

## **Veterans Home in Holyoke Board of Trustees Meeting**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Veterans' Home Holyoke (HLY) was held virtually and telephonically on Wednesday October 2, 2024. The meeting began at 1:30 PM.

**Board Members via Webex:** Chairman Collins, Trustee Kevin Trustee Jourdain, and Trustee Isaac and Trustee Mass.

**Present via Webex:** Melanie (Acobe) Gentile, Budget Director (HLY); Kathleen Denner, Recording Secretary Diane Dietzen, (HLY); Debra Foley, Communications (HLY); Glen Hevy, Deputy Superintendent (HLY); Kelly Jones, Director of Nursing (HLY); Michael Lazo, Superintendent (HLY); Jeff Lenahan, Quality Manger (HLY); Caitlin Menard, Director of Social Work (HLY); Brett Walker, General Counsel (HLY); Ciara Hanlon.

**Roll Call:** Chairman Collins conducted the Roll Call as follows: Trustee Jourdain, Trustee Mass, and Chairman Collins. Trustee Bigda joined after the approval of minutes vote.

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

**Public Comment:** No public comment for this month.

**Approval of May 23, 2024 minutes:** A motion was made by Trustee Mass to approve the May 23, 2024 Board Meeting minutes and it was seconded Trustee Jourdain. No Discussion.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes), and Trustee Collins (Yes). It was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2024, Board Meeting.

### **Follow up on "Funds transition"**

Chairman Collins stated that speakers at the previous meeting suggested the board should get a legal opinion from outside council. When the date of the meeting is announced it will be shared with the board. Trustee Joudain asked if there will be a special meeting. Chairman Collins is hoping to review at the November 12 meeting.

### **Recent Donation by the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company**

Mr. Lazo shared that the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company started a fund-raising campaign to support the two Homes and had one donor donate \$10,000 to split between the Homes. Discussions were had as to how to use the donation possible sundries or touch to play interactive iPad type of device for veterans. He continued that this information would be brought back to the donors to discuss how they would like the money to be spent.

### **Full council participation**

Chairman Collins opened a discussion of the rules for of participation in the full statewide council meeting and also the rules and guidelines. The function of the council is to hear what is going on with the Commonwealth and with Chelsea. Trustee Mass questioned at the last council meeting if there is a larger mandate of veterans statewide, found out it is not true, that the Holyoke Board is for the Holyoke Home specifically and for us to get more information on Chelsea and Chelsea to receive more information on the Holyoke Home. Trustee Mass suggested arranging a visit to Chelsea and for Chelsea to visit Holyoke here. Chairman Collins suggested to have a conversation with Chairman Lyons of Chelsea.

**DCAMM New Home Quarterly Update (Mr. Lazo):**

Mr. Lazo reported that Joe Fazio is leaving DCAMM. When the new person is onboarded, Mr. Lazo will invite to present update to the board.

**CFO/Treasurer Update (Ms. Gentile):**

Ms. Gentile reviewed the FY25 Trustee Pending Plan in the attached materials. Trustee Mass requested to see the professional support for the trustees fundraising. Ms. Gentile replied that she can create a new category. Trustee Mass responded that he does not need it separated out, he is wants to know if that is a sufficient amount and have we gotten any quotes. Trustee Jourdain added there were two charges one was for the professional support and then the audit. Trustee Jourdain questioned the status because we were waiting on a marketing fundraising vendor quote. Ms. Gentile replied that we cannot use statewide for that because we cannot solicit for a vendor that is to be a fundraiser. Trustee Jourdain said it was for us to get quotes, but the board would pay for it. Trustee Jourdain would like a choice of two or three to get a quote from. Ms. Gentile shared that for the audit she is waiting on statewide contractors, and they are taking longer to get back to finalize the auditor. Trustee Mass and Trustee Jourdain asked for the amount of the marketing plan to be increased to \$10,000 and the audit to \$5,000. Ms. Acobe confirmed that the amounts will be adjusted to \$10,000 for marketing plan and \$5,000 audit.

Motion to change the checking account from Westfield Bank to the State funds if it is a revolving credit account if not comes back to the Board of Trustees for further clarification, one that does not sweep method. Motion made by Trustee Mass and seconded by Trustee Jourdain.

Roll Call: Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes) and Trustee Collins (Yes). The motion passes unanimously.

Trustee Jourdain made a motion to add a new line item to add \$10,000 for development. Seconded by Trustee Mass.

Roll Call: Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes) and Trustee Collins (Yes). The motion passes unanimously.

Ms. Gentile has two purchase orders. One for IN2L balance \$3018 for two subscriptions, the other subscription is paid in a separate transaction.

Trustee Jourdain made a motion to approve \$3018.56 IN2L subscription and Trustee Mass seconded.

Roll Call: Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes) and Trustee Collins (Yes). The motion passes unanimously.

Trustee Mass motion that the board make a recommendation that the governor's office include the IN2L in the operating budget for next year for the Home to be carrying forward. Trustee Jourdain said if it is an allowable expense then it should be paid out of state appropriation.

Trustee Mass made a motion that the IN2L subscription be included in next years' operating budget. The motion was seconded by Trustee Jourdain.

Roll Call: Trustee Jourdain (Yes), Trustee Mass (Yes) and Trustee Collins (Yes). The motion passes unanimously.

Ms. Gentile will put the holiday gifts on the November agenda.

Ms. Gentile gave an update on the overall budget for the Home. She shared the spreadsheet that is attached.

### **Holyoke Veterans' Home Superintendent/Administrator Update (Mr. Lazo):**

#### **Census report**

Mr. Lazo reported that the Homes census is currently at 113 veterans with 11 beds available, a waitlist of 122 veterans, 3 veterans identified for admissions, with no COVID in the building, and an occasional staff COVID positive but right now no positive veterans.

COVID and flu vaccines available for staff and veterans, staff has to receive vaccines or complete a declination form. Recreation had a small cluster of COVID cases in August into September with activities occurring on unites. Veterans are back to communal actives and dining. Offsite trips have resumed. 3-4 nighttime activities per week. Mr. Lazo thanked the board for today's picnic. We are currently planning for Veterans Day and the holidays. The Veterans Day activity will be the making of blankets and then donating them to EOVS for homeless veterans. Mr. Lazo continued that last year the gift was a care package for deployed soldiers.

Mr. Lazo recognized the Recreation team for a great job during the COVID period keeping the veterans engaged. Thank you to the community partners for support, picnics, social events, and birthday parties.

Mr. Lazo gave a reminder that the Home had a VA survey back in January and received full accreditation in July and we do expect them back in January 2025. DPH came in July for their licensure survey, and we became licensed as of July 25. They did give improvement suggestions which are being worked on. Mr. Lazo continue that we are expecting DPH for the CMS certification survey to make necessary corrections. Our Pinnacle surveys continue to be strong. The September scores were 100% favorability rating 4.93 out of 5 recommend to others and overall satisfaction score of 4.89 out of 5 and the Home continues to be considered best in class and 12 out of 16 metrics. Mr. Lazo stated that staffing 341 employees with equals 302 FTE's. We have 95% reporting to work. Our average HPPD for September was 7.32. We have had 20 new

staff members from July 14 to September 23 and are getting close to full. We are at 90% organic staff with overtime up due to some absences.

Mr. Lazo shared that discussion has started with the finance team regarding staffing the new building. We will need to grow 35% to staff the needs of the new building.

Mr. Lazo gave some updates regarding the new building. The steel infrastructure is moving forward. There is one crane that will remain through mid-November. On November 7 there will be a topping off ceremony, a piece of the steel beam will be in the lobby for staff and veteran to sign, governor will sign during the topping off ceremony. He continued that the geothermal well portion of the project has been completed with 140 wells. Working groups have been meeting to discuss procurement for the new building. In the current Home we have gone live with new EMR on September 9. We had a Wi-Fi failure but has been fixed. After action completed with Ernie and Kelly spending countless hours to make sure all information was entered so we could move forward.

Mr. Lazo shared that on September 13 Lieutenant Governor, the Secretary, Mayor Garcia, Representative Duffy and Chairman Collins were here to thank the team for their hard work for DP licensure and was part of the EMR go live week, it was much appreciated by staff and leadership. The Executive Team of Holyoke was awarded the Manuel Carballo Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service. On October 17 the team will receive the award from the governor. EOVS was the nominating agency.

#### **Holyoke Veterans' Home General Counsel Update (Atty Walker):**

Mr. Walker shared that a staff member has offered 2 Celtic tickets to a game next week as a fundraiser. Trustee Mass suggested a veteran. Mr. Walker added that it was a fundraiser for staff. Mr. Lazo shared that in the past it had been a free drawing. Trustee Mass suggested to continue to the way it has in the past and revisit for next year.

Mr. Walker has been working on HIPAA privacy law clinical and non-clinical and how it applies to our setting. He is also working on document retention education and guidelines, decision making in healthcare settings, education provided to decision making guardianship. Mr. Walker shared that the next focus was on decision making authorities in healthcare settings. Guardianship would be a focus, deciding if a veteran would benefit for having a court appointed guardian to them. Trustee Mass asked if the Home has veterans who need guardianship. Mr. Walker replied that it is to make clinical staff and social work aware if they do identify someone that needs assistance with guardianship and that we have a program ready to go and that we are proactive. Chairman Collins thought it was part of the admissions process. Trustee Mass suggested to reach out to veterans' legal services as part of the process to prevent problems in the future.

#### **Quality / KPI update**

Mr. Lenahan shared his power point presentation that is attached. He discussed our surveys, reviewed the data YTD, and Quality Projects.

**Ombudsperson**

JM Sorrell gave an overview of her role. She does a lot of training for example sexual harassment for senior leadership, new staff orientation in areas of diversity, trainings around LGBTQ cultural competence. She is looking at collaboration between departments and personal in short- and long-term range. The culture will change with the move into the new building. JM continued that they will be looking at the way they log grievances because that is what CMS and DPH will be looking at. JM has been collaborating with and guides and mentors the ombudsperson at Chelsea. JM works with residents and staff to resolve conflicts; the approach is in the spirit of partnership. Everyone participates in problem solving, resuming ombudsman program EOEA covers the Home, as in a volunteer Joe Delaney will resume more formally coming in once a week to help resolve issues.

**No Executive Session Scheduled for this meeting.**

Our next meeting is November 12

Full council on December 17<sup>th</sup>

At next meeting proposed for 2025

Term expire for Chairman Collins was renewed under the new legislature under the governor and the secretary will end in 2028.

Trustee Mass asked if next meeting to have unions to the meeting.

**Adjourn:**

Chairman Collins concluded the meeting at 2:57 PM.

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

Attachments: