

GOVERNING BODY MINUTES
Monday – June 9, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.
Microsoft Teams

Members Present/Absent:

- ☒ Pam Sagness, Chairperson
- ☒ Aaron Olson, Superintendent
- ☐ Dr. Eduardo Yabut, Medical Director
- ☐ Vacant Position, Mental Health America of ND
- ☒ Representative Karen Rohr
- ☒ Vacant Position, Consumer-at-Large
- ☒ Allyson Hicks, Attorney General's Office
- ☒ Courtney Peterson, Assistant CFO, Fiscal Administration
- ☒ Dr. Dan Cramer, Statewide HSC Administrator
- ☒ Pat Traynor, Interim Commissioner of ND DHHS

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Pam Sagness, Chairperson.

Approval of Minutes: MOTION by Superintendent Olson - *Approve May 12, 2025, minutes.*
Second by Dr. Cramer. Unanimous approval.

Old Business:

- **Mental Health America – Aaron Olson**
Discussion: Superintendent Olson reached out to Mental Health America regarding a replacement for the Governing Body. He hasn't heard back from them yet.
Recommendations: None noted
Follow-up: Superintendent Olson will continue to communicate with Mental Health America.

Reports:

- Employee Wellness Committee Report – Cindy Sperle-Gee, Employee Wellness Committee Chair
 - Information regarding the Employee Wellness Committee purpose and activities provided including the Dakota Wellness Program and vouchers offered to staff that can be used for the workplace wellness initiatives in the portal.
- Superintendent's Report – Aaron Olson, Superintendent
 - During the second quarter of 2025, forward progress is being made regarding key strategic priorities including hospital operational redesign, workforce stabilization, and clinical program alignment.
 - Average daily census= 76.
 - Current challenges include staffing with targeted hiring campaigns and development of an internal nurse education infrastructure being done as a better tool for recruiting the type of staff we need. Efforts are also advancing in establishing a formal orientation process and education department. The current

- department is segmented and is being brought together operationally.
 - New State Hospital update provided. Multi-disciplinary design sessions were held and formal bid phase started in May.
 - Operational improvements including security upgrades, workflow mapping, and a new formalized response to internal emergencies called Code BERT (Behavioral Emergency Response Team) explained to members.
 - Looking ahead, NDSH is finalizing items with the current facility/new facility, launching education programs, enhancing safety systems, and improving workforce performance metrics as part of the redesign of operations.
 - Groundbreaking of the new State Hospital is being planned for August.
 - The most recent Joint Commission Accreditation report was given to members following the last meeting.
- Medical Director's Report – Dr. Yabut, Medical Director
 - Dr. Yabut unable to attend. Report tabled until next meeting.
- Quality Management (QM) Comparative Statistics Report– Deb Eissinger, QM Director
 - Joint Commission Plan of Corrections/Evidence of Standard Compliance submitted.
 - First and Second Quarter Comparative Statistics report to be submitted at the September meeting.
- Financial Report – Courtney Peterson, Assistant CFO
 - March numbers presented at the last meeting instead of December 31, 2024, numbers.
 - Reports and numbers from both fiscal reports reviewed. A ten percent increase in budget spending was noted over the last three months. The biggest impact is the revenue intake. Some of that also includes the SIIF (Strategic Investment and Improvement Fund) spend for the State Hospital draw downs. 12.5 million in SIIF noted with an additional three million allocated for the new build transition work. 12.3 million has been expended to date.
 - New funding for the New State Hospital is with the Office of Management and Budget.
- Safety and RIS Management Report – Larry Culp, Director of Safety/Security
 - EPR (Emergency Preparedness and Response) tabletop exercise completed on June 4th.
 - Code Red drills completed with a 95% passing rate noted.
 - Camera installation project in final stages of completion.
 - Two more card readers are to be installed to the LRC (Learning Resource Center) first floor doors.
- Plant Services Report– Jeff Comer, Plant Services Director
 - Jeff unable to attend. Report tabled until next meeting.
- Department of Health and Human Services Report – Pam Sagness, Chairperson
 - Introduction of Interim Commissioner of ND DHHS, Pat Traynor, to the Governing Body.
 - There are two big areas of the DHHS budget bill with legislative initiatives that impact the State Hospital. One section is a directive for the development of long-term locked residential facilities in the community.
 - The second area is funding for three facilities to establish inpatient capacity: Altru to expand 24 beds for adult services, CHI to add 10 beds in Williston for inpatient care, and a 30-bed expansion for CHI Bismarck with a focus on youth services.

- NDSH Staff and Public Comment Period
No comments noted.

MOTION by Representative Rohr – *Accept the standing reports*. Second by Dr. Cramer.
Unanimous approval.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m. MOTION by Commissioner Traynor - *Adjourn meeting*. Second by Superintendent Olson. Unanimous approval.

Next Meeting: September 8th, 9:00 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room or Teams

Recorded by: Jodi Grugel