

Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Board of Trustees Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke (HLY) was held telephonically on Tuesday, November 10, 2020. The meeting began at 5:12 PM.

- **Members Present:**
Kevin Jourdain, Chairman; Isaac Mass, Sean Collins, Gary Keefe, Mark Bigda
- **Also Present:**
Val Liptak, Acting Superintendent; Cheryl Poppe, Secretary, Department of Veterans Services (DVS); Dr. Thomas Higgins, Interim Chief Medical Officer; Michael Lazo, Chief Operating Officer, Norman Gousy, Chief Financial Officer, Aimee Desmarais, Chief Nursing Officer, Pat Dill, Interim Nurse Executive; Mark Yankopoulos, Legal Counsel; Matt Deacon, General Counsel, DVS; and Nancy Shimel, Recording Secretary
- **Pledge of Allegiance** - All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- **Public Comment:**
John Paradis requested to make public comment. Mr. Paradis is a member of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Coalition. Mr. Paradis presented the following information:
 1. In honor of Veterans Day, the coalition created an online virtual tribute for veterans who passed away from COVID-19 at the Home. The tribute can be viewed at www.holyokesoldiershomecoalition.org. Mr. Paradis stated that the coalition had acquired written consent, and included images, a narrative and an obituary link as part of this tribute. They would also like to include information on any veteran resident in the Home. The coalition asked for assistance to get the word out to families of veterans at the Home, as this would be one small way to honor those veterans. The email address for the coalition is as follows: holyokesoldiershomecoalition@gmail.com
 2. Mr. Paradis inquired if the public can send in cards for the veterans at the Home. He inquired on process for addressing any cards.
 3. Mr. Paradis reported that he had a request from a family member and health care proxy of a veteran at the Home, requesting response to complaints regarding issues this family is having at the Home. Mr. Paradis informed the family that there is an Ombudsmen coming onboard. She has inquired about any recourse she may have for complaint resolution through the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS). Mr. Paradis inquired if this information could be sent to the email address of the coalition.
 4. Mr. Paradis noted that the coalition would like to express their thanks to the Board of Trustees for listening to their feedback, as well as opening up discussions with Administration about the creation of a temporary and potential permanent memorial for the veterans. He noted that the coalition is happy to participate with whatever may be needed.

Kevin Jourdain addressed Mr. Paradis' inquiry on the family complaint resolution. He stated that there is a complaint process and an Ombudsmen that can assist with this. He asked that someone from Administration walk through the process. He also asked that Administration address the question on cards and letters for the veterans.

Kevin Jourdain wished to recognize Veterans Day, thanking all the veterans for their service. In particular, he is thankful to the veterans in our facility, as well as the staff, senior leadership here and at the state level, and the Board of Trustees members who are veterans. Thank you for your service and best wishes on Veterans Day on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Jourdain also wished to recognize the 245th birthday of the U.S Marine Corps.

- **Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion by Isaac Mass and seconded by Sean Collins, it was unanimously VOTED to accept the unamended minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting held on October 13, 2020. Kevin Jourdain conducted a Roll Call vote on the approval of the unamended minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings on October 13, 2020. The Roll Call vote is as follows: Mark Bigda (Yes), Sean Collins (Yes), Gary Keefe (Yes), Isaac Mass (Yes), Kevin Jourdain (Yes).

- **CFO Update**

Norman Gousy reviewed the "Trustee Fund-Summary of Receipts and Disbursement Report for FY20 for the period ending October 30, 2020, as well as the current month's activity detail. He provided information on the operating budget using the standard reporting format. The UBS and Westfield Bank statements were also provided.

Kevin Jourdain inquired on historical data for the retained revenue account relative to the license plate fund. He asked if money would be spent from the retained revenue account if there is money left in the general fund. He is also interested in knowing how much was carried over from prior years to determine how we arrived where we are now. Norman Gousy stated that he will obtain a year-to-date figure of what was rolled over for the past 2 years. Isaac Mass stated that it would be helpful to know if we have a policy in place regarding when the funds from the license plate revenue account would be accessed. He noted that when someone is getting this license plate, they would probably hope that these funds would go towards something above operating expenses. Norman Gousy stated that there is no specific policy in place, the description for use is in the budget. Mr. Mass inquired if they work off the statute? Mr. Gousy confirmed that this is the case. Kevin Jourdain reported that Norman Gousy will be leaving his position as Chief Financial Officer at the Home. He wished Mr. Gousy the best of luck and thanked him for his service.

This concludes the CFO Report.

- **Report from the State and Administrator**

Secretary Poppe provided a brief update on the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Capital Project. As you know, DCAMM and Payette have concluded their stakeholder outreach and analysis and are actively working on the Rapid Planning Phase Needs Assessment, which will be made available in time for Veterans Day, or shortly thereafter.

Additionally, the State's Designer Selection Board held a meeting on Wednesday of last week to begin the process of picking a design vendor to move forward in the completion of this project. We anticipate vendor selection by November 14th.

We remain on track to meet the April 15th deadline to submit our grant application to the VA State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program, and we thank you all again for your participation in this expedited project.

Regarding Veterans Day, we look forward to hosting this year's ceremony in a virtual format, similar to Memorial Day. This will enable our veterans, their families, and friends to safely celebrate our veterans and those who are currently serving our Country.

The ceremony includes speakers and musical performers from across the Commonwealth, remarks by Governor Baker, a tribute from our Military, and more.

The event will be streamed at 10:00am on the Facebook page of the Department of Veterans' Services, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, and the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea. We are also making the ceremony available to media outlets to stream and broadcast throughout the day.

State and Administrator Report (cont.):

Michael Lazo provided the following update:

Current Veteran Census:

- 86 veterans are at the home
- 18 veterans are in the dorm
- 2 dorm veteran LOA
- 22 veterans are currently at the dedicated skilled nursing unit at Holyoke Medical Center
- 4 veterans in an acute care setting
- 132 total across all settings

Veteran Testing and COVID update:

- Regular onsite surveillance testing continues to be conducted weekly on our negative veterans and staff.

Status of Veteran test results at the Home:

- 41 out of 41 Veterans were tested (includes 19 Dorm Veterans)
 - 41 negative
 - 0 pending

Current Employee Numbers:

- 317 Total Employees
- 307 Active Employees
- 97% of our staff is currently reporting to work
- 10 employees are currently out of work (9 Direct Care and 1 Non-Direct Care)
 - 6 employees out on FMLA
 - 1 employee out due to an IA
 - 3 employees out for other reasons

Status of Employee test results at the Home:

- November 4th – 5th:
 - 192 Staff tested
 - 183 negative
 - 9 tests not performed due to specimen issues
 - 192 employees tested out of 205 Negative state employees.
 - 94% Compliance rate for the first week of November.
- Next round of testing to be conducted on November 10th and 12th

Dr. Thomas Higgins provided the following update:

Facility Infection Control:

- We continue to take all precautions possible related to infection control and follow all guidance and requirements from CMS, CDC, DPH, and Governor Baker's orders.
- Since August 1st, there have been just two employees testing positive for COVID-19 (on 9/2 and 10/29) and no veterans testing positive.
- The employees were isolated and sent home and the quarantine measures have to date been successful in preventing any further spread.
- The home remains under heightened precautions until November 13th based on CDC recommendations from the 10/29 positive test, contingent on negative testing today and Thursday.
- Although we do not encourage or expect many outside visits to take place over the holidays, we are coordinating with EOHSS on quarantine procedures should a veteran leave the home for a holiday gathering.
- Skin biopsy with an atypical rash was reported as Scabies. The individual is isolated in acute care. We are following established Scabies protocol. There has been no indication of spreading to other veterans or staff.

State and Administrator Report (cont.):**Medical Updates:**

- We continue to work with laboratory vendors to ensure that the cycle threshold is reported routinely with any positive results so that we can properly interpret a “positive” test in a previously recovered individual.
- Dr. Higgins is in close touch with Holyoke Medical Center, Baystate Medical Center and Mercy Medical Center. All three institutions are reporting an upsurge in COVID cases, including ICU cases.
- The contract with Baystate Medical Practices for Infection Prevention and Infectious Disease consultation has been modified to accommodate additional off-hour coverage; and should be finalized this week.
- Three additional resumes have been received from candidates for the permanent CMO position. Two will not be pursued as they are from clinicians with no administrative background, but the third one passed the phone screening and is promising.
- Phone interviews will be conducted this week, and if the screening goes well we intend to fly the candidate in from out of state for a tour and in-person interviews.
- We have received and modified several policies and procedures from Chelsea, including credentialing and ethics procedures. The revised documents will be reviewed by the policies and procedures committee and then submitted to the Board of Trustees.
- A new policy on how to address MOLST and DNR orders has been drafted and is in legal review.
- Greeting cards and letters can be accepted to come into the facility as the risk of the COVID virus is very low on materials. They can be addressed to “Any Veteran”.

Aimee Desmarais provided the following update:

Clinical Staffing:

- The Home’s HPPD remains above the CMS standard for long-term care facility of 4.408.
- Since the last update, the following is the hiring update:
 - We have completed interviews for the Director of Social Services position and have a recommended candidate.
 - We currently have one Social Worker position posted.
 - Three Recreation Therapists are starting this month and there are two additional positions that were posted on 11/3.
 - Nurse Practitioner on boarded on 11/9.
 - Infection Prevention Nurse and Lead Nurse Educator are starting on 11/30.
 - We on boarded 3 CNAs on October 26th and 2 CNAs and 1 LPN on November 2nd
- We continue to provide on-going house-wide training and competency checks.

Human Resources and Labor:

- Management assisted and completed the Bidding process with the MNA last week. Next week we will be assisting SEIU with the Bidding process. This will keep us on schedule to implement the set schedules in January.
- We continue to have monthly labor management meetings with the MNA and SEIU 888.
- Our Interim Nurse Clinical Consultant Team remains in place until December.
- We are completing EPRS’s on all clinical staff and have 58% completed to date. Expected completion date is now November 16, 2020.

Quality and Compliance:

- We are still waiting for the Joint Commission unannounced survey to review the implementation of the correction plan.
- DPH completed an unannounced survey on October 28th and 29th the unofficial preliminary findings were overall positive, they complimented all the education that was provided and is ongoing.
- Veterans Administration (VA) Survey evidence of compliance to the Corrective Action Plan was submitted to the VA.
- Flu compliance is 58% - plan in place to continue

State and Administrator Report (cont.):

Michael Lazo provided the following update:

Facilities and Operations:

- We remain at 6 units open.
- Refresh Project:
 - Phase 2 of the Refresh project remains on target date for a completion date of December 28, 2020.
- The following systems are in the process of being reviewed and updated:
 - Wander Guard – License has been renewed. Additional points discussed, pending quote.
 - Overhead Paging System – Vendor was on-site November 5 – issues have been identified.
 - Security Video System – DCAMM has engaged one of their house doctors to review the building and the MSP Security Report from 2018. Recommendation will be shared once evaluation is completed.
- The Home is also working with DCAMM to advertise for other building related projects to include repairs to the first floor patio, the exterior envelop and the TPO roofing system
- Initial Training on Infection Control standards and the 7 step cleaning process began on October 16th. 17 of 36 employees have been trained thus far (47%).
- The Surfacide machines will be here on the 16th. Training and implementation will begin shortly after.
- Director of Facilities is slated to start on December 7th.

Systems and Operational Status:

- Policy Tech remains on target to start in December 2020.
- Omnicell preparations have begun with a rollout expected in January 2021 for education and go live tentatively set for February 2021.
- The SHH Team is looking at software programs for Medical References and training. Health Stream has been reviewed this week to support the Training and Education Roll out.

Veteran, Family and Staff Support:

- Veterans Day at the Soldiers' Home and at Holyoke Medical Center includes: special gift from Dunkin Donuts (Individual boxes of donuts decorated with Military Branch Logos) Fleece Vests from the Hart Golf Tournament, cards and letters from the community; a special virtual ceremony by DVS.
- The Home is closed to visitation on Veterans Day due to quarantine but will accommodate families on the Sunday after visitation resumes.
- Family and Veteran Advisory Councils to resumes. Invitations have gone out to Veterans and Families. These will be facilitated by the Director of Social Work.
- Quarterly Virtual Family Meetings dates are set for December, invitations to go out next week.
- Communications continue to be developed for families, the staff, and the unions. The BOT chair has been added to the communication distribution list for improved communication.
- At the request of the families, the Recreation Programs by Veteran Care Areas have been sent out for November and will go out every month moving forward.
- Grief Support Programs continue to be available for staff.
- Family member support group meetings continue off sight with Jill Adams, MSW, LICSW.

State and Administrator Report (cont.):**Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Project:**

- The Strategic Selection Team is interviewing vendors this week and the goal is to have a final selection by mid-December.

This concludes the State and Administrator Update Report and discussion was opened up to any questions.

Isaac Mass inquired if, with COVID on the rise in area hospitals, there a plan in place if the hospitals are to exceed capacity and cannot take transfers from the Soldiers' Home? Dr. Higgins responded that we hope that will not happen and that the COVID census at Baystate Medical Center is at 28 – it was at 300 during the March-April wave – so at this point, there is plenty of head room. We will look to the State to help coordinate with geographic availability if this need should arise. We are fortunate in that the emerging evidence is that the residents who have recovered are probably not going to get sick again, but that still leaves us with a number of residents at the facility who have always been persistently negative. We do not have the capacity to do IV drug infusion in-house, but there are some residents that could be managed in that event, but only up to the point where hospitalization would be necessary. We will keep an eye on the situation as cases expand. Mr. Mass noted that we hope that we will be within head room, but spikes happen suddenly, so it would be good to know that we have a contingency plan in place if necessary to give confidence to family members that we can send residents out to other facilities.

Sean Collins noted that he appreciates all the hard work on these reports. He looks forward to correcting some of the deficiencies at the Soldiers' Home. He stated that he noticed that the Department of Public Health (DPH) did an unannounced survey on October 28th and 29th. He inquired if this survey is similar to what was experienced with the Joint Commission? Val Liptak stated that DPH did an infection control focused survey. She noted that they followed exactly what DPH guidelines are. There is a checklist of items they go through. This was an unofficial survey, so we are unsure how the report will be written up, but it went very well. They were impressed with the education and infection control measures that were put into place. They also monitored PPE to ensure it was being worn properly. Mr. Collins stated that this was excellent news and validates all the efforts being put into place. He noted that at the last meeting we had discussed getting more insight on the Joint Commission. We look forward to getting that report update.

Sean Collins asked for information about what Omnicell is? Val Liptak stated that Omnicell is a medication dispensing machine, similar to Pyxis. We don't currently have a medication dispensing system in-house – we are in the process of implementing this.

Sean Collins requested that the information on the electronic medical record (EMR) vendor can be shared with the Board Chairman once the vendor has been selected. Ms. Liptak confirmed that this would be provided. Secretary Poppe noted that Eric Sheehan, Deputy Superintendent at Chelsea Soldiers' Home, is available for any questions around the electronic medical record.

Sean Collins confirmed whether the flu status information was for employees? Ms. Liptak confirmed this.

Kevin Jourdain inquired if the \$100,000 that had initially been allocated to the EMR project has been reimbursed to the Trustee Account? Secretary Poppe will reach out to Secretary Alda Rego to address this question.

Kevin Jourdain asked if the design selection board had determined who the finalists will be. Secretary Poppe said the design selection board selected three (3) finalists who will be reviewed this week. Kevin Jourdain inquired if these names will be sent to the Board of Trustees. Secretary Poppe shared the information on the three finalists: Payette, Perkins Eastman, Schmidt Group.

Kevin Jourdain asked if all clinical and non-clinical staff have had at least one (1) COVID test within the last 6 months? Val Liptak confirmed this is the case. She further added that if staff does not comply, they cannot come back into the building until they have a negative COVID test in hand.

State and Administrator Report (cont.):

Kevin Jourdain inquired if there is anything to be concerned about relative to Scabies in the facility? Dr. Higgins stated that there was a veteran who had a skin rash for 1 ½ months. This individual was seen by a number of physicians, including a dermatologist, who determined this was not Scabies. The veteran was treated for skin and fungal infection. The treatment was not responsive so a dermatology consult was done and a biopsy was ordered. The biopsy findings showed Scabies organisms. In result, we put our Scabies protocol into effect to treat all veterans, and it was also offered to staff out of an abundance of caution. We are following our protocol to get this accomplished. Kevin Jourdain asked if we know how Scabies got into the building? Dr. Higgins stated that it is possible it came in through an employee or visitor. He noted that some individuals can have a low grade infection that smolders, and this could also be a possibility. A lot is not known about what happens around elderly compromised patients – skin integrity decreases over time. Dr. Higgins consulted a dermatologist and they suggested we treat it. Our consultant from Baystate Medical Center vetted all of our plans on what we are doing. We will continue to keep the Board of Trustees posted.

Kevin Jourdain asked there has been a formal invitation to DPH to do a formal survey? Secretary Poppe said the recent DPH survey was at our request. What DPH does is CMS surveys, so they are not funded for this, but are doing this as a courtesy to us, as the Board requested it be done. We believe there will be an unannounced follow-up survey in the future. We plan to be survey ready. Mr. Jourdain asked if the understanding is that the Soldiers' Home will have the same surveys that other nursing homes in the state are having done? Secretary Poppe confirmed that this is the understanding. CMS is not doing regular surveys, as they are focused on infection control currently. We will follow-up on this.

A motion was made by Isaac Mass and seconded by Sean Collins, to advance the UBS presentation to this part of the meeting agenda. All board members were unanimously in favor to make this change to the meeting agenda.

UBS Performance Presentation Calendar Year 2020 YTD – Presentation by Michael Ravosa, of UBS:

Michael Ravosa, Certified Financial Planner and Portfolio Manager at UBS, provided the UBS Portfolio Review Report as of 11/9/20, which included information on Asset Allocation Review, Portfolio Value and Investment Results, Summary of Gains and Losses, and Summary of Performance by Account.

Kevin Jourdain thanked Mr. Ravosa for his report and presentation. He stated that we will be restarting the Finance Committee, and look forward to having Mr. Ravosa be a part of this meeting, and to assist with the creation of an Investment Policy. Mr. Jourdain stated that EOHHS has authorized the Board of Trustees to engage Morrison Mahoney to work with the Board on policies. We would like to get special counsel to assist us with going through the policies. Legal counsel will help to review policies along with John Bagley, who is our attorney.

OLD BUSINESS:**Trustee Account Audit Update from Powers & Sullivan and the Chair:**

Kevin Jourdain stated that this report has been circulated to the Board of Trustees and to the state senior leadership. Mr. Jourdain has asked the Board make a motion to receive this report and read the report for future meetings. Mr. Jourdain has asked the State to give us a management comment on this prior to our December Board meeting. A motion was made by Isaac Mass, and seconded by Sean Collins, to receive this report and table the item for discussion at the next Board of Trustees meeting on 12/8/20. All Board members were unanimously in favor.

OLD BUSINESS (cont.):Meeting the Capital & Infrastructure Needs of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke:

Kevin Jourdain asked if an update could be provided in terms of where Payette is on their report for the Board of Trustees. Secretary Poppe reported that Payette is in the process of completing a joint needs assessment, which may be out tomorrow or shortly thereafter. This report will be public. Secretary Poppe asked if the Board would like to have a separate meeting to discuss this report? Kevin Jourdain agreed that a designated remote meeting should be set up to review this report. Isaac Mass noted that it would be helpful for the public to know where they can access the report.

Kevin Jourdain inquired if it would be put up on the Soldiers' Home website. Secretary Poppe stated that, due to the size of the document, it may have been come via link. She will update the Board when she has this information.

Follow-Up on Board Rules adopted on July 14 relative to recommendations from Attorney Pearlstein Report:

No new updates per Kevin Jourdain.

Discussion of Recommendation of Soldiers' Home in Holyoke Legal Counsel to review past Executive Session Minutes for Possible Release: No new updates on this item per Mark Yankopoulos. Kevin Jourdain to remove this item from agenda.

The Selection Process of New Superintendent pursuant to MGL c 6 Sec 71 and Judge Ferrera's opinion:

A vote will take place later in this meeting on the retainment of a talent acquisition firm.

Appointments of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer pursuant to MGL c 6 Sec 71. Discussion of any vacancies to these positions and possible appointments of acting persons:

Kevin Jourdain reported that with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position is being vacated shortly. This will give us another opportunity to take a look at this going forward. Isaac Mass stated that the CFO position is currently being actively advertised for, and there is nothing referring to Board of Trustees approval for the filling of the CFO position. The Superintendent, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, appoints the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer positions.

Kevin Jourdain noted that with the impending CFO vacancy, we need to give thought to the question of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Steve Giordano is currently acting in the role of interim CFO, and there are approximately 19 candidates for the CFO position at this time. The Assistant Treasurer position is currently vacant, and there is someone currently holding the Treasurer position. We need to make a determination on this. Kevin Jourdain to work with Secretary Poppe. Gary Keefe inquired if these are all full-time positions. Kevin Jourdain confirmed that these positions are currently full-time positions. We are trying to get in alignment with what the Statute says. Gary Keefe stated that the statute may need to be updated. Secretary Poppe provided clarification that there is a Treasurer at both the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke and the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea. These are both bargaining unit positions. There may have also been an Assistant Treasurer at one time, but there is not one currently. Isaac Mass noted that it is important that the Board of Trustees have the approval of the most important financial position in the facility. Kevin Jourdain agreed that this is the intent of the Statute. He inquired if the Board can get a copy of the job descriptions for all three of these positions: CFO, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer.

NEW BUSINESS:Announcement of Board Membership Changes:

Kevin Jourdain announced the appointment of two highly regarded new members to the Board of Trustees: Major General Gary Keefe and Lt. Colonel Mark Bigda, MD. He provided the background of each of the new Board members and welcomed them both to the Board of Trustees of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke. Mr. Jourdain thanked former members, Christopher Dupont and Cesar Lopez, for their many years of dedicated service to the Board of Trustees, wishing them both the best.

NEW BUSINESS (CONT.):Announcement of Management Changes:

Kevin Jourdain reported the following changes to the management of the Soldiers' Home:

- Norman Gousy, CFO, has resigned, effective 11/25/20.
- Dr. Thomas Higgins, interim CMO, will be leaving the facility shortly. We are in the process of getting a new CMO for the facility. There is a final round of interviews with the CMO candidate this week.
- Val Liptak, interim Administrator, will be leaving the facility on 12/4/20 to resume her administrator role at Western MA Hospital.

Catherine Starr reported that they are actively pursuing an interim candidate for the position of Superintendent at the Home. She is hoping this will be wrapped up as early as this week. They are also in discussions with a candidate for the permanent Deputy Superintendent position. We are prescreening a number of candidates for the CFO position and are in good shape to identify candidates for that role. Kevin Jourdain requested to be consulted on finalists for these positions. He asked that he be provided with an update so that the Board of Trustees can provide input.

Isaac Mass wished to put out a reminder that as we are interviewing for the CMO position, that this is a position that can only be hired by the Superintendent. We do not have the authority to appoint a full-time permanent CMO, and we do not currently have a permanent Superintendent in place, as Val Liptak is the interim administrator, not the permanent Superintendent. Catherine Starr suggested looping back on this discussion.

Selection of Interim Administrator:

Kevin Jourdain reported that Human Resources is in the process of identifying someone and will reach out to the Board of Trustees with any updates.

Retention of Talent Acquisition Search Firm for the Superintendent – Board to Vote on the Approval to Retain B.E. Smith for this Purpose:

Kevin Jourdain expressed his thanks to Secretary Poppe for her assistance with getting a Human Resources representative to work with us on this. Jessica Sheerer is the lead person from a Human Resources perspective. Kevin has started working with Catherine Starr and others in EOHHS on this, and he reported that they have spoken highly of B.E. Smith. They are a firm who have done business with the Commonwealth previously, and have considerable experience with the recruitment of health care professionals. He reported that he has been in discussions with Monique Yalman from B.E. Smith. Discussion took place addressing recruitment needs for this position, and determining a process so that stakeholders are able to provide input. Kevin Jourdain noted that we are in a transformational phase, and are hoping to find the right mission-based leader, who would like the opportunity to restore the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke. Isaac Mass made a motion, seconded by Sean Collins, to approve the selection of B.E. Smith as the talent acquisition search firm for the recruitment of a Superintendent for the Soldiers' Home. All were in favor to approve this. Kevin Jourdain conducted a Roll Call Vote as follows: Mark Bigda (Yes), Sean Collins (Yes), Gary Keefe (Yes), Isaac Mass (Yes), Kevin Jourdain (Yes).

Committee Assignments and Resumption of Committee Meetings:

Kevin Jourdain reported that we will resume the following three committees:

- Operations Committee - this committee will have oversight of most day-to-day operations of the facility, working closely with the Superintendent and executive leadership of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke.
- Bylaws Committee – Board of Trustees Bylaws are to be reviewed every three (3) years. This review is overdue, and we need to see what changes need to be made.
- Finance Committee – oversight of the Trustee fund, state appropriation fund, retained revenue accounts, as well as overall financial and budget issues facing the Home, and advocacy around those as well.

There will be three Trustee members on each committee. Kevin Jourdain will reach out to Board of Trustees members regarding committee membership. He noted that he is sensitive to the fact that we will have a busy upcoming meeting schedule with the regular monthly meeting, the Superintendent search, and the Payette meetings, but would like to get these committee meetings on the books within the next couple of months.

NEW BUSINESS (cont.):Committee Assignments and Resumption of Committee Meetings (cont.):

Isaac Mass noted that currently the Board of Trustees does not have a Personnel Committee. He stated that he believes there is a need for a committee to be created for the evaluations of the superintendent, as any good candidate will want to know how they will be evaluated. He inquired if the Board Chairman has plans to assign this to a particular committee. Kevin Jourdain stated that this would be under the Operations Committee, and we should revisit this in light of new information and determine how this would work with EOHHS day-to-day supervision of the Superintendent. A determination will need to be made on how the Board of Trustees can have input for the annual appraisal of the superintendent.

Approval of the Invoice from Powers and Sullivan – Motion to approve payment from the Trustee Account for the completed Audit:

The Audit done by Powers and Sullivan has been completed. The invoice was sent out to the Board members for review in consideration of approval. Sean Collins inquired how often will audits of the Trustee account be done going forward? Kevin Jourdain recommends doing an annual review. Isaac Mass made a motion, seconded by Sean Collins, to approve the Powers and Sullivan invoice in the amount of \$19,613.00 out of the Trustee account. All were in favor to approve. Kevin Jourdain conducted a Roll Call Vote as follows: Mark Bigda (Yes), Sean Collins (Yes), Gary Keefe (Yes), Isaac Mass (Yes), Kevin Jourdain (Yes).

Approval of Official Temporary Location for COVID-19 Patient Memorial:

Kevin Jourdain stated that he received a complaint from coalition members that memorial items and signs that had been placed at the bottom of hill at the Home had been removed. Management at the Soldiers' Home has explained that there was a number of rain storms in October that damaged these items and they had our Maintenance department at the Home clean up the area as the items had blown all over the lawn. No disrespect was meant in removing these items, it was just that the area needed to be cleaned up. Going forward, we would like to discuss creating a temporary location for a COVID-19 patient memorial. The coalition has made a recommendation to the Board of Trustees that a small post be designated that would commemorate those we have lost. Isaac Mass suggested that this is not something we can control as Trustees, but we can make the space available for the coalition to put this up for a certain period of time until a permanent memorial can be put in place. Kevin Jourdain noted that this is state property, and there are time, place and manner restrictions on this. This memorial would be meant to honor lost veterans, not make political statements. Mr. Jourdain stated that he has asked the management at the Home to get a semblance of a policy that the Board can adopt on a short-term basis to allow us to move forward for now until we have a future permanent plan in place. Isaac Mass suggested we work with the coalition and let them handle the day-to-day management of this. Sean Collins agreed that we work with the coalition on this, and suggested possibly doing memorial holiday wreaths with the veterans names on them. Kevin Jourdain to reach out to John Paradis from the coalition on these suggestions. He noted that the facility would need to stay HIPPA compliant in regards to veteran names, so this would have to be driven by community members to agree to include family member names. Kevin Jourdain stated that they will table this item for now, and he will work with the coalition and our legal counsel, Mark Yankopoulos, on this. He stated that this would not need to be a Board decision, but rather, a decision between management and the coalition. Isaac Mass made a motion, seconded by Sean Collins, to allow the Soldiers' Home Administration to work with the chair of the Soldiers' Home Coalition to put a temporary memorial in place for this specific purpose. All were in favor to approve this motion. Kevin Jourdain conducted a Roll Call Vote as follows: Mark Bigda (Yes), Sean Collins (Yes), Gary Keefe (Yes) Isaac Mass (Yes), Kevin Jourdain (Yes).

Review, Creation and Eventual Adoption of Policies and Procedures for Patient Memorials:

Isaac Mass stated that he feels the location of the permanent memorial should be relative to Payette with regards to however they do construction. He feels it should be something substantial, in or on the building. Kevin Jourdain stated that this item should be tabled at this point, and it will be brought up at the meeting with Payette. Isaac Mass made a motion, seconded by Sean Collins, to table the review, creation and eventual adoption of policies and procedures for patient memorials and study of a permanent location. All were in favor to approve this motion.

NEW BUSINESS:Discussion of the Ombudsman Program and the Appointment of Mr. Joseph Delaney as the New Ombudsman. Request for a report from Mr. Delaney on the program and his plans for success:

Kevin Jourdain reported that Mr. Joseph Delaney was recently appointed as the Ombudsman for the Home. This was related to an item in the Pearlstein report. There is a need and demand for these services, as the Ombudsman will serve as an advocate for people to voice their concerns to. Mr. Jourdain requested that the Board be provided with the resume and contact information for Mr. Delaney, as well as information on the Ombudsman program so that information can get out to veterans and families. He inquired if Mr. Delaney's information has been posted throughout the facility so his information is readily available? Val Liptak confirmed that this information has been posted on the units. A letter went out to families to inform them. A notification was also sent to the VA within the submitted report. Val confirmed that Mr. Delaney's information was sent to the Board Chairman. The Ombudsman process is an opportunity for those who feel the internal complaint process is not doing them justice. He will serve as an advocate between residents and administration and allow people to feel like they are being heard. Mr. Jourdain inquired if the social work team is making veterans aware of the complaint process to ensure they are properly educated on the Ombudsman process. Val Liptak stated the Social Work Director is starting to have meetings with families with the Ombudsman present. All of the processes are currently being put into place. Mr. Jourdain reported that Matt Deacon has been working with the Office of Elder Affairs for a permanent resolution for the Ombudsman program. There are a couple of options that Matt can brief us on at the next Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Jourdain will add this as an agenda item for the next Board of Trustees meeting on 12/8/20.

Adjourn:

Isaac Mass made a motion, seconded by Sean Collins, to conclude the Public Session and move into Executive Session for the purpose stated on the agenda. Mr. Jourdain noted for the public's awareness that the Board of Trustees will not be returning from Executive Session to Public Session. The Board of Trustees will adjourn after the Executive Session has ended.

Roll Call Vote is as follows: Mark Bigda (Yes), Sean Collins (Yes), Gary Keefe (Yes) Isaac Mass (Yes), Kevin Jourdain (Yes). It was unanimously VOTED to conclude the Public Session and move into Executive Session at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Shimel
Acting Secretary for the Board of Trustees