



Hi-Desert Memorial Health Care District dba
Morongo Basin Healthcare District
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 5, 2024 at 6:15 p.m.

Convened on the La Contenta campus; the public was invited to attend the meeting on campus or via Microsoft Teams, an electronic, remote platform.

- **Mission Statement:** *To improve the health and wellness of the communities we serve.*
- **Vision:** *A healthy Morongo Basin.*
- **Core Values:** *Commitment, Collaboration, Accountability, Dignity, Integrity, Equity.*

Board of Directors:

- Director Cooper
- Director Evans
- Director Markle-Greenhouse
- Director Stiemsma
- Jacquelin Todd

- Linda Evans, Chief Strategy Officer, Desert Care Network (*remote*)

Administrative Staff:

- CEO Cindy Schmall
- Debbie Anderson, CFO
- Tricia Gehrlein, Chief Patient Experience Officer (*remote*)
- Karen Graley, Board Clerk (*remote*)
- Beverly Krushat, Executive Assistant
- Janeen Duff, Director Strategic Initiatives

CALL TO ORDER

Director Evans called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. The meeting was convened on the La Contenta campus and by electronic platform using Microsoft Teams platform.

ROLL CALL

Karen Graley, Board Clerk, conducted roll call and declared a quorum.

OBSERVANCES

Director Evans announced that observances were conducted in the Public Hearing immediately preceding this regular business meeting of the Board of Directors and would not be repeated in this meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Evans, Chief Strategy Officer, Desert Care Network, reported that Measure AA, the lease-purchase agreement on the November ballot, was approved by 72%. This is a 30-year lease between Desert Healthcare District and Tenet Health.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Motion 24-73: Director Greenhouse motioned to approve the meeting agenda; second by Director Stiemsma, motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- **Motion 24-74:** Director Stiemsma motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with the correction of adding Tricia Gehrlein to the list of attendees at the November 7 meeting, second by Director Greenhouse, motion passed by unanimous vote.
 - Minutes: Regular meeting of the Board of Directors, November 7, 2024
 - Minutes: Special meeting of the Board of Directors, November 13, 2024



ACTION ITEMS

RESOLUTION: INCREASE BOARD MEETING STIPENDS – *Director Evans*

Director Evans reviewed Resolution 24-03 to increase board member compensation from \$105 per meeting/day to \$110 per meeting/day, noting that the stipend would become effective 60 days after adoption of Resolution 24-03. No public comment was received regarding the resolution. There was discussion about making the incremental stipend increase an annual action item. Staff will consult with legal counsel to ensure compliance with law.

- **Motion 24-75:** Motion by Director Stiemsma to adopt Resolution 24-03 to increase the Board of Directors’ meeting stipend amount from \$105 to \$110 for each meeting/day; second by Director Todd. Resolution 24-03 was adopted by a roll call vote. The vote was unanimous.

APPROVE CEO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION – *Director Evans*

Director Evans called for a motion to approve the CEO performance evaluation.

- **Motion 24-76:** Motion by Director Cooper to approve the CEO Performance Evaluation as recommended by the joint boards’ committee in the November 13, 2024 special meeting (closed session); second by Director Greenhouse. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPROVE POLICY FN-AP-104 LEVELS OF AUTHORIZATION – *Debbie Anderson, CFO*

Ms. Anderson explained the redline changes that included updating titles and language; there were no significant changes to the text.

- **Motion 24-77:** Motion by Director Stiemsma to approve policy FN-AP-104 Levels of Authorization as presented; second by Director Todd. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

BYLAWS REVIEW – *Cindy Schmall, CEO*

Ms. Schmall referred the Directors to tab 4 in the agenda packet where redline edits were presented. She explained that ACHD recommended specific language be added to exclude seating immediate family members or terminated employees on the board.

Director Evans expressed concern about adhering to the restriction of family and employee members being seated through the election process and suggested that this may be specific to when appointing to a board vacancy. Staff will consult with legal counsel to clarify.

Also, text was updated to reflect new legislation for remote participation by board members (AB2303) and defines the ad hoc committee for CEO performance evaluation to reflect participation of both boards.

- **Motion 24-78** Motion by Director Greenhouse to approve edits to the Bylaws as presented, second by Director Stiemsma. The motion was amended to approve all changes but section 1 regarding seating restrictions. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION – *Cindy Schmall, CEO*

Ms. Schmall referred the Directors to tab 5 in the agenda packet for a summary of the amended law AB2302 Section 54953 of the Government Code. The law was revised to more effectively restrict legislative member attendance at meetings by remote platform, specifically restricting remote attendance to only twice a year for “just cause” or “emergency circumstances.”



REPORTS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH UPDATE – *Tricia Gehrlein, Chief Patient Experience Officer*

Ms. Gehrlein referred the Directors to tab 6. The written report listed November and December events where the District’s community health workers (CHW) serve as ambassadors, ensuring good relationships with other service organizations, introducing the District and health centers, and engaging the community in conversation and education. They also work with our patients to secure resources such as assisting with applications for utilities, health insurance and county resources. They also attend the monthly ReachOut meetings. Director Greenhouse stated her appreciation of CHWs attending these meetings and representing the District.

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT – *Cindy Schmall, CEO*

Ms. Schmall referred the Directors to tab 7 that listed HR activity for the quarter. She noted that our employee turnover rate is below the national average. We have been unsuccessful in filling the opening for an HR Director, so department management remains with the CEO. Tela Thornett has been promoted to HR Supervisor and has been doing an excellent job with the new responsibilities.

FINANCIAL REPORT – *Debbie Anderson, CFO*

Ms. Anderson reported that the consolidated financials for the month of October show a loss of income of \$(243,884) and year to date income of \$1,317,226. Non-clinic financials for October show a loss of \$(223,894) and year to date income of \$1,684,037. The clinic financials for the month of October show a loss of \$(19,990) and year to date loss of \$(366,811). The non clinic operating income after allocation is on par with budget. Operating income after allocation was \$60,432 and the budget for the month was \$56,764. Investment losses caused a negative change in the District’s net position. Year to date, the non-clinic changes in net position of \$1,684,037 is doing much better than budgeted, which was \$1,421,476.

The ARP capital income was booked showing a small loss of \$(19,990) for the clinics. This brings the year-to-date loss to \$(366,811). In comparison, the year-to-date budget is \$(893,358), so clinics also are doing better than budgeted.

Ms. Anderson reviewed clinic patient visit history and the focused effort of management to increase patient visits. October shows that visits have exceeded budget!

- **Motion 24-79:** Director Stiemsma motioned to accept the financial report as presented, second by Director Cooper; motion passed by unanimous vote.

CEO REPORT – *Cindy Schmall, CEO*

CEO Cindy Schmall referred Directors to her written report under tab 9 in the agenda packet.

Additionally, she highlighted:

- Good news for the Split Rock project, the electrical panels that the board approved at \$71,000 came in just under \$30,000. The panels will arrive in four to five months, not the projected 12 months.
- The purchase of the property in Yucca Valley is due to close escrow this week. This is disclosure of the closed sessions on October 21 and November 7, 2024.
- Two Wellness Wheel vehicles have been wrapped with the new logo, and the dental mobile unit has been wrapped. *(The dental van was available for viewing before the meeting.)*



- She announced the promotion of Janeen Duff as Director of Strategic Initiatives, with a focus on community relations and implementation of strategic plan initiatives, working directly with Cindy Schmall.
- Tina Huff, Chief Clinical Operations Officer has stepped down. Tricia Gehrlein will provide health center oversight as Chief Patient Experience Officer.

CALENDAR REVIEW AND COORDINATION

- December 19: Annual Employee holiday party.
- Board meeting January 9, 2025, moved from January 2.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS

DIRECTOR COOPER: “Thank you for all the staff reports. Congratulations to Janeen Duff on her promotion.”

DIRECTOR GREENHOUSE: “Thank you to staff for being here and always doing a wonderful job.” She thanked Linda Evans for joining the meeting tonight. She also spoke to “the great strides the organization has made this year in expanding services, and expanding our presence in the community. Staff is to be commended. They are very appreciated.”

DIRECTOR TODD: “I appreciate everybody and all the work they do.”

DIRECTOR STIEMSMA: “I want to thank Cindy for specifically calling out some positive comments that came out of an exit interview, that was really refreshing because so many time we just hear the bad feedback.” She congratulated Janeen Duff on her promotion.

DIRECTOR EVANS: “I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season. I appreciate you all, and I agree with what Dianne said. I commend the board and all the employees. I think healthcare is so over complicated and there’s a lot of changes right now. I encourage you to keep going in what we are doing because it’s so important and it matters.”

ADJOURN MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.



Heidi Stiemsma, Secretary of the Board

Board meeting minutes recorded by K. Graley, Board Clerk.