

**San Juan County Public Hospital District #2
Dbá Lopez Island Hospital District (LIHD)**

Board of Commissioners - Regular Meeting

May 26, 2021

REMOTE MEETING DUE TO COVID-19

Zoom Video/Audio

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Minutes

Commissioners Present

Albert Berger, Board Secretary
Christa Campbell
Iris Graville, Board President
James Orcutt
Steven Greenstein

Staff

Superintendent Anne Presson

Commissioners Absent

None

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm by Commissioner Graville. President Graville started with a land acknowledgment to recognize the traditional land of the Coast Salish.

The meeting began with a formal statement read by President Graville in response to recent social media activity. The statement was read as follows:

While it's not the Lopez Island Hospital District's policy or practice to respond to concerns raised on Facebook, I'm going to start the meeting today by stating that recent Facebook posts suggesting the District will be terminating our relationship with the University of Washington in January are incorrect. The LIHD executed a three-year agreement with UW that runs through June 30, 2023, and we've not had any conversations with Island Hospital or any other health care organization about taking over the management of the Clinic on Lopez.

It's possible there are concerns and sensitivities on Lopez following the Orcas Island Health Care District's decision last month to collaborate with Island Hospital instead of UW. The LIHD and UW leadership have reassured Clinic staff and community members that the Orcas move is in no way influencing health care decisions on Lopez. Both the UW and LIHD remain committed to a partnership to support the Lopez Clinic and ensure its long-term success.

We don't know exactly what prompted Facebook posts and comments about an end to the LIHD collaboration with UW. It's possible there was misinterpretation of a recent discussion between LIHD and Lopez Clinic leadership about the District embarking on a strategic planning process.

Strategic planning is a routine activity of organizations to assess both where they are and where they're going. We plan to prepare a press release to inform the public about the process that began last month with the support of a consultant well-versed in rural hospital districts and the challenges we face in San Juan County. We included the regional and local leadership of UW in our first two meetings, which are open to the public. As we proceed, we'll launch several work groups including members of the UW staff, other health care stakeholders, community leaders, and focus groups. We all look forward to the community's engagement as we continue in this process through the end of this year.

We face significant challenges in our ability to deliver the spectrum of needed health care services in our small, rural and remote community. We're fortunate to be able to partner with UW to bring additional services and expertise. While the UW organization has done an excellent job adapting to our unique needs, there's mutual awareness that its model, designed for an urban environment, is expensive to implement here. That said, we're all committed to working together to see how we can make it sustainable for the long-term.

The Commissioners recognize and appreciate the daily demands on staff to provide care, and we'll continue to work with Clinic leadership to be sure staff receive accurate information about the partnership between the Hospital District and the UW. We also remain focused on being good stewards of taxpayer dollars as we strive to understand and meet the health care needs of the entire Lopez community, now and into the future.

II. Public Comment

There was no request for public comment at this time.

III. Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda contained two sets of Minutes and one AP Voucher Report. The edited Minutes from the March 24th Regular Board Meeting and the Minutes from the April 28th Regular Board Meeting. The AP Voucher Report dated 5/22/21 in the amount of \$3,191.91. Commissioners Campbell and Graville noted a couple of typos, which Presson will correct before finalizing for posting.

MOVED by Commissioner Orcutt, seconded by Commissioner Berger to approve the Consent Agenda subject to making grammatical edits in the Minutes of April 28th Regular Board Meeting. VOTE: 5:0:0. Motion Carried.

IV. Health Care Partner Updates

a. UW Medicine Lopez Island Clinic (UW) – Present from UW Medicine were:

- Debra Gussin, Executive Director UW Neighborhood Clinics and Associate VP Primary Care and Population Health.

- Dr. Matt Jaffy, Associate Medical Director, North Region, UW Neighborhood Clinics
- Dr. Bob Wilson, UW Lopez Clinic, Clinic Chief
- Mark Bresnick, Assistant Director of Operations, North Region, UW Neighborhood Clinics
- Crystal Rovente, UW Lopez, Clinic Manager

Bresnick reiterated what was stated by Graville in the LIHD statement. UW Medicine is committed to partnership with the Board and Lopez community, and looks forward to working together to find solutions to the problems we collectively face. He apologized for the miscommunication that led to the post on social media and is working to reassure the Clinic staff. He will also communicate that the UW is fully engaged with the LIHD around the Strategic Planning process and excited to see what we can learn. Gussin agreed, reiterating there's lots of good work being done.

Bresnick reported on vaccine activity and that this past Tuesday UW completed the last of the COVID-19 second doses. They are looking at bringing out vaccine to all of the UW Neighborhood Clinics to be able to provide during regular patient visits. This is a change in process for UWM. They are also able to bring out Pfizer vaccine since the refrigeration requirements have changed and it can be stored in the refrigerator for 30 days. This provides more flexibility and will allow for vaccinations of children ages 12 and up. Since this was only recently decided, there will be more details coming in the future.

Finally, Bresnick is working with the UW finance team to close the budget gap for FY '22. They are looking at ways to enhance revenue opportunities and UW can be involved in other initiatives that could deliver value to UW and the Lopez community. All opportunities to create a sustainable model in a rural, remote community will be explored. Rovente reported that as of this week the Clinic is once again fully staffed.

- b. **LIPT** – Since the practitioners were seeing patients and unable to attend, Superintendent Presson shared a summary provided to her from the Lopez Island Physical Therapy practice. Overall, the financials are looking positive and the practice will provide a formal report at the June Board meeting.

Visits – LIPT had a busy month with 10.4 patients per day, similar to their pre-Covid schedule.

Revenue - Revenues were higher than average at \$89/visit (per visit revenue is calculated with a one-month delay, using April revenue divided by March visits). Unsure whether this revenue increase is sustainable as they continue to receive a few checks from older activity as their former biller seeks to recover any outstanding payments before closing out the accounts. Nonetheless, it is helping sustain cash flow.

Expenses - Expenses are on budget and there is still remaining PPP support to cover salaries in April. As such, the practice is not requesting any support in May.

Depending on how revenue flow is in May and June, the practice may need to request a subsidy payment before the end of Q'2. They will provide a report in June when they have a better idea about ongoing revenue.

LIPT provided a Provider Statistics report based upon percentage of patient visits. The percentages of Medicare and Medicaid for the past two years were included for comparison. They are seeing a few more privately insured patients during this Covid era, and 70% of visits are Medicare or Medicaid.

V. Community Partner Updates

- a. **CWMA** – Barbara Nepom reported there was an upcoming CWMA Board meeting and progress has been very positive regarding equipment maintenance and purchases for the Clinic. CWMA has a new Board member, Sara Munson, who is a retired Pediatrician.
- b. **Lopez Fire & EMS** – Duane Bordvick reported that the LIFE Commissioners had a good meeting and there are no significant issues facing LIFE other than an ongoing septic issue. They will be scheduling public meetings to discuss the EMS levy. They also recently purchased a used fire truck and it should be in service in a few weeks.

Chief Bigby provided a report on the number of air transports over the past several years. There was discussion around whether the bump in transports when UW took over clinic operations was continuing or whether things had returned to normal levels. Somewhat hard to know with 2020 being such an unusual year. More conversation is needed to better understand how things are going in regard to air transport activity.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. **Finance Committee** – Berger provided an update on two items from UW: FY '21 financials through Q'3 and the FY '22 Budget. In regard to FY '21, which covers the period July 1st through March 31st, there is an overall shortfall of 14.5%. The primary drivers are that Patient Revenue is down by \$95,000 (16.5%) due to Visits being below budget by 14.4%. On the Expense side, Non-Provider Benefits are over budget by 26.5%. We are still waiting for clarification on the amount and timing of PPP loan forgiveness, which could positively impact the financial picture for the fiscal year.

Discussion continued around the reduced visits, and what strategies could be implemented to increase visits and subsequent revenue. It remains unclear why visits

are down, as Bob is seeing 14-16 patients/day and is accustomed to seeing 18-20 per day.

- b. **Quality Committee** - There was no report from the Quality Committee.
- c. **Communications Committee** – Campbell shared that as the Board has an idea of the timeline for Strategic Planning, the Committee will draft an article so the public is aware of what’s underway and what to expect.
- d. **SJC Community-Based Long-Term Care (LTC) Network** – Superintendent Presson will provide a report for the grant at the June Board meeting. She did share two of the grant deliverables which were the Network Statement and Environmental Scan.

VII. Old Business

There were questions on the vaccine report provided by the Lopez Island Pharmacy. Those will be clarified.

VIII. New Business

There was no New Business reported.

IX. Operations Report

- a. **LIHD Financials through April 30, 2021** – Presson provided a summary of the financial report through April 30, 2021. She noted that Property Tax receipts to-date were slightly higher (58% of budget) than this time last year (53%). The Cash Balance as of the end of April is favorable to budget by approximately \$175,000. This is partly due to the Beginning Cash being just under \$85,000 favorable and expenses being almost \$17,500 less than budget. In addition, Property Tax receipts are almost \$64,000 higher than budget.
- b. **OPMA and COVID-19** – Presson provided a short update on requirements should public entities consider returning to in-person meetings. She shared an update from the legal firm she works with on Orcas. The summary is as follows:

For the past 14-15 months it’s been changing all the time. Lately it’s been pretty solidified, until last Thursday [May 29, CDC announcement lifting many mask restrictions]. There will be a lot of unknowns. Local governments in Phase 3 are allowed to have up to 50% capacity or 400 people, whichever is fewer, excluding staff. But we still have to keep people 6 feet apart. A recent change allowed groups of up to 10 sit together, but the term “group” wasn’t defined. Keeping people 6 feet apart will mean we’ll never get to 50% capacity, it’s nearly impossible.

The most problematic thing is that during the meeting, if we can't comply with restrictions (masking, distancing, capacity), the meeting must be recessed, adjourned, or continued. So, part way through our meeting, if one too many people show up, the meeting has to stop. We obviously can't kick anybody out or ask them not to attend, so it may mean everybody goes home and gets on the computer and does it remotely, or that meeting doesn't happen.

The firm providing the overview hasn't yet had a client attempt an in-person meeting because of so many limitations. We would still need to accommodate attendance by listening and speaking by telephone and would have to have a remote component and an in-person component that worked together. If three members are in person and two at home, and also the public, it could require managing a lot of different cameras and computers, which is likely to cause a new set of challenges and is not easy.

Also, all attendees must still wear masks and maintain 6 feet of distance, and we would have to have a staff member monitoring compliance with these rules. Not sure who could serve in that role, and it's a lot to oversee the public's use of masks and social distancing. And, of course it all changed recently, including rules for those vaccinated and those not. Not sure yet how the Governor and the counties change those rules, because local governments can set rules. Until things are clearer, should any entity choose to meet in person there's still the need for both a remote and an in-person component, and the technological problems will be challenging.

It was Presson's recommendation that the Board continue with remote meetings for now and not add an in-person component until more of the COVID-19 restrictions are removed. There was consensus of the Board to support Presson's recommendation.

- c. **LIHD FY '22 Budget Process** – Presson indicated that she'll be sending out a budget calendar. This will include the timeline for her Annual Performance Review. As a reminder, the Budget/Levy hearings are scheduled for November 10th and a legal posting must take place for the two weeks prior. Based on all of this, she might ask that the October 27th Regular Board meeting be moved up a week. More to come at the June meeting.
- d. **Sensitive Items Update** – the issue specific to the social media post was discussed earlier

X. Public Comment

There was no request for public comment at this time.

XI. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Campbell would like to continue using technology, even into the future when meetings can return to in-person, as it allows for more of the public to attend. She would like to see the District work to facilitate access in the future and maintain Zoom as another way to attend meetings.

Commissioner Berger agreed with the comments around Zoom, and felt it was a great way for people with disabilities to participate in governance. He also hopes to continue this format when it's safe to get back together.

Commissioner Orcutt also agreed with previous statements about the importance of maintaining the option for people to participate in meetings remotely. A hybrid approach to meetings was a good idea.

Commissioner Greenstein commented that the sound system at the recent LIFE meeting was a challenge and it will be important to manage technology issues in a hybrid approach. He also added an observation from the LIFE Board meeting that they reported four refusal forms for vaccine were sent out, and they got three back so those are on restricted duty for Fire/EMS. They also talked about the new radio system. They are just waiting for the FCC license to be finalized. Once received, the work on the installation can be completed.

Superintendent Presson will explore what options might be available with the Library and LIFRC. She will also post the LIHD Statement read at the start of the meeting on the LIHD website and send it to the Clinic. Rovente asked that she be provided with the air transport report from LIFE.

Some discussion continued between the Board and UW around the question of why visits are down. The Commissioners appreciated Bob bringing the issue up so everyone can work together to understand and find ways to address. President Graville noted that she would like to have more conversation with the staff who attend the meetings, and the Public Comment period isn't the right fit. She would like to think about how to change the Agenda format to be able to have time to capture staff feedback, comments and input. These are valuable contributions and she wants to make sure there's a good way that is easy and approachable so we get the benefit of the staff's thinking and questions. She thanked Bob, Crystal, Wen, and Erica for participating.

XII. Upcoming Meetings

The next Regular Meeting of the LIHD is scheduled for June 9th at 3 pm. This will be the Board's third Strategic Planning meeting. The second Board meeting in June is scheduled for the 23rd at 4 pm.

XIII. Adjourn

MOVED by Commissioner Orcutt, seconded by Commissioner Berger to adjourn the Regular meeting at 5:45 pm. VOTE: 5:0:0. Motion Carried.