

Hi-Desert Memorial Health Care District dba
Morongo Basin Healthcare District
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 6, 2025 at 6:30 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 (*not present*)
- Director Stiemsma

Administrative Staff:

- CEO Cindy Schmall (*remote*)
- Debbie Anderson, CFO
- Tricia Gehrlein, CPE&CO (*remote*)
- Karen Graley, Board Clerk (*remote*)
- Beverly Krushat, Administrative Services Manager
- Kelly Hedges-Wehner, Director Patient Care Services.
- Geoff Baker, Building Projects Specialist

Guests

- Jackie Todd, CHC board member

CALL TO ORDER

Director Stiemsma called the meeting to order at 6:30 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 a roll call and declared a quorum. Director Greenhouse was not present.

OBSERVANCES

Observances were made during the 6:00 p.m. Public Hearing that preceded this meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was presented.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING AGENDA

- **Motion 25-63:** Director Evans motioned to approve the meeting agenda; second by Director Cooper, motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- **Motion 25-64:** Director Evans motioned to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Directors dated October 2, 2025, second by Director Cooper; motion passed by unanimous vote.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

CEO Cindy Schmall introduced Kelly Hedges-Wehner, Director of Patient Care Services. "He has been with us four weeks, please join me in welcoming him. You will see him periodically at these meetings."



PRESENTATION SNAP / CALFRESH CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM

Dianna Anderson, Community Programs Liaison gave an overview of the SNAP program in light of changes related to the passage of the federal Big Beautiful Bill.

Statistics: Nationally 42 million or one in eight families receive SNAP benefits. In California, 5.3 million, or one in seven families receive SNAP benefits. 55% of the enrolled families have children. 36% are elderly or disabled. Over 30% of those families are working.

Ms. Anderson gave two examples to illustrate why the SNAP benefits are so vital to families who are living at or near the federal poverty level. CEO Schmall pointed out that some of our staff may qualify for SNAP benefits because even though they are employed, they don't earn enough to meet expenses.

Federal changes to the program are effective October 1, 2025: able-bodied adults up to age 65 are required to work or volunteer for 20 hours per week. Adults with children at home below age 15 are exempt from this new requirement. Subscribers are required to document their compliance every six months. The District's outreach team is available to assist community members with reporting their compliance.

With the current government shutdown, SNAP is not funded, resulting in a significant increase in people accessing food banks and organizations that distribute USDA surplus food. The District maintains a list of local food pantries on our website and distributes the list at outreach events.

After the presentation there was discussion on how to assist our community members facing food insecurity due to the government shutdown. CEO Schmall shared that staff is exploring solutions, not necessarily for food distribution as the District had provided during the pandemic, but other creative opportunities to benefit community members who lack resources.

ACTION ITEMS

APPROVE RESOLUTION #25-03 INCREASE IN STIPEND AMOUNT

Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 32103(b), the Board of Directors of Hi-Desert Memorial Health Care District (doing business as Morongo Basin Healthcare District) convened a Public Hearing to receive public comment and consider adoption of a resolution increasing Board member compensation from \$110 per day to \$115.50 per day for attendance at a meeting of the Board of Directors. There was no discussion by the board. Director Stiemsma called for the vote.

- Motion 25-65 by Director Evans to adopt Resolution #25-03 to increase board member compensation from \$110 to \$115.50 per meeting day, second by Director Cooper; motion passed by roll call vote: 3 yes (Directors Cooper, Evans and Stiemsma) and one absent (Director Greenhouse)

APPROVE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR SPLIT ROCK PROJECT

CFO Debbie Anderson presented an overview of the financial cost of the Split Rock expansion project. The project budget was approved in 2022 and has had several change orders as variances as they became known (such as the City adding electric-vehicle charging stations; extended rental of temporary fencing and porta potties because of project delays). Delays and new requirements substantially increased the cost that we estimate is \$419,890.

Ms. Schmall commented about some of the changes taking the project over budget but noted that the difference is still less than the cost of building a stick-structure. Geoff Baker, project manager,



was present to answer questions. He shared the most recent change was for moving water meters with added backflow requirements.

Director Stiemsma asked what staff is doing to mitigate any further surprises. Ms. Schmall noted that Geoff Baker has established a great working relationship with the City. But no one expected that SCE or the water district would make the changes they made. She surmised that the major big-dollar changes are known. There may be some small unknown changes yet to come.

The directors thanked staff for their ongoing diligence with the project and commented on how great an asset the new building will be for the community.

- **Motion 25-66** by Director Evans to approve additional funding of \$419,890 for the CIP Split Rock expansion project, second by Director Cooper; motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPROVE CHANGE OF BOARD MEETING REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING TIME

CEO Cindy Schmall explained that the CHC Governing Board has agreed to convene their meetings on the same night as the District board meetings. To accommodate the new schedule, they will convene 15 minutes earlier and asked that the District board move their meeting back 15 minutes. The new schedule would be effective with the January regular business meeting.

- Motion 25-67 by Director Evans to move the regular board meeting time from 6:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. effective January 6, 2026, second by Director Cooper; motion passed by roll call.

DISCUSSIONS

DISCUSSION CEO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TOOL

Ms. Schmall requested that the discussion be deferred to the December business meeting.

DISCUSSION: BOARD OF DIRECTORS VACANT SEAT

Ms. Schmall announced that Jackie Todd has agreed to serve the remainder of the term for the vacant seat. The Registrar of Voters has made the recommendation to the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors to appoint her to the open seat.

DISCUSSION: FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

Ms. Schmall, CEO, stated that the government is shut down so there has been no communication. We are monitoring but have nothing to report at this time.

COMMUNITY SERVICE IDEAS FOR AIRWAY

Ms. Schmall noted that the homeless population has become a problem at the Airway property (used syringes, defecation, pulling trash from the dumpster). These are people in need. She asked, "What if we took the Airway suites and turned them into a resource center, i.e. access to computer equipment for Cal Fresh documentation, food distribution, access to restroom facilities, even showering facilities, and clothing? The suite has space for washers and dryers, as well as a refrigerator for perishables. There's potential for partnering with other community focused organizations such as Reach Out. Availability could be offered late in the day so as not to disrupt surrounding Airway businesses. The potential is exciting because it can meet so many needs and serve the community. The goal is to be a community resource center. She stated that before staff started exploring options, She wanted board consensus on the concept.

The Directors were receptive to the proposal. Dianna Anderson noted that San Bernardino County is surveying health-related community needs and may bring support to the project. Tricia Gehrlein

added that with the SNAP and Medi-Cal required work, school or volunteer time to retain benefits, this could provide some individuals opportunity for work or to volunteer.

STAFF REPORTS

FINANCIAL REPORT

The consolidated financials for the month of September show income of \$231,503 and year to date income of \$847,743. The non-clinic financials for the month of September show income of \$213,490 and income year to date of \$671,191. The clinic financials for the month of September show income of \$18,013 and year to date income of \$176,551.

When reviewing the non-clinic financials, the operating income continues to be positive, even though it's not doing quite as well as budgeted. This is mostly due to the allocation of overhead. Additionally, investments continue to do better than budgeted. The District continues to try to grow the balance so that if the hospital reverts back to the District, there will be enough reserves to manage the hospital. The hospital is currently leased to Tenet for 30 years with a clause for Tenet to buy the hospital at the end of the 30 years. However, Tenet is under no obligation to do so, in which case the hospital would revert to the District.

- **Motion 25-68:** Director Cooper motioned to accept the financial report as presented, second by Director Evans; motion passed by unanimous vote.

CEO STAFF REPORT

Ms. Schmall narrated a PowerPoint presentation showing the progression of the Split Rock project. The Directors reviewed health fair statistics and the summary of the community survey.

CALENDAR REVIEW AND COORDINATION

Calendars for November, December and January were reviewed.

- January 2026 meeting conflicts with the holidays. General agreement to move the board meeting to the second week of January.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS

- **DIRECTOR COOPER:** "I want to thank everyone, and especially our leader who's not with us right now, but she's trying to get over a cold or something and still coming through. And thank you to staff, too."
- **DIRECTOR EVANS:** "Thank you to everyone. Thank you so much for this information. I appreciate all the reports given tonight. And just, once again, I'm very moved by your hearts for our community and all you do. So, thank you so much. It means so much and I'm always proud to be on this board and love sharing all the wonderful things that you do. Again, welcome Kelly, and welcome back, Jackie."
- **DIRECTOR STIEMSMA:** "Welcome to Kelly and Jackie. Lots of great information tonight."

Director Stiemsma adjourned the meeting at 8:05.



Patricia Cooper, Secretary of the Board

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