

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

August 25th, 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 9:36 a.m.

Guests: Rie Shimada, Lynda Newton, Austin Morgan

No Public Comment.

Additions/deletions to Agenda:

Jeff Carmen moves to approve the agenda. Vicki Vaughn seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

Vicki Vaughn made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Jeff Carmen supported the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Lynda Newton reported her story.

Feedback from the residents is that they are happy with the new healthcare providers. Employees have also been bringing children and pets to the facility to visit more often, and the residents are very happy with that. Lynda Newton mentions that the children and pets are also in line with our upcoming Eden Alternative training which includes animals and plants as enrichment for residents.

Lynda Newton states per QAPI that falls are currently at original goal of 10% facility wide.

For Poly Pharmacy, currently 44% of residents are taking 8 or less medications. Lynda Newton states medications counted are any that are active, not advised to count PRN. Dr. Wierman asks if over the counter meds are counted or should they be and Lynda Newton responds that per State guidelines any medication taken in the last 30 days would be considered.

Jeff Carmen asks why the State monitors medication used in nursing facilities. Lynda Newton states many reasons such as medication interactions, chemical restraints, and over medicating. Our current PCC system has flags for medication interactions. If it is mild to moderate the nurse may continue with the dose but if it is considered severe, they will need doctor approval to administer.

Lynda newton also states since we have changed physicians and are working with the Cass County clinic we may move towards working with their pharmacy as well. Facility is having issues with the current pharmacy with prior-authorizations and timeliness in medication delivery.

In reference to the new Physician announcement Jeff Carmen expresses disappointment with the wording of the written post stating that Cass County Medical Care Facility pre-dates the Clinic and that should have been stated properly.

The check register was reviewed.

Jeff Carmen questions a charge to Jefferson Township. Mercedes Schirripa states this is the tax bill for the land the facility owns but leases to farmers locally. Jeff Carmen asks if the lease payments cover the taxes and Mercedes Schirripa states yes, they do.

Jeff Carmen questions a charge to Michigan Department of Community Health. Mercedes Schirripa states this is a QAS payment through the state for Medicaid, we also make QMI and OAM payments. These pay for reviews and management of caseloads.

Jeff Carmen questions a charge to Text-em-all, this is the all-staff texting service for facility messages to employees.

Vicki Vaughn questions a charge to Ring central, this is the facility phone system.

Jeff Carmen questions a charge to Ascension/Borgess, this is our labs for facility.

Vicki Vaughn questions a charge to R.W. Lapine Inc. This is for the HVAC system upgrade and will be reimbursed with the grant.

Vicki Vaughn moved to approve the check register, Jeff Carmen seconded, approved unanimously.

Recent census was reviewed:

The facility is currently at 68 residents on average. Specifically, 71 at the end of the month and 75 on this day with expected discharges and admissions.

Jeff Carmen asked if the facility ever accepts any hospice or memory care residents. Mercedes Schirripa states the facility often has Hospice and Hospice respite stay residents but unfortunately, we are not currently able to accept dementia care residents due to issues with ability to segregate for safety those residents.

Jenna Badner states for the cash position.

Facility continues to cut back on unnecessary expenses. All millage is currently received. Quarterly maintenance costs due to unexpected issues within the facility have driven numbers up but overall, the facility is in a much better position financially than last year.

Vaccinations.

Mercedes Schirripa states that the meeting packet includes all forms for acceptance or denial of vaccination currently in use in the facility as well as 2 forms noted to be from Dr. James Wierman. She has also been in contact with legal on the whether forcing vaccine compliance and/or doctor

approved exemptions is a proper course forward. She also passed a memo better explaining this to everyone present and would like a vote on whether to require exemptions in the facility.

Mercedes Schirripa continues, stating that pre-covid flu vaccines were a requirement at the facility with a doctors note required to be exempt. Since the pandemic though that is no longer the case. Going by federal recommendations vaccines are no longer a requirement for employment. The facility goes by federal recommendations over State due to funding from Medicare and Medicaid.

Dr. James Wierman states he would like to challenge refusals from employees to vaccinate. Jeff Carmen disagrees, citing pressure from the community not to be forced to vaccinate.

There is currently no requirement for written exemptions to vaccinate at Cass County Medical Care Facility.

Lynda Newton states that she has worked with HR to educate new and current employees on vaccinations. The current percentage of employees vaccinated is about 70%. As per residents about 1 out of every 20 agrees to be vaccinated.

Lynda Newton goes on to explain that staff and visitors are encouraged to wear a mask when symptomatic and during outbreaks, though this also isn't a requirement. Forcing exemptions to vaccinate is not likely to increase compliance as employees have quit the facility and even medical care as a field rather than be vaccinated.

Dr. James Wierman suggests offering the vaccines later in the year, such as October to extend the active protection period. Lynda Newton states that the facility already does this.

Vicki Vaughn asks that all future discussions on vaccinations be shelved. Jeff Carmen states that while he does not mind discussing this issue he agrees with Vicki that it is not moving forward and that this is not a Board decision to make.

Austin Morgan provided the maintenance report:

Lapine, the company working on the HVAC system has installed valves and is currently hooking up the electric controls to valves in resident rooms.

Maintenance is also continuing to install baskets in the bathrooms for resident personal items as well as re-caulking and re-painting resident bathrooms one hallway at a time.

Facility is also continuing to seek and receive quotes for fixing and improving the facility paging system, cameras, and a front desk panic button.

Mercedes Schirripa provided an administrator's report:

Mercedes Schirripa requests moving forward on who she has chosen to complete the wage audit at a cost of \$23,000. This is a classification and compensation study that will compare the facilities 37 job titles to other facilities, the results of which will inform areas of improvement financially.

Jeff Carmen moves to accept. Vicki Vaughn seconds. The motion passes.

Mercedes Schirripa also states that the facility plans to host an outdoor fall festival as opposed to indoor Thanksgiving event during a time when sickness is at a higher risk. There will be plenty of food and possibly a petting zoo.

The facility also recently had an outdoor car show that the residents really enjoyed.

Ambrosia Neldon is preparing pamphlets for the facility as well as the Outpatient department, taking pictures at the facility to update current advertising.

Vicki Vaughn suggests the facility post in the township newsletter as well.

Mercedes Schirripa questions if there is a way to receive a county mailing list to mail postcards for the facility.

Jeff Carmen states the COA would have a mailing list of county residents as well as the county clerk would be able to provide a voters registration list with addresses.

The millage signs are also due to be ready.

Mercedes Schirripa states that she presented at the County meeting for the millage.

Some improvements a Yes vote could provide the facility include increased outlets per resident room, possible additions to providing more private rooms as well as assisted living and dementia care. Increased training of staff to allow for admissions of specialized care residents such as those on ventilators or with traches, bariatric care, and dialysis.

There is wear and tear on the building as well with a need for refurbishment on the roof, in the parking lot, and lighting indoors.

Jeff Carmen cautions not to present a list of needs or wants when discussing the millage renewal, instead framing the conversation as what is needed to continue operating as a 1st class facility.

Relevant attachments:

There are no questions about the employee roster or resident council minutes.

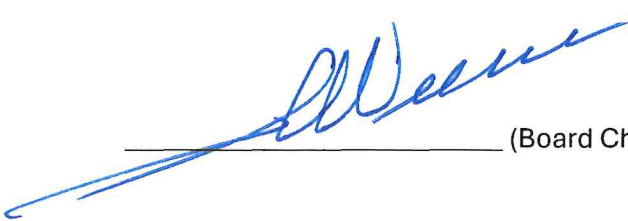
Next board meeting to take place September 30th. All present in agreement.

Dr. James Wierman moves to recess.


Recess started at 10:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Bennett



(Board Chairperson)



(Administrator)