

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

July 27th, 2026

In attendance: Dr. James Wierman (Board Chairperson), Vicki Vaughn (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 9:43 am.

Guests: Rie Shimada (Director of Rehabilitation), Lynda Newton (DON), Ambrosia Neldon (Cass County Marketing and Communications Manager), Mark Nottley via zoom

No Public Comment.

Additions/deletions to Agenda:

Mercedes Schirripa asks that the Board go into a closed session at the end of the meeting, requesting to add item 16 to agenda closed session MCL-15.268-A.

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

Vicki Vaughn made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. All in favor, the motion carried.

Lynda Newton reported her story.

Lynda Newton would like to highlight the staff at CCMCF this month. She states that there are multiple residents at the facility on Hospice care. This entails hospice aides checking in and providing some cares such as showering. Residents are so pleased with CCMCF staff standards they are expressing a preference to care being provided by facility staff over hospice aides.

Per QAPI Lynda Newton has been working with a consultant to improve the fall program for fall prevention. The facility is continuing to implement an emergency discharge and hospital transfer process to align with State regulations in documentation. The facility is also auditing the medications in process with the plan of corrections for State as well.

Poly pharmacy is maintaining a 38% average, to push for lower numbers Lynda Newton states she continuously speaks with the pharmacy as well as doctors and nurse practitioners working with the residents.

The check register was reviewed.

Jeanette Hamel states there is 1 check with a high amount that is for the security camera installation. She asks if there are any other questions on the check register. There are no other questions from the Board.

Census:

Dr. James Wierman asks if census has been steady. Mercedes Schirripa states it has but will need to be slowed or paused while the flooring project moves into resident areas as at least 4 rooms will need to be kept empty to move residents in and out of. She adds that this is temporary though and the facility should stay at break even during this time.

Cash position:

Dr. James Wierman asks why the overall amount has gone down and is currently at \$2 million. Mercedes Schirripa clarifies that the operating is at that amount, but the overall total is a little over \$5 million.

Ambrosia Neldon gives a brief update on the CCMCF website.

She explains that the current website for the facility operates on a platform with multiple plug-ins that all must maintain communication with each other making the overall functionality clunky and at risk to being hacked. She would like to transition the hosting platform for the website from the current Wordpress to Civicplus, which would provide cohesion with other county sites as well as better security and simplified usability. This will also save time for the website as it will need less maintenance. The overall cost for this transition is expected to be \$14 thousand. The board approves the cost to update the facility website.

Mark Nottley presents a wage study update via zoom.

Mark Nottley states the wage study is at a point where Board involvement is needed as they need to decide the pay structure to be implemented. Once established, this pay structure can remain in use for years to come and has flexibility to add new positions.

Mark Nottley states for comparison he stuck to similar county facilities. Dr. James Wierman asks if he used hospitals or nursing homes in his comparisons. Mark Nottley responded that he did not as private owned nursing homes do not have to provide that information if they don't want to and that both nursing homes and hospitals in the area are going to have differences of hours, workloads, and benefits that make the comparisons inaccurate to the studies aim.

Mercedes Schirripa will send Mark Nottley a list of local Private sector nursing homes to include in the market study at the Boards insistence. Mark Nottley reiterates that those facilities may not cooperate as they don't have to.

Mark Nottley explains that creating the pay structure is a matter of choosing steps and width. The more steps the more years a raise is received with the width being the overall percentage range allowed. Once chosen a pay structure can be created and it is then a matter of math to choose the overall raise percentage which is then divided by the steps to show each yearly raise amount.

Vicki Vaughn is concerned that once the raise years cap off employees will look elsewhere as they can no longer expect a yearly raise. Mercedes Schirripa explains that with this pay structure there would still be cost of living and inflation bonuses after the step limit is reached.

After much discussion it is considered and decided that CCMCF will adopt an 11 step, 25% width pay structure. Dr. James Wierman asks if all are in favor, Vicki Vaughn says aye, all are in favor.

Rie Shimada present for the therapy department.

Reporting inpatient numbers for June, Rie Shimada states there were 34 cases, with 265 visits and 696 units of service billed. Each unit of service is 15 minutes. Dr. James Wierman states that equals about 174 hours worked by staff, with Mercedes Schirripa stating 200 monthly is available for work hours. In comparison, for the month of June, outpatient logged 37 cases with 180 visits and 482 units of service billed, which Dr. James Wierman calculates to be 120 hours worked, combined with inpatient to be nearly 300 hours worked for the month in total.

Rie Shimada adds that she calculated 445 staff hours were needed to work scheduled services for June, but that the actual number of service hours billed fluctuates as residents can become sick, or not tolerate the full time scheduled, as well as outpatient clients not showing for appointments.

Administrator's report:

During a recent power outage, it was noted that the current facility generator cannot power the entire facility as well as the chiller, or AC unit. This is problematic for summer storms as overheating is of concern. Mercedes Schirripa states there are options to either replace the current generator with one big enough to run both or purchase an additional generator to run the chiller when needed. She will provide cost estimates for those options during next month's Board meeting.

For an update on the flooring project, that is moving along. When they redo the nurses station area Mercedes Schirripa states the plan is to remove one of the desks for less sitting by staff and allow that to be a more resident friendly area. Dr. James Wierman asks if this will impede the nurses' doing duties such as charting, to which Mercedes Schirripa responds that no, nursing staff will all have designated charting areas, perhaps on the halls they are charting on.

Mercedes Schirripa has been working with Jeanette Hamel on a few grants that would combined provide about \$200 thousand for staff retention services, \$150 thousand for behavioral transportation, and reimbursement for recent lift purchases. Regarding the transportation grant, Mercedes Schirripa has previously been approved to purchase a van for facility use and after working with local transportation services since then is asking to do so again. The facility bus has been under repair for the past week or so and if the grant is approved a van purchase may be at no or low cost to the facility. Dr. James Wierman requests to discuss this further when Jeff Carmen is also present.

All the cameras have been installed for the ongoing IT/security update project. They will next move on to the fire panel and badge readers for doors that require them, as well as new smoke detectors.

The residents are going on a facility trip to the Cassopolis County fair on August 6th. There is a car show planned at the facility on August 22nd as well as a fall festival also at the facility and open to the public is still in planning stages.

Vicki Vaughn asks if donations are needed for the activity department and Mercedes Schirripa responds that such donations are always welcomed.

Dr. James Wierman asks how the facility plans to transport residents to the fair and Mercedes Schirripa states she expects the facility bus to be repaired by then, Cass Transit will also be assisting with transportation.

Rate projection recommendation:

Jeanette Hamel states that the board packets contain a rate projection recommendation provided by Phil Altman, the facility financial correspondent, that shows Medicaid rate changes as well as private pay rate suggestions. Both Jeanette Hamel and Mercedes Schirripa feel that the current private pay rate is fine to stay as-is. The Board agrees to leave the private pay rate as it is.

Questions per the employee roster.

Mercedes Schirripa states that the nursing schedule has been updated in the system to auto populate from a spreadsheet to easier show nursing staff numbers per day and position. This makes it easier to see where someone is needed on the schedule.

Resident council minutes:

Vicki Vaughn notes complaints about the food being cold. Mercedes Schirripa states that residents often request the food be hotter than regulation allows, with Lynda Newton agreeing. Vicki Vaughn asks if cold sandwiches are ever available, and Mercedes Schirripa responds that they are as there is an entire menu always available of other food options.

Resident newsletter:

No questions about the resident newsletter

Public comment:

No public comment.

Any other business:

No other business.

Dr. James Wierman moves to go to closed session. All in favor.

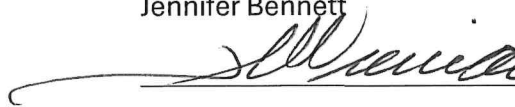
Closed session started at 12:05 p.m.

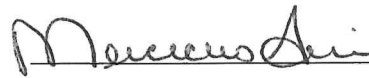
Board came out of closed session at 12:27 p.m.

Board moved to recess at 12:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Bennett

 (Board Chairperson)

 (Administrator)