

Veterans Home at Holyoke
Board of Trustees Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Veterans Home at Holyoke (HLY) was held virtually and telephonically on Tuesday May 13, 2025. The meeting began at 5:31 PM.

Board Members via Teams: Chairman Collins, Trustee Bigda, Trustee Mass and Trustee Ostrander.

Present via Teams: Robert Engell, Executive Director (VET); Diane Dietzen, (HLY); Debra Foley, Communications (HLY); Kelly Jones, Director of Nursing (HLY); JM Sorrell, Ombudsperson; Ciara Hanlon, Budget Director (HLY); Eve Elliot (OVA), Glen Hevey Deputy Director (HLY).

Board Members in Person: Trustee Jourdain

Present In person: Michael Lazo, Executive Director (HLY); Jeff Lenahan, Quality Manger (HLY); Kathleen Denner, Recording Secretary and Trustee Jourdain

Roll Call: Chairman Collins conducted the Roll Call as follows: Trustee Bigda, Trustee Jourdain, Trustee Mass, and Chairman Collins.

Trustee Ostrander joined the meeting at approximately 6:29 pm during Trustee Jourdain's end of term recognition.

Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: No public comment for this month.

Approval of February 11, 2025 minutes: A motion was made by Trustee Mass to approve the February 11, 2025 Board Meeting minutes and it was seconded Trustee Jourdain. No Discussion.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Bigda (Yes), Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes), and Trustee Collins (Yes). It was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2025, Board Meeting.

Old Business:

Follow up on "Funds transition"

Trust fund follow up

Chairman Collins updated the group on his preliminary discussion with Senator Velis. Senator Velis has been busy with the budget but has been tracking the funds transition and he is trying to get more clarification moving forward. Chairman Collins continued that the discussions are very solid case that the money, the interest we are earning for

our veterans. We have a fiduciary obligation to do the best we can with those dollars. We are continuing to find a solution to supply EOVS. Trustee Jourdain thanked Chairman Collins for birdogging with legislator, so they hear how important it is how the money is being invested and making sure we are being good stewards of the funds. He continued that how important the equity investment long term investment policy to make sure that this fund id available for generations to come for our veterans.

New Business:

Reinstatement of Laundry Fees

Trustee Jourdain asked for clarification on the laundry fees, these used to be charged, and a period of five years suspended. We have never received complaints but are curious about the need to reinstate the fees and how much we are projecting for the year, and why could that not be absorbed into the budget.

Mr. Lazo replied that we reinstated these as we got back to the standard of business prior to COVID. We are averaging a little over \$102,000 per year on laundry fees and the past few years including the upcoming state budget is tight. The cost to a family is 75¢ a pound and we do have laundry facilities on sight (free) for families to use or they can bring the laundry home. Mr. Lazo continued that the fee was waived during COVID because the vendor could not come into the building. Trustee Jourdain asked what percentage of residents are using the laundry service. Mr. Lazo replied that everybody is using the laundry service. Trustee Jourdain asked if everyone will continue to use the laundry service. Mr. Lazo think 50/50. Trustee Jourdain asked for the 50% that will use the machine here but for the veterans who use the service what the weekly cost would be. Mr. Lazo will check what the costs would be. Trustee Jourdain believes that out of all the things that the Commonwealth finds money to spend that they cannot find the money to cover for veterans' laundry. Mr. Lazo, this was a local decision. Trustee Jourdain stated that the Home would have had to cut somewhere if the budget is reduced. Trustee Jourdain encouraged Mr. Lazo to ask the State for the finances to cover the costs. Trustee Mass shared that the reason we stopped why we charged for laundry, he believes we got dinged for charging for laundry, believes it was on the VA Home Survey.

DCAMM New Home Quarterly Update (Mr. Lazo)

Mr. Lazo will share an update in his remarks.

CFO/Treasurer Update (Ms. Hanlon)

Approval of Holyoke Veterans Home funding, up to the amount of \$4,000, for the annual picnic that will be held on August 12, 2025 at the Veterans Home at Holyoke.

Ms. Hanlon reviewed the attached Trustees Spending Plan. She reported that March and April aligned with spending with the bulk going to entertainment. Professional charge will be credited back due to printing of checks. Donations are a little slow compared to the holiday season. A new row added for unspent funds for events/activities to track what was not spent.

Trustee Mass noted we added \$10,000 for marketing/development consultant and asked if Ms. Hanlon knew when the proposals would be available. Ms. Hanlon replied

she thought that was on pause, she will check on the status. Ms. Hanlon reported that the RFR for the audit has had no responses, was able to find the firm who merged with previous auditors and is waiting for proposals. She continued that ideally 3 proposals are needed and if not they will have to create a notice of intent.

Trustee Jourdain asked for confirmation on the checking account balance is \$217,000 for the end of April. Confirmed by Ms. Hanlon. Trustee Jourdain asked if she was able to get a hold of Mike Mulligan. Ms. Hanlon replied that she reached out to firm but has not got to him directly. Trustee Jourdain because our equities and overall investment accounts are doing well we are getting to our 60% threshold and with the checking account balance growing to \$217,000 would it be wise to take \$100,000 and make a transfer to UBS as cash to maintain our 60% equities cap. Ms. Hanlon will check with Ms. Acobe in the morning.

Trustee Jourdain made a motion to take \$100,000 from the checking account and put into UBS account to leave in fixed income. Trustee Mass seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Bigda (Yes), Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes), and Trustee Collins (Yes). The vote passed unanimously.

Ms. Hanlon purchase order request for \$4,000 for Trustee Picnic. This would reflect an increase of \$500 from last year's picnic due to the rise in food costs.

Trustee Jourdain made a motion up to \$4,000 for the Trustee picnic seconded by Trustee Mass.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Bigda (Yes), Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes), and Chairman Collins (Yes). The vote passed unanimously.

Holyoke Veterans Home Executive Director Update (Mr. Lazo)

Mr. Lazo reported that the current census is 116 veterans with 8 beds available, a 91% occupancy rate. We have 107 veterans on the waitlist. Mr. Lazo continued that masking is optional due to community rate under 12%. The COVID vaccine is available, and the CDC is recommending a second dose for those 65 years old and older. We are watching the measles situation. At this time there are no cases in Massachusetts, but we are developing plans. Mr. Lazo shared that the recreation staff have had off-site trips shopping, scenting trips, zoo, meals out, and family picnics, each care center beginning with care center 4 which is scheduled for May 21.

Mr. Lazo continued that the pavilion is being used more with warmer weather. He thanked our veteran community partners for their great support.

Mr. Lazo discussed the CMS survey that occurred on February 25. It was a four-day survey in which we received 6 clinical citations. The Life Safety Survey occurred on March 10 and 11 where we received two citations bringing us to a total of 8 citations. Details. The national average is 10 so we were better than average for our first survey. The plans of corrections were submitted and accepted by CMS and proof of completion was also submitted and accepted. We are awaiting final approval from CMS for certification.

Mr. Lazo reported that the Pinnacle survey's results remain high. We found out that the Pinnacle survey group surveys 1500 homes. Our results for April were 4.82% out of 5 for Recommend to Others and 5 out of 5 for Overall Satisfaction.

For staffing we currently have 352 employees reporting to work, which is approximately 97%. That is a HPPD average of 6.55% for April, the RNHPPD is 1.34%, the LPNHPPD at 1.01% and the CNAHPPD was 4.20%.

Mr. Lazo shared that we have had four internal promotions and 24 new hires over the past few months. We do have openings in nursing, housekeeping, food services, HR, finance and recreation with interviews currently occurring. We have seen a decrease in overtime and callback pay in the past few months.

Mr. Lazo discussed the capital improvements with the plans for the new Home being accepted by the Department of Public Health. We received 12 out of the 13 waivers with one remaining. Progress continues with the exterior brick, windows being installed, and framing of interior rooms. We are still on target for November 2026 occupancy. The current Home's elevators are having issues but are back up and running.

Mr. Lazo shared that the Veterans Home has won its second excellence in the supplier diversity award. The team will be going to Boston in June to receive the award.

Holyoke Veterans Home General Counsel Update

No update for this meeting.

Quality / KPI update (Jeff Lenahan)

Mr. Lenahan presented the attached Power Point. The CMS certification survey reviewed including a Desk audit on April 15th and a follow up to the Life Safety Code survey on April 28th.

Mr. Lenahan discussed current projects including audits for the CMS certification Survey, the creation of joint policies with Chelsea, barcode scanning in Wellsky and met with VA for the new survey process for the new building.

Mr. Lenahan shared the visit from the New York State DPH to discuss our Quality program.

End of term recognition of Trustee Jourdain

Chairman Collins recognized Trustee Jourdain's end of his term as a board member. Chairman Collins gave his gratitude and spoke to Trustee Jourdain's dedication and leadership of the board of trustees.

Trustee Jourdain shared his appreciation and retrospective of his 7 years as a board member and Chairman.

No Executive Session Scheduled for this meeting


Adjourn: Trustee Jourdain made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and it was seconded by Trustee Mass.


Roll Call Vote: Trustee Bigda (Yes), Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes), Trustee Ostrander (Yes), and Chairman Collins (Yes).


It was unanimously VOTED to conclude the meeting at 6:38 PM.


Respectfully submitted, Kathleen Denner, Acting Secretary for the Board of Trustees

Attachments:

 Account Statement for April 2025.pdf

 April 2025 Trustees Statement.pdf

 BOT.QI.May 2025.pptx

 2025 02 11 BOT Minutes - FINAL.pdf

Picnic and Next meeting August 12