

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

August 24th, 2026

In attendance: Dr. James Wierman (Board Chairperson), Vicki Vaughn (Board Member), Jeff Carmen (Board Member), Mercedes Schirripa (Administrator), Jeanette Hamel (Controller), Jennifer Bennett (Recording Minutes).

Meeting called to order: Dr. James Wierman called the meeting to order, with Board agreement.
Meeting called to order at 9:22 am.

Guests: Rie Shimada (Director of Rehabilitation), Lynda Newton (DON), Jennifer Rentfrow (County Administrator), Ambrosia Neldon (Cass County Marketing and Communications Manager)

No Public Comment.

Additions/deletions to Agenda:

Vicki Vaughn makes the motion to approve the agenda; all are in favor and the motion passed.

Mercedes Schirripa states that there unfortunately is no newsletter this month as the facilities activities director is on a medical leave. She confirms there will be one next month and going forward in his absence though.

Jeff Carmen moves to amend the agenda to remove the newsletter line. All in favor, motion passes.

Dr. James Wierman moved to approve the minutes as presented. All in favor, the motion carried.

Dr. James Wierman asks about the progress of the salary report. Mercedes Schirripa states that as expected not every Nursing facility is sharing information on their rates.

Lynda Newton reported her story.

Employees occasionally bring their children to work, with numerous instances recently. Lynda Newton states the residents truly enjoy seeing and interacting with children. Lynda Newton also adds that pets are brought to work sometimes as well. Dr. James Wierman asks how these interactions could be structured events, to which Mercedes Schirripa states an on-site daycare for employees would facilitate that.

Per QAPI Lynda Newton states that while falls are an ongoing focus, they are holding steady at 4-5%. Medication use of psychotropics, environment, infection control, evaluations, etc. within the building are all going well currently.

Per poly pharmacy, Lynda Newton states that there is not likely to be much change there possibly until the on-staff doctors receive the elder care education as planned. They are still adjusting from clinical to long-term care prescribing practices and she feels further education will help with this.

The check register was reviewed.

Jeanette Hamel states that July has been typical for expenses and asks if there are any questions from the Board.

Dr. James Wierman asks about Indeed charges. Mercedes Schirripa explains that paying an amount to Indeed will boost job postings, so they are seen quicker without applicants having to go through multiple pages before ours are seen.

Jeff Carmen asks about charges to Jefferson township. Mercedes Schirripa and Jeanette Hamel, both confirm those as real estate taxes with Jeanette Hamel stating she will investigate that further.

Census:

Jeanette Hamel states that with the ongoing flooring project the facility is aiming to keep 4 rooms empty for movement of residents and Mercedes Schirripa states that we are not currently holding the extra rooms but will do so once the flooring project enters phase 3.

Cash position:

Jeanette Hamel states that there are currently about 3 million investment funds that are earning interest and that overall, the current cash position looks good. She asks if there are any questions and there are not.

Dr. James Wierman asks if there have been any covid cases in the building recently and Lynda Newton states there has not.

Rie Shimada present for the therapy department.

Inpatient numbers are as stated, 37 cases for July with 308 visits scheduled, equaling 860 units of service provided. Dr. James Wierman adds that it is equal to about 215 hours worked by staff. For outpatient numbers, Rie Shimada states that there were 38 patient cases with 189 visits scheduled and 535 units of service provided in July. Dr. James Wierman states that is equal to 131 hours worked by staff. Dr. James Weirman asks how many staff are employed in the therapy department and Rie Shimada states there are 2 full-time employees, 1 PT manager, and 2 part-time or PRN employees.

Administrator's report:

Mercedes Schirripa states that the facility generator was tested and is not sufficient to run the building as well as the chiller. She is currently fielding quotes for a new generator that can and possibly run on the facility's natural gas line instead of gasoline like the current one does. She will present the quotes at the next Board meeting.

Mercedes Schirripa requests Board approval to update the facility PRN policy and expectations. Currently a PRN employee is required to work one 8-hour shift in a month, she would like that changed to 2 weekend days in a month. They do not have to be consecutive.

Jeff Carmen asks if this is a personal policy as would be present in an employee manual, and Mercedes Schirripa states yes. Jeff Carmen asks to see the amended PRN policy as well as a copy of the employee manual.

Mercedes Schirripa states that herself and Jeanette Hamel have submitted for the behavioral health transportation grant that at minimum pays out 150 thousand dollars. If awarded any of these grants she is seeking to use the payout to purchase a facility van as well as hire a CNA to drive the van. This will assist with out-of-county transport as well as after-hour transportation needs that the county transit cannot provide.

Jeff Carmen states that the Woodland Foundation is also an avenue to seek additional funding for the facility as they serve the Cass County community.

Mercedes Schirripa states that she has spoken with Woodland representatives about funding and possibly collaborating regarding mental illness and addiction related referrals.

Jeff Carmen clarifies that the Woodland Foundation has no affiliation with the Woodland clinic.

Mercedes Schirripa states that this past weekend the facility had a car show with good turnout from residents and community members alike. There was live music and a vote on best classic car.

The parking lot project is set to begin after Labor Day. This is in collaboration with the road commission and includes milling and repaving the entire parking lot, the path around the building and the path to the pond.

Mercedes Schirripa states the communications company has received approval from the State for the new fire panel, so that project can now move forward.

The facility wide flooring project continues as well. It is currently in phase 2 and going well.

The Cass County Campus Development panel was created for future building projects on the medical care facility grounds had its first meeting recently, mainly as a preliminary introduction of different community leaders that will be involved in project decisions, development, and implementation.

Mercedes Schirripa states that the current contract with Dussel's includes weeding flower beds and trimming bushes at beginning and end of season but not re-applying mulch or edging. She has requested a quote from Legend, who currently does the mowing and plowing for the facility, to see their cost for freshening up flower beds and islands around the facility as well as adding mulch and river rock. Their response was \$12,700.00 as a one-time fee and job.

Jeff Carmen would like a quote from Dussel's as well and questions a bill for village floral. Mercedes Schirripa states that village floral provides the facility flower arrangements that we then provide to new admissions or any LTC resident who gets sent out to the hospital.

Jeff Carmen would like Mercedes Schirripa to communicate with Dussel's about whether they would be interested in doing the extra work. Dr. James Wierman states that if they are not Mercedes Schirripa should move forward with Legend and Vicki Vaughn adds that this should be a spring project regardless of who does it. Mercedes Schirripa states she will speak with both Dussel's and Legend to lock a price for this to be done in the spring.

Questions per the employee roster.

Dr. James Wierman notes that there is high turnover. Mercedes Schirripa states most terminations are the result of attendance. Dr. James Wierman asks if there are still agency employees at the facility and Lynda Newton states that there are.

Resident council minutes:

Mercedes Schirripa states that she saw multiple concerns in the resident council minutes that she has discussed with Lynda Newton. Reports of call lights being unanswered for too long can be checked within the system and it is not noted that a call light has been on for longer than about 15 minutes during peak hours such as mealtimes. A complaint of showers not being provided in the event of a shower aide calling off is unacceptable and the nursing staff know to have a CNA provide the shower in that instance. Food temperatures continue to be a complaint with residents consistently requesting food hotter than regulation allows.

Mercedes Schirripa adds that while the life enrichment director has been on leave, activities and nursing staff have pulled together to maintain offering activities and events for the residents.

Public comment:

Jeff Carmen states that prior to covid shutdowns there were veteran interviews planned in collaboration with the historic commission and he asks if this could be revisited.

Vicki Vaughn asks how taking residents to the fair went. Mercedes Schirripa states the residents enjoyed the outing enormously. There were 24 residents total with staff at the fair for 3 hours and all were given a scavenger hunt to earn bingo bucks. Residents that came on different days with family also spent time at the facility booth.

Any other business:

No other business.

Dr. James Wierman moves to go to recess. All in favor.

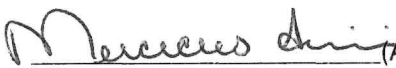
Board moved to recess at 10:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Bennett

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Diana", written over a horizontal line.

(Board Chairperson)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mercedes", written over a horizontal line.

(Administrator)