

**MINUTES FOR:
CASS COUNTY MEDICAL CARE FACILITY BOARD MEETING**

July 28th, 2025

In attendance: Dr. James Wierman (Board Chairperson), Vicki Vaughn (Board Member), Jeff Carmen (Board Co-Chair), Mercedes Schirripa (Administrator), Jenna Badner (Controller), Jennifer Bennett (Recording Minutes).

Meeting called to order at 9:25 a.m.

Guests: Rie Shimada, Lynda Newton, Larry Wile (via zoom), Austin Morgan

Public Comment:

There have been miscommunication issues with getting a representative to speak on vaccines as well as printed information about vaccines between Mercedes Schirripa, Dr. James Wierman, and DHHS. Calls are not being returned to the proper person and mail being delivered through third parties.

Additions/deletions to Agenda:

Mercedes Schirripa requests moving vaccines to first item as DR. Wile is ready to join meeting via zoom and placing the administrators review last after the physical therapy meeting.

Jeff Carmen made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Dr. James Wierman supported the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Vaccinations:

Dr. Larry Wile presented via zoom to answer any questions.

Jeff Carmen asked if there were requirements for vaccines for health department workers. Dr. Wile states that the expectation is to get all respiratory vaccines unless for medical or religious reasons, but no set requirement to vaccinate for employees. Also stating that refusal for covid vaccine has been loosened recently due to the delta variant being less prominent, no reason needed for refusal of that.

Jeff Carmen questions if this is so at the dental clinic as well with Dr. Wile stating yes, it is.

Dr. James Wierman asks what employers can do and what employers should do to increase employee vaccinations.

Dr. Wile states that while there are studies that show higher employee vaccination rates correlate to less hospitalizations for clients and residents that liability and legal factors contribute to not requiring employees vaccinate. Being too stringent about vaccinating or not can drive off employees entirely as well.

Mercedes Schirripa asked if the health department employees are not required to vaccinate why would Cass County Medical Care Facility employees be required to. Dr. Wile states that CMS has stricter guidelines for nursing facilities due to the clients being more vulnerable and having longer stays at the facility than a visit to the health department as staff wear PPE during dental appointments and clients need to reschedule when sick.

Jeff Carmen asks if the health department is the final authority on instructions from the state level on mandating vaccinations in nursing facilities. Dr. Wile states no, LARA, CMS, or CDC would be final authority on those guidelines as they supersede the health department.

Dr. James Wierman asks what the current guidelines for employee vaccinations are. Dr. Wile states they vary state to state and to check with CMS for compliance and notes that vaccination regulations are different from testing when sick to confirm or deny positive test results.

Jeff Carmen asked if there is any follow-up to confirm when an employee refuses due to medical reasoning. Dr. Wile states yes, a letter from that employee's physician is needed in that case.

Jeff Carmen asks if the same is true for refusal for religious reasons. Dr. Wile states that after consulting with an attorney religious is too personal and individual to confirm in the same manner.

Dr. Larry Wile signs off at this point.

Dr. James Wierman states he has vaccine educations in print outs and posters that he would like posted at the facility and possibly placed in employee checks on occasion to encourage vaccinating. Mercedes Schirripa states all new employees have vaccine educations in their new hire packets and that she will be glad to post notices on the bulletin board but does not feel comfortable putting educations in paycheck envelopes. She stresses the importance of encouraging employees to vaccinate without being pushy.

Lynda Newton agrees with both Mercedes Schirripa and Dr. James Wierman on the importance of vaccinating and not pushing employees too hard. She recognizes community resistance to vaccines citing a possible overreaction to covid mandates that is still present. Lynda Newton also notes all new employees are offered vaccinations though most refuse.

Lynda Newton reported in her story that her grandchildren have been visiting the facility recently and the residents have reacted positively to children in the building. A lot of staff also bring their dogs, and the residents enjoy seeing pets as well. Pets brought into the building do need to be vaccinated. The aviary in the facility has been updated with more birds and an improved habitat.

Lynda Newton also states a resident who used to be a nurse has said that although mistakes are made, she is 98% happy with her care and the other 2% unsatisfied is usually remedied.

Falls are currently at 23% facility wide. It is noted that 11 of the 16 total falls can be attributed to 4 residents. Those residents with frequent falls all have some level of dementia making prevention

that does not impede freedom a challenge, but interventions continue to be specific to personal need.

For Poly Pharmacy, currently 43% of residents are taking 8 or less medications. The new pharmacist has recommendations that have not been implemented yet, it is expected to bring numbers down once they are though.

Mercedes Schirripa states we are still working towards Cass Family Clinic pharmacy being our facilities medication provider.

The check register was reviewed.

Jeff Carmen questioned payment to Cass County Admin, Jenna Badner explains that it is for IT services and if it states a payment is for Cass County it would be for maintenance.

Vicki Vaughn questioned an eye surgery payment. Mercedes Schirripa explained that physician fees are included in cost of stay, but any service not included in the facility such as surgeries, transportation, seeing a specialist for examples the facility is responsible for payment.

Vicki Vaughn questioned multiple advantage plumbing payments. Mercedes Schirripa explains those are for separate issues, the new tubs installed and a leak under the sink in the kitchen respectively. Austin morgan adds that Abes specifically clears plumbing lines every 2 months.

Jeff Carmen questions an Indeed payment, asking if it is monthly. Mercedes Schirripa states, no it is not and that and Indeed sponsorship is a requirement.

Jeff Carmen moved to approve the check register, Dr. James Wierman seconded, approved unanimously.

Recent census was reviewed:

The facility is currently at 69 residents. James Carmen asked why it is not full. Lynda Newton stated that for some referrals the facility is unable to provide or afford care needed such as high medication costs or dialysis and chemotherapy needs. They are not feasible costs for residents outside of the County.

Jenna Badner states for the cash position that operating funds continue to accrue and are improving yearly.

A new room rate increase is proposed:

Jenna Badner states the last room rate was under a different administrator, increasing from \$447.58 to the current \$510 daily. Mercedes Schirripa states increase should be yearly. Discussion of difference between private pay rates and Medicaid rates with QAS supplement.

Jenna Badner proposes increasing the daily private pay rate to \$520 beginning 10/1/2025.

Jeff Carmen moves to approve rate. Vicki Vaughn seconds. The motion passes. Letters will be sent to family members to notify them of this increase.

Austin Morgan provided the maintenance report:

Per the HVAC systems, new valves were received Friday and are scheduled to be installed. The grant the facility received will reimburse the cost for this.

The new tubs in the shower rooms have been installed, during that process it was discovered that the old valves in that plumbing will eventually all need replaced. Age and condition of valves impedes use to where larger sections of the building will have to have water shut off during any plumbing work in those areas.

The smoke detectors also need updates. Austin Morgan is currently vetting quotes from Vanguard for that.

The boiler is ready to be replaced, the facility has all parts, the only charges are for labor.

Mercedes Schirripa provided an administrator's report:

August 15th a press release about the facilities partnership with Cass family Clinic will be published to announce to the community.

Facility is updating the camera systems. There are blind spots in the building currently that an additional 16 cameras are needed for. The facility is working with IT and a third party to get quotes for this as well as fixing the badge scanner at the front office and installing a panic button at the desk that would lock the entrance doors and alert authorities.

The paging system within the building is currently not working properly, half the building cannot hear overhead pages. Awaiting quotes for that service.

Also inquiring about quotes for resurfacing the parking lot.

It is fair week and CCMCF has a booth at the Cass County fairgrounds. Staff will be present all week to answer community questions and concerns as well as handing out fans with resident designs on them, as well as pens, fans, and water.

The Employee Roster:

Vicki Vaughn notes the year for November is incorrect, it should be 2025 not 2024.

Lynda Newton states that the facility has lost 5 nurses due to terminations with 2 of those being short notice from staff.

Nothing to report or comment on for Resident Council.

Next board meeting to take place August 25th. All present in agreement.

Dr. James Wierman moves to recess. Vicki Vaughn seconds motion.

Recess started at 10:51 a.m.

11:30am Jeff Carmen makes the motion to enter public session. Vicki Vaughn seconds the motion. Motion passes.

Jeff Carmen makes the motion to accept administrative positive review. Vicki Vaughn seconds the motion. Motion passes.

Jeff Carmen makes the motion to have a wage compensation evaluation completed for all Cass County Medical Care Facility employees. Vicki Vaughn seconds the motion. Motion passes.

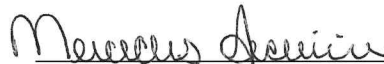
Meeting adjourned 11:34am

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Bennett



(Board Chairperson)

 (Administrator)