hoping to simplify the accounts and that anytime funds are being moved, a vote must be taken by the Board of Trustees to approve. Discussion took place around positive relationship with Peoples Bank and they made \$5,000 donation in the past to the Home. A motion was made by Chris Dupont and seconded by Brian Corridan to reallocate funds currently at Peoples Bank to UBS Financial Services.

A3: Reallocation of Westfield Bank Non-Profit Money Market Balance and portion of Non-Interest drawn down to \$350,000 and funds move to UBS. A motion was made by Cindy Lacoste and seconded by Chris Dupont to reallocate \$175,000 from Westfield Bank Money Market Balance Account to UBS Financial Services, and to drop down the Non-Interest Account from \$625,000 to \$350,000 and funds moved to UBS. It was unanimously VOTED to approve this.

For February Board of Trustees meeting, Norm Gousy will research new options for the checking account.

To Change the \$5,000 Threshold for Prior Board Approval for Expenses from Trustee Account back to \$1,000.

Additionally require approval and second signature of the Chairman on all checks. Isaac Mass inquired on quantity of checks over \$1,000 and best way to handle checks that are time sensitive. Kevin Jourdain noted that the BOT Chairman has the authority to act on behalf of the BOT between meetings for time sensitive items. Brian Corridan made the recommendation that the threshold be changed to \$2,000, rather than \$1,000. Discussion also took place regarding the use of credit card/debit card. It was noted that some vendors will only take debit/credit card as payment. Kevin stated that auto withdrawal from checking account could be utilized for this purpose. A motion was made by Brian Corridan and seconded by Cesar Lopez to change the Threshold for Prior Board Approval for Expenses from the Trustee Account from \$5,000 to \$2,000; additionally to require approval and second signature of the BOT Chairman on checks from the Trustee Account, and lastly that there be no further use of the debit card/credit card without BOT approval and that the cards will be stored in the safe. It was unanimously VOTED to approve this.

New Business (cont'd):

Welcome: Kevin Jourdain welcomed the newest member of the Board of Trustees, Isaac Mass, representing Franklin County. Thanks were expressed to DVS and Secretary Ureña for being highly committed to forming a full seven member Board of Trustees.

Appointment of Committees: Kevin Jourdain establishing the following new committees: Finance Committee, ByLaws Committee, and Operations Committee. He will be contacting Board members regarding representation on these committees. Chairs of the committees are as follows:

- Finance Committee: Kevin Jourdain
- ByLaws Committee: Cindy Lacoste
- Operations Committee : Cesar Lopez

February Board of Trustees Meeting Date: The next meeting date is being rescheduled from 2/11/20 to 2/18/20 as the Superintendent will be at an off-site conference from 2/10/20-2/13/20. Kevin reminded members that the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke and the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea are required to have an annual joint meeting. Kevin has proposed that this meeting be scheduled as our February meeting, with a planned location in Worcester.

- **Adjournment**

Carmen Ostrander made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chris Dupont; the meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bennett W. Walsh
Secretary for the Board of Trustees