



~Approved 8/27/2024~

Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

9:00 a.m.

Board Room & Teams

Board Members Present:

Clinton Cook – Bigfork Township
Greg Cook – Koochiching County Unorganized
Carol Gilbertson – Itasca County At-Large
Kurt Fredrickson – Stokes Township
Tom LaMont – City of Effie
Teresa Kittridge – Marcell Township
Gordon Rahier – Pomroy Township
Eugene Rajala – City of Bigfork
Larry Salmela – Carpenter Township
Sally Sedgwick – Wirt Township
Dan Sursely – City of Big Falls
Heidi Watson – Koochiching County At-Large

Board Members Remote:

Board Members Absent:

Marie Lovdahl – Itasca County At-Large

Staff Members: Dr. Ed Anderson, Darla Anderson, Nelly Becker, Samantha Beckner, Heather Boessel, Annette Buckingham, Kyle Buckingham, Pam Burns, Alex Cleath, Sara Elioff, Nathan Hough, Dawn Jourdan, Karlee Mann, Deb Morell, Amanda Niemala, Heidi Powell, Jennifer Rissanen, Renee Tower

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Others: Ellen Bomstad, Linda Buckingham, LaDonna Cole, Gary Erickson, Dan Heinecke, Jack Hillstrom, Dawn Kern, Bonnie Lovdahl, Barb Rahier, Bruce Sampson, Robert Stevens, Christopher Virta

The regular monthly board meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Clinton Cook.

The meeting began with a prayer.

A. Community Comments

No comments were made by the community.

B. Approval of Agenda

A **motion** to approve the agenda as presented was made by Teresa Kittridge, seconded by Greg Cook. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes 6/25/2024

A **motion** to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2024, Regular Board meeting as amended was made by Carol Gilbertson, seconded by Sally Sedgwick. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Information, Discussion and/or Action

1. Strategic Planning – Robert Stevens

Heidi Watson joined the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

Robert Stevens, strategic planning facilitator, distributed the book “Start with Why” to each board member, emphasizing the importance of serving the community. He reviewed the results of interviews conducted on June 10, 11 and 12 with board members, community members, leadership team members, and medical staff.

Issues Identified:

- Tax Levy: Amount, usage, communication, and transparency.
- Independence vs Affiliation: Education on options.
- Laundromat.
- Ambulance Services.

Goals Identified:

- Goal 1: Long-Term Care Revitalization.
- Goal 2: Clinical Service Lines.

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- Goal 3: The Bigfork Valley Experience.

The Board will develop strategic initiatives, work plans and timelines on August 6. The final strategic plan will be presented for approval at the August or September board meeting. The strategic planning goals will be reviewed by the board quarterly.

Teresa Kittridge made a **motion** to close the Special Board Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 6, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room at Bigfork Valley for the purpose of strategic planning, as permitted by Minnesota State Statute 144.581. The motion was seconded by Carol Gilbertson and passed unanimously.

a. **Community comments/Questions for Facilitator**

Several community members provided feedback.

2. **Finance Committee Report**

The Finance Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, July 23.

3. **Financials**

Darla Anderson presented the financials and accounts payable for June 2024.

The Finance Committee made a **motion** to accept the financial report for June, which was seconded by Eugene Rajala. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Accounts Payable**

The Finance Committee made a **motion** to ratify the accounts payable for June, which was seconded by Dan Sursely. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **2025 Tax Levy**

A request was made to confirm that the final tax levy certificate is due to Itasca County on September 15.

Teresa Kittridge exited the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

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Nathan reported that the nursing home rooms should be ready by the end of summer, with the hope of accepting patients by early fall. This increase in the nursing home census may eventually lead to a reduction in the tax levy.

Nathan does not recommend increasing the 2025 tax levy from \$1 million approved last year

6. Governance Committee Report

Carol Gilbertson provided an overview of the Governance Committee meeting that was held on Tuesday, July 23.

7. Annual Meeting Date & Budget for Event

A **motion** to approve a \$1,500 budget for food and giveaways for the Annual Meeting was made by Carol Gilbertson, seconded by Gordon Rahier. The motion passed unanimously.

A **motion** to schedule the Annual Meeting for Thursday, September 12 at 5 p.m. was made by Casey Sursely and seconded by Heidi Watson. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Board Member Stipend Amounts

The current stipend is \$25 for attending committee meetings and educational events, and \$50 for board meetings.

Kurt Fredrickson made a **motion** to keep the current stipend amounts, which was seconded by Eugene Rajala. The motion failed with all opposed.

A **motion** to increase the stipend amount for committee meetings and educational events to \$50 while keeping the stipend for board meetings at \$50 was made by Gordon Rahier and seconded by Larry Salmela. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Post Board Agenda on Bigfork Valley's Website

Tom LaMont made a **motion** to give permission to post the agenda on the website and to allow the Governance Committee to explore and initiate methods of communication to the public on the minutes and

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agenda. The motion was seconded by Gordon Rahier and passed unanimously.

The board took a 15-minute recess.

10. CEO Report

The meeting reconvened at 12:14 p.m.

Nathan Hough provided the following updates:

- The lunchroom, resident rooms, hallway, and kitchen in the Tamarack area are currently undergoing updates, including installation of a new dishwasher.
- Resident room and lunchroom lights are being upgraded to LED, with some costs offset by incentives from MN Power.
- During the renovation of the Tamarack area in LTC, the need to replace parts of the existing heating system was identified. Pricing is being obtained for this task.
- A new dishwasher has been successfully installed in the Aspen area.
- The expansion of the Rehab space has been completed.
- Patient records have been moved from the billing area to the basement in Spruce to create more space for staff and to better secure the records.
- The x-ray room update project is currently in progress.
- Nathan met with Jake Tone, the Essentia Health provider liaison, to discuss collaboration opportunities. These include facilitating the return of patients to Bigfork after specialist referrals, enabling Essentia Health providers to order services at Bigfork, and exploring outreach opportunities for Essentia Health specialty providers to conduct consultations and procedures in Bigfork.
- Nathan is continuing discussions with Rick Breuer from Cloquet Hospital regarding collaboration efforts to enhance specialty services for the Bigfork Valley community.
- Initial discussions are underway on bringing Urology specialists to Bigfork.
- Nathan met with the Director of Emergency Medical Services from Sanford Health to explore ways to improve access to advanced life support ground transfers in the region.

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- Dietary services had a state survey in July with zero deficiencies noted.
- Nathan is working with the VA to reestablish an agreement to accommodate community members with VA benefits in LTC.
- Early discussions are in progress with Healogics to develop a formal Wound Care Program at Bigfork Valley Hospital.
- Nathan met with Allison O'Hara from Northland Counseling Center to discuss behavior health services.
- Aroris has requested additional data to continue phase 1 of the commercial patient insurance review.

11. Wilderness Health

There was discussion about the purpose and benefits of Wilderness Health for Bigfork Valley. After discussion, there was a consensus to discontinue Bigfork Valley's membership with Wilderness Health.

12. Community Newsletter

A draft community newsletter was reviewed. It will be inserted in the Watts News.

13. Employee Appreciation

Lynette Lovdahl, Chase Jacobson, and Nicole Becker were nominated to receive employee appreciation gift certificates for outstanding job performance. A **motion** to approve the nominations was made by Heidi Watson, seconded by Greg Cook. The motion passed unanimously.

14. Board Member Election/Filing Dates

The filing period for affidavits of candidacy for the Northern Itasca Hospital District Board of Directors will commence on July 30, 2024, and close at 5 PM on August 13, 2024.

Available Positions:

- Bigfork Township (4-year term)
- City of Bigfork (2-year term)
- City of Effie (4-year term)
- Itasca County Unorganized (4-year term)
- Koochiching County Unorganized (4-year term)
- Stokes Township (4-year term)

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- Wirt Township (4-year term)

Interested individuals should file their affidavits of candidacy with their respective city or town clerk of residence, or the county auditor's office for unorganized positions.

15. Board Meeting Agenda Topics for Next Month

The following topics will be included on next month's agenda: Tax Levy and Strategic Plan.

16. Open Discussion

There was discussion regarding fundraising, giveaways, and billboards.

At 1:00 p.m., with no further business, a **motion** to adjourn the meeting was made by Greg Cook and seconded by Larry Salmela. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Renee Tower, Executive Administrative Assistant.

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