

New hospital board members take oath

Written by Chris Lee

Newly elected board members of East Phillips County Hospital District were sworn into their positions Tuesday, May 25 at their regular board meeting.

Harlan Stern, Steve Young and Steve Deaver all took the oath at last Tuesday's meeting. Sheryl Farnsworth was absent and will take the oath at the June meeting.

With Farnsworth's absence, board members agreed to postpone the election of officers until the next board meeting. Those members currently holding offices will continue until the next meeting.

An item included in the monitoring report was a policy referring to ensure people experience minimal impacts while at the hospital. Administrator John Ayoub said the high numbers with regard to patient satisfaction that MMH holds is amazing. He added the staff has been doing a great job to ensure those numbers stay where they are.

CFO Greg Was gave the financial condition and activities report and said things are looking good. Volume is one thing Was touched on where they would like to see a little higher numbers.

Patient days was also another area, just as a couple months ago, where they were over budget. As has been reported, MMH is in great standing compared to years past, according to Was.

Sharon Greenman presented the quality committee report and went through the balanced scorecard for the first quarter. She reported most of the areas were in great standing and those that fell below satisfaction levels were just within reach.

Director of nursing Claudia Powell explained a few areas including pressure ulcers and medications.

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Administrator reports activity

Administrator Ayoub reported interviews have been going well concerning the hiring of a compliance officer to replace Erica Brady who recently resigned her position. He added there have been a number of quality candidates and he hopes to sit them down in some group interview settings. Ayoub said he hopes to have offered someone the position in two or three weeks.

The administrator updated board members with a brief overview of health care reform and where things are currently standing. He said things have moved from legislation to regulation to be interpreted.

Ayoub said the revenue integrity team is still looking into some different things around the hospital including the ER leveling tool. He said they are in the last tweaking stages and are thinking about going live with it July 1. Some testing will take place so they aren't off the mark statistically.

Another area the team is looking at is high intensity inpatient care. They are also thinking about going live with this in July. Patients utilizing a high number of resources will be charged for those resources. Ayoub used the example of one-on-one nursing care where someone requires around the clock attention.

Ayoub said they began the Northeastern Junior College training for the management team and reported things went well. In all, four different parts will take place with two sessions later this year.

The administrator said the Center for Medicare and Medicaid audit is nearing the final stages. MMH submitted requested information and Ayoub said they are currently waiting for the final report.

Ayoub said a contract has now been signed with Inquiry Credentialing Services, a company that soon will provide credentialing packets.

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Credentialing was approved contingent upon Dr. Dennis Jelden's signature for two-year appointments for Jay Cook MD (diag. radiology mammography), Ronald Homer MD (radiology), Brian Lyle MD (cardiology), Bradley Tipler MD (radiology), John Drury, MD (cardiology) Suzanne Homer, MD (radiology) and Danielle McClellan MD (family practice).

Ayoub presented board members with the MMH Foundation report and said a nursing scholarship has been set up in memory of Winona Rouze. He also mentioned other scholarships had been awarded as well this year.

Ayoub also reported on the Hispanic Health Fair and said numbers weren't quite what were expected but those who did attend were happy with the information they received. He added they don't think another similar fair will be held but plan to work with the community linkages committee and drive advertising toward the Hispanic population to attend next year's MMH health fair.

Ayoub added they will pull resources used at the Hispanic health fair and pull them into the regular health fair.

Other business

In other business May 25, the hospital board:

—noted the next board meeting will be Tuesday, June 22.

—held a five-minute executive session for the purpose of negotiations.

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—appointed board member Harlan Stern to the medical staff pharmacy and therapeutics committee.