1. NW Board Of Directors Meeting Agenda July 26, 2021
   Documents:
   
   TNW BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA 2021_07_26.PDF

2. NW Board Of Directors Meeting Approved Minutes Of June 21, 2021
   Documents:
   
   TNW BOARD MINUTES 062121 APPROVED.PDF

2.I. NW Board Of Directors Meeting Draft Minutes Of July 26, 2021
    Documents:
    
    TNW BOARD MINUTES 2021_07_26 VERSION 2.PDF
Board Meeting  
Monday, July 26, 2021

Time: 5:00 PM  
Virtual Meeting via ZOOM Conference Call

Webinar Link:  
https://greenwichct.zoom.us/j/82647159057?pwd=MEJ0SGtmQk1QWUIER0M5WDBTY2RwUT09  
To join by phone dial 1 646 518 9805; Webinar ID: 826 4715 9057; Password: 6229802  

AGENDA  

1. Medical Director’s Report – Frank Walsh, MD  
2. Review/Approval - Minutes June 21, 2021 – Chairman  
3. Reports  
   a. Executive Director-John Mastronardi  
   b. Nursing-Nadia Benson and Chris Ann Bennett  
   c. Building Committee –Paul Hopper and Larry Vanterpool  
   d. Finance Committee-Nisha Hurst and Nunzio Raimo  
   e. Marketing-Chris Carter  
   f. Therapeutic Recreation-Carissa Ronish  
   g. Friends of Nathaniel Witherell – Scott Neff  
4. Chairman’s Discussion – Laurence Simon  
5. New Business  
6. Adjournment  

2021 Calendar of Board Meetings:  
No meeting in August  
September 13, 2021  
October 18, 2021  
November 15, 2021  

cc: Town Clerk
Board of Directors Zoom Board Meeting
Minutes
June 21, 2021

Present: Laurence B. Simon, Chairman; Suzanne Brown; Christopher Carter; Paul Hopper; Nisha Hurst; Richard Kaplan; Joan Merrill

Absent: Melissa Gibbons, Secretary; Nirmal Patel, MD MPH

Staff: Michel Baptiste, Housekeeping/Laundry Supervisor; Nadia Benson, Deputy and Director of Nursing; George Cossifos, Admissions Director; Linda Marini, Assistant to Executive Director; John Mastronardi, Executive Director; Scott Neff, FNW Executive Director; Nunzio Raimo, Director of Financial Operations; Justine Vaccaro, Director of Social Work; Larry Vanterpool, Facilities Director

Guests: Amy Badini; Bob Barolak; Meredith Braxton; Bill Drake, BET; Andy Duus, BET Liaison; Carol Ferraro; Elizabeth Franklin-Quigley; Thomas McGuire; Brad Markowitz; Paul Scholtes; Greg Schulte; Mary Alice Schulte; Sheilah Smith; Maria Szpak; Kate Tabner; Ellen Wolfson, Commission on Aging; Debbie Wortman;

Mr. Simon opened the meeting at 5:06 PM via Zoom Webinar.

Medical Director's Report – none - Dr. Frank Walsh absent

Review/Approval of Minutes of April 26, 2021

A motion to approve the minutes of April 26, 2021 was made by Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Kaplan. A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Ms. Brown was not present at the time of the vote).
Executive Director’s Report - presented by John Mastronardi

COVID-19 Vaccinations – Mr. Mastronardi reported that to date 75.8% of the Witherell staff have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Resident vaccination numbers remain consistent at 91%.

- Per DPH guidance as of June 1, 2021, all unvaccinated staff must test monthly.
- CMS guidance stipulates that monthly testing of staff must occur when county positivity rates are <5%. Currently, the Fairfield County positivity rate is less than 1%.
- Unvaccinated staff will continue to be tested and a log kept for compliance.
- Mandatory education for unvaccinated staff has begun. Our goal is to have all staff educated on the efficacy of the vaccine by June 30, 2021. We also continue to assist staff who wish to be vaccinated with scheduling and we are following up with staff who were vaccinated in the community.
- Fully vaccinated residents who are new or re-admissions do not need to quarantine unless COVID positive or exhibiting flu or cold-like symptoms.
- Mr. Kaplan noted that the EEOC now states that employers can mandate the vaccine for employees. Mr. Mastronardi believes our management is becoming less resistant to the idea of mandating the vaccine for staff. However, if we mandate the vaccine, dependent on the numbers of staff that may quit or not return to work, it could cause a staffing problem for us. Mr. Mastronardi would consider making the vaccine a requirement for new hires.

The most current visitation policy is posted on our website. Mr. Mastronardi emphasized that in-room visits must not exceed 2 visitors. Having more than 2 visitors in a room at a given time goes against CDC, CMS and DPH guidance.

HealthStream – we have a new internal e-learning website for employees to be educated and trained on core competencies, certification core course, mandatory training and refresher courses.

GI Outbreak – In May we had a GI outbreak where 10 residents exhibited symptoms.

- There was only 1 confirmed case of C. diff (also known as Clostridioides difficile or C. difficile). The resident became symptomatic on May 9th, was put on contact precautions, and a sample was collected that same day. The resident was transferred to the hospital on May 13th and returned to Nathaniel Witherell on May 16th, where they continued on IV antibiotic treatment with contact isolation precautions until May 30th.
- We reported the event to DPH on May 11th, even though we only had 1 confirmed case and are only required to report if there are over 3. A line list was also completed and submitted to DPH by Infection Prevention.

Inventory Management System
We are using expense data in total days to calculate our per patient per day factor, so we can compare to other nursing homes. Some of the interventions that will help address the issues we’ve had in the past are:

- Lowering costs for Med A supplies – we are getting new pricing from Companion
• New diabetic supplies
• Incontinence products and sizing – the first analysis is complete and the program will be rolling out in the coming weeks.
• Reorganization of the Nursing central supply storage room for better inventory control and par levels – pending.
• We have updated our Group Purchasing Organization (GPO) contracts for Grainger and HD Supply, and updated our GPO contract for nutritional supplements as well (activation is pending). We are reviewing potential GPO contracts for Imperial (Maintenance supplies) and reviewing Eco Lab contracts for laundry and linens.
• Weekly budget review is currently in development.

Chaplaincy
• Sue Neumann, has begun as a part-time Chaplain, 2 afternoons/week. Ms Neumann’s background and training is in clinical pastoral education.
• Barbara Salop and Joan Mann have joined us as spiritual care visitors representing the local Jewish community. Each will work one afternoon/week, alternating weeks. They are trained in the practice of Jewish visitation and both have extensive experience in their same capacity from their roles at Greenwich Hospital.

Electronic Devices Policy – We contacted the Ombudsman because we know that electronic devices in resident rooms will go into effect October 1, 2021. We will be revising and updating our policy on accepted/approved electronic devices with respect to this bill.

Volunteers – Mr. Mastronardi reported that our volunteers have begun to return with the lifting of some of the restrictions.
• The Greenwich Boys & Girls Torch Club recently held a fundraiser and graciously shared some of the proceeds with the Witherell and Parsonage Cottage. They purchased puzzles and games for the residents.
• PT/OT have 3 volunteers for transporting residents 5 days per week
• 10 volunteers are helping with religious services
• 1 volunteer has assumed our building plant care
• 5 volunteers are doing visitation transport
• 1 volunteer is working from the gift shop with a “rolling cart of goodies” going floor to floor
• Hair Salon – until we secure a new onsite hairdresser, which we’re working on with the Town, Joanne Maciejewski, our retired hairdresser, has agreed to come in and perform haircuts for the residents in the interim.
• Mr. Mastronardi stated that our Volunteer Coordinator, Mary Tate, has been doing an excellent job in getting our former volunteers to return, amid some reluctance, and in recruiting new volunteers as well. He anticipates we will be back to normal numbers of volunteers in the building and normal levels of activities within approximately 2 months.
Visitor Code of Conduct – Mr. Mastronardi and Ms. Benson are currently developing a Policy and Procedure on a Visitor Code of Conduct. The need for this policy stemmed from 3 incidents of loud, unruly, and inappropriate behavior by visitors in our building.

Dietary – Mr. Mastronardi stated that the Morrison contract, as well as the pharmacy and rehab contracts, are being reviewed.
- The contract terms have not always proven to be favorable to NW; subsequently we have requested that each vendor review their contracts
- As a result of the review of the food service contract, Morrison will be giving back approximately $2,777/mo (for a total of $50K) to NW on the Management Fee paid.
- We feel Morrison can do better with their pricing and services and they can be a true partner in collaboration with us.

Communal Dining – in response to Mr. Simon's question, we have been doing communal dining. Unvaccinated residents must continue to socially distance.

Mr. Mastronardi responded to Ms. Merrill’s question concerning the NW Quality Assurance Committee – The NW Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Committee, QAPI, is comprised of all NW department heads. This committee meets quarterly. Minutes of these meetings are not public information and are kept as confidential and privileged information within the facility.

Communication Policy – Mr. Mastronardi stated that this policy has been in flux due to certain family members, or members of Family Council, who were not happy with the parameters set in place – they did not like that they needed to communicate through a liaison. Elaine Conklin, LMSW, is the NW liaison. The appointed liaison from Family Council has left the organization and a replacement has not yet been named.

Building Committee Report - presented by Larry Vanterpool

The NW Building Committee met on Thursday, June 17, 2021, to discuss the status of capital accounts, the FY21 capital projects, and to begin discussion on the upcoming capital fund utilization of FY22.

FY 21
Tower Electrical Panel upgrade.
The final contract has been signed with Greenwich Electric for $235,485, and now Greenwich electric will be able to order the necessary parts to start the project. The parts will not be available until September 2021. We will continue to work on our internal shutdown plan with the Department of Public health.

The second phase of this project was initially thought to be a separate project. But since the original estimate of the 1st phase was for $500K, and the signed bid is for $235K, this presents an opportunity to complete the 2nd phase and stay ahead of the facility needs. Mr.
Vanterpool anticipates being able to develop an RFB along with Purchasing within the next 90 days.

The Pavilion External Renovations
AVT Construction is scheduled to start this week, and deliveries of materials have been observed. AVT is requesting revision and change of some of the material (waterproof deck membrane) due to availability, and the Committee will evaluate soon.

FY 22
Interior renovations - $360,00 (Carpet, painting and furniture)
The Committee started the discussion on how to utilize and maximize these funds, and Mr. Simon suggested creating a paradigm of a resident/patient room that would include color selection, furniture and functionality, electronic devices, etc. This would allow for a cost estimate per room renovation for both a single and double room. The approach can be the same for all corridors and public spaces.

Finance Report – presented by Nunzio Raimo
Mr. Raimo reviewed the Financial Statement and Operating Results for the period ending May 31, 2021:

- NW Census by payer class for May 2021: total days billed in May 2021 were 5,187. There has been a positive turn from December 2020 forward.
- Occupancy Percentage for May 2021 was 83%, and average beds per day was 167.3.
- Revenue by Payer Class: May revenue from operations was $2,124,959. Private pay was budgeted at 26% but was actually 25% of revenue for May 2021.
- Two efficiency metrics were highlighted: 1.) Monthly revenue per FTE (which is an indicator of staffing efficiency) for May 2021 was $8,465.97, the highest it has been all year; 2.) Revenue per billable patient day (which shows the efficiency of our revenue stream from operations) for May 2021 was $410.00.
- Revenue May YTD Actual was $22,421,782, compared to budget of $25,916,000, resulting in a negative variance of $3,494,218.
- Expenses from Operations for May 2021 YTD Actual were $18,931,005 compared to budget of $19,879,918, resulting in a positive savings year to date of $948,913.
- May 2021 YTD Margin Before Debt & Allocation of $3,490,777, $2.54M under Budget.
- May 2021 YTD Margin Before Debt & Capital was $(1,632,254), compared to our budget of $651,118, resulting in a variance of ($2,283,371). Actual Capital Expenditures were $182,231, and Deferred Revenues were $2,251. Operating Profit before Debt Service was $436,525, with a negative variance of $32,262.
- Net Revenues/(Expenses) after COVID monies are ($22,106).
- Benefit Summary for YTD May 2021 variance to budget was a savings of $256,764.
- For May YTD 2021 Salaries & Wages were under budget by $673,040. Mr. Raimo noted this variance continues to grow each month.
- For May YTD 2021 OTPS were $1,233,189 compared to a budget of $1,043,468, a variance of ($52,686). Many of these expenses were COVID related expenses: PPE; courier service for COVID testing; rental of PODS for visitation & associated electrical hookup; porta potties.
For May YTD 2021 Supplies & Materials were below budget by $180,007.
For May YTD 2021 Maintenance expenditures were under budget by $43,180.
Overall Gain/(Loss) Fiscal Year to date at ($2.2M); after COVID money at ($22,106).

Marketing – presented by Christopher Carter

Mr. Carter reported the following:
- Over the past 2 months we’ve completed our 2nd flight with Today Media where we’ve been using their geofencing advertising capabilities.
- Digital ads continue to be focused around hospitals in Westchester County; over the last 2 months we’ve added advertising around Southwest Connecticut including Greenwich and Stamford hospitals.
- Search advertising continues to be strong and in line with our trends over the last six months; this fall we will have details on the most visited pages of the new website. We have the ability to focus advertising around marketing needs so we can align Google advertising accordingly.
- We did 30 Facebook posts since the last Board meeting, including Five Ways for Seniors to Protect Themselves from Online Misinformation, and a piece on the fact that several of the volunteers are back at the Witherell.
- In social advertising, we had a big uptick in May Facebook, with over 15,000 impressions.
- Blogs - we had posts on Reuniting with Family Members, What to Know and What to Do; and a piece on resident musicians Vin Galizi and Michael Rinaldi, which was also picked up by the Greenwich Time.
- Our new website has launched; it has a much more modern design, designed to provide greater education to those considering a nursing center or short term rehab facility; there is a virtual tour of the exterior; the technology allows for faster page loads and improves the experience of the reader; the navigation bar on the top of the homepage contains an Events and Newsletter section – it also has a Family Update section with the latest information on visitation and visitation guidance per CMS and the status of COVID-19 at the facility – NW is one of the only hospital facilities to provide this on their website - it also has the visitation section, where you can sign up. Discussion has begun about shooting footage this fall for an internal virtual tour.
- If anyone has any questions about the digital terminology, please feel free to send Mr. Carter an email.

Friends of Nathaniel Witherell (FNW) – presented by Scott Neff

Mr. Neff reported the FNW Community Appeal to date has exceeded last year’s fundraising total by 14%. He continues to conduct follow up with past contributors who have not yet made a contribution to this year’s appeal. The FNW fiscal year ends on June 30, 2021.

The next FNW Board Meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 23rd at 9:00 AM via conference call. The FNW Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2021.
Chairman’s Discussion – presented by Laurence Simon

Mr. Simon thanked Joan Merrill for her three-year tenure on the Board of Directors and expressed his appreciation. He thanked her for her service to the board, for her time, effort, and insight, and for helping NW become a better facility. Ms. Merrill stated that it has been an honor to be on the Board and that her only regret was that she ‘couldn’t have done more’. She will be happy to stay until her replacement is found.

Mr. Simon reported the following for the 11 months ending May 31, 2021:

- There were 386 admissions; 44 long-term and 342 short-term
- Of the 342 short-term admissions 231 were medical and 115 were orthopedic
- Greenwich Hospital continues to provide us with about 2/3 of our admissions
- The Census on July 1, 2020 was 158; Census today is 173; the high Census during the year was 182; our goal for next year is to get to 188. In order to reach this goal we need to increase the long-term census which is currently at 140.

Mr. Simon stated that in the 14 months that Mr. Mastronardi has assumed the role of Executive Director, he has done a very good job fixing the cost side and now helping to improve and focusing on the revenue side.

Mr. Simon noted that healthcare is currently a dynamic environment. There are hospitals providing health care, nursing homes interacting with hospitals, nursing homes providing in-home care; there are ways to generate revenue and we need to position ourselves properly to do that.

Mr. Simon stated that as we improve our finances, we are also going through a lot of transition, both with vendors and staff. Some staff have been resistant to change, causing work stoppages due to excessive call-outs; this has had a negative impact on cost. The staff has to understand that the management is in control of the building; we are staffed adequately when everyone reports to work as assigned.

Mr. Simon noted that it has been a very difficult year for Nathaniel Witherell; isolation was difficult for residents and families. Now that we hope the worst of COVID is over, he is willing to take some of the suggestions from management and others and work with the Town to enforce vaccinations for new hires. He also believes there will come a point in time, in the not too distant future, when NW will try and enforce vaccinations for existing employees.

Mr. Simon believes we are well positioned for the future, with a solid staff to take us where we need to go; issues have been identified; more transporters and volunteers; return of communal activity; all of which are what make Witherell a special place.

With our ability to control our costs, our ability to increase our revenue through a different series of alliances and agreements with healthcare providers, we can become and remain profitable without the large amount of COVID grants that we received this year.
Mr. Simon thanked the Board for their hard work and commitment to the betterment of this facility.

In response to Mr. Kaplan request for an update on the RFP, Mr. Andy Duus, BET Liaison, responded that they are still in the process of collecting information, and before they go back out to other parties, they have their own internal work to do. This an ongoing process that “is not going to end soon”. He stated it may not be over for another year.

Mr. Simon had a final comment with regard to labor negotiations with the Teamsters. They’ve been proceeding slowly (the contract expired on 7/1/19) – now ending their second year without a contract. Arbitration is scheduled in July and August. The Town is in the process of finally hiring a Labor Relations Specialist which Mr. Simon thinks will help with negotiations. He has reviewed some of the payroll issues that come out of the contracts and believes they are too complicated – as a Town and as an institution we need to find a way to simplify how people get paid, and simplify the contract language in that regard.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for July 26th via Zoom Webinar. The September 13, 2021 Board meeting will be held in-person.

New Business - none

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Hurst seconded by Mr. Carter and the meeting was adjourned at 6:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Marini
June 24, 2021
Board of Directors Zoom Board Meeting
Minutes
July 26, 2021

Present: Laurence B. Simon, Chairman; Melissa Gibbons, Secretary; Suzanne Brown; Christopher Carter; Nisha Hurst; Richard Kaplan; Joan Merrill

Absent: Paul Hopper; Nirmal Patel, MD MPH

Staff: Chris Ann Bennett, Infection Preventionist; Nadia Benson, Deputy and Director of Nursing; Linda Marini, Assistant to Executive Director; John Mastronardi, Executive Director; Scott Neff, FNW Executive Director; Nunzio Raimo, Director of Financial Operations; Carissa Ronish, Therapeutic Recreation Administrator; Justine Vaccaro, Director of Social Work; Larry Vanterpool, Facilities Director; Dr. Frank Walsh, Medical Director

Guests: Amy Badini; Andy Duus, BET Liaison; Elizabeth Franklin-Quigley; Paul Scholtes; Mary Alice Schulte; Sheilah Smith; Ellen Wolfson, Commission on Aging;

Mr. Simon opened the meeting at 5:04 PM via Zoom Webinar and noted that a quorum was present.

Medical Director’s Report – Dr. Frank Walsh

Dr. Walsh reported that the number of admissions is on the rise, with 7 this past Saturday alone. Orthopedic cases still account for a large percentage (38%) of short-term admissions from the hospital with medical representing the balance.

There has not been a COVID positive case among the staff or residents in 66 days, and indoor and outdoor visitation continues.

- 76.6% of staff have been vaccinated; 87% of staff and volunteers
- Over 90% of residents have been vaccinated
- Dr. Walsh continues to encourage staff to get vaccinated. He suggests staff get the J & J vaccine because it is similar to the flu vaccine as far as anticipated side effects.
Our Census today is 183. Dr. Walsh noted that Greenwich Woods, which has more beds than NW (217), currently has a census of 75.

Dr Walsh stated that there has been an uptick in COVID positive cases nationwide, primarily in unvaccinated people. He has seen a large number of people in his practice getting tested, and the majority testing positive are unvaccinated individuals; most have not exhibited severe illness.

The Connecticut state positivity rate was 1.4% and has risen to 1.6% this week. We at NW continue to follow all CDC and DPH guidelines with regard to testing staff and the unvaccinated in the facility.

To Mr. Kaplan’s question as to whether we require new admissions to be vaccinated, Ms. Benson responded that we will accept an unvaccinated resident (long-term and short-term), but they will follow quarantine protocol. Ms. Bennett stated that we ask new admissions if they wish to be vaccinated, and we will make appointments and transport those who wish to be vaccinated. This includes long-term residents, who may have refused the vaccine in the past and now wish to receive it.

At Mr. Simon’s request, Ms. Bennett will provide the same vaccination statistics on the long and short-term residents as she does regarding the staff.

Mr. Simon noted that the number of residents being hospitalized varied between 2 and 5 this month. Dr. Walsh explained that since we are admitting patients with higher acuity than a year ago, this can definitely be a factor with regard to hospitalizations.

**Review/Approval of Minutes of June 21, 2021**

A motion to approve the minutes of June 21, 2021 was made by Ms. Hurst, seconded by Mr. Kaplan. A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

**Executive Director’s Report - presented by John Mastronardi**

Suspected GI outbreak – From May 6th through May 20th we were being monitored as part of a suspected GI outbreak. Residents have since recovered and any related issues have been resolved. The majority of the residents that were monitored via the DPH mandated GI line lists, did not have true GI concerns or symptoms. Ms. Chris Ann Bennett will elaborate further during her report later in this meeting.

HealthStream – We have partnered with a company called HealthStream, which is an e-learning website, for employees to be educated and trained on core competencies, certification core course, mandatory training and refresher courses.
Ascripts – We are engaging with Ascripts, a company which pursues pharmacy rebates that our pharmacy vendor does not pass on to us. The Ascripts application will communicate with our EMR, Matrix Care, and identify pharmacy rebates that would otherwise not be pursued. Their fee is 28% of the monthly savings, with the balance going to NW. Ascripts estimates savings between $3K and $10K per month but Mr. Mastronardi believes a more conservative estimate of our savings to be between $1K to $2K per month.

PatientPing – Mr. Mastronardi reported that we are working with PatientPing, a care collaboration application that tracks patient outcomes while they are in our care and within the 30 – 90 days post discharge window. This will help us reduce hospital readmissions and emergency department visits, and we will be able to collaborate/coordinate more effectively with the accountable care organizations. We will be able to check in and follow-up with patients post discharge to make sure they are doing well.

Nursing Report - presented by Nadia Benson and Chris Ann Bennett

Ms. Benson reported the following concerning current staffing ratios:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Day Shift</th>
<th>Evening Shift</th>
<th>Night Shift</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long-Term</td>
<td>5 to 1</td>
<td>8 to 1</td>
<td>13 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-Term</td>
<td>3 to 1</td>
<td>5 to 1</td>
<td>7 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Nurse + CNA to residents</td>
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</tbody>
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Ms. Benson stated that we are providing fiscally responsible and safe staffing. Changes we have made to staffing have not affected our quality of care.

Ms. Benson reported that we are currently having difficulty hiring CNAs because we are competing with unemployment. Our CNA’s start at $18/hour which is comparable to what they can make on unemployment. Ms. Benson expects there will be larger pool of qualified applicants, and that people will want to return to work, come September when the extra unemployment is no longer available.

Mr. Kaplan asked about the use of a staffing companies. Ms. Benson explained that they have entertained the idea, but it is very costly. For example, one company quoted $32/hour/CNA; $58/hour/LPN; $75/hour/RN. Mr. Simon noted that the Teamster contract is still in negotiation. He stated that the low CNA salary is a real obstacle to hiring and thinks this should be addressed before a contract is signed.

Mr. Kaplan asked if Ms. Benson has considered hiring back past employees; Ms. Benson will look into that as an option.

Ms. Benson noted that there are proposed staffing requirements for the state of Connecticut; currently, our staffing meets those proposed staffing ratios. Mr. Simon calculated the current hours per resident per day at 4.33 hours.
Mr. Simon stated that with the Teamster contact about to be settled over the next two weeks, the contract will provide a base rate of about $20.50/$21 per hour for CNA’s, and also look to shorten the 24-month probationary period. (See note below on revision to this number to 6 months.)

Ms. Hurst asked if our current staffing ratios will maintain our 5-star rating. Ms. Benson stated that they ran the staffing numbers through the Payroll Based Journal (PBJ) reports and we will maintain our five-star rating even with our staffing right-sizing.

Ms. Bennett reported the following regarding COVID vaccinations to date:

- Full time staff – 125 of 143 are vaccinated, 87%
- Part time staff – 81 of 125 are vaccinated, 65%
- 8 Nursing staff members are not vaccinated, the majority are CNA’s; greater than 90% of nurses are vaccinated
- Dietary – 9 unvaccinated, all part time staff (majority are evening and/or weekend staff)
- Thus far, no one has stated religious objections as reason for declining the vaccine

**Building Committee Report - presented by Larry Vanterpool**

Mr. Vanterpool reported the following:

The Pavilion External Renovations – This project is now 75% complete. In replacing the wood on the 1st floor deck, some unexpected structural damage was discovered that needed to be replaced/repaired. A change order was processed for a cost of approximately $8K. The contractor asked for a weeks’ extension to the original completion date, bringing the date of project completion to August 9, 2021, which Messrs. Hopper and Vanterpool approved. There were some design challenges concerning the height of the railings to preserve the historic look of the building which all have been resolved.

Tower Electrical Panel upgrade – The parts have been ordered and are scheduled for delivery in early October 2021. Once the parts are in the building, we will coordinate the internal shutdown plan.

Ms. Benson corrected a statement she made during her report: The probationary period for both Teamster and LIUNA employees is six (6) months, not 24 months.

**Finance Report – presented by Nunzio Raimo**

Mr. Raimo reviewed the Financial Statement and Operating Results for the twelve months ending June 30, 2021:
NW Census by payer class for June 2021: total days billed were 5,153. April 2020 was the only month with 30 days that exceeded June 2020.

Occupancy Percentage for June 2021 was 85%, and for the year averaged about 81%; average beds per day for June 2021 was 171.8.

Revenue by Payer Class: June revenue from operations was $2,285,880. Private pay was budgeted at 26% but was actually 27% of revenue for June 2021.

Two efficiency metrics were highlighted: 1.) Monthly revenue per FTE (which is an indicator of staffing efficiency) for June 2021 was $9,344; 2.) Revenue per billable patient day (which shows the efficiency of our revenue stream from operations) for June 2021 was $444.00.

Revenue June YTD Actual was $24,638,720, compared to budget of $28,272,000, resulting in a negative variance of $3,633,280.

Expenses from Operations for June 2021 YTD Actual were $21,305,448 compared to budget of $22,867,577, resulting in a positive savings year to date of $1,562,129.

June 2021 YTD Margin Before Debt & Allocation of $3,333,272, $2M under Budget.

June 2021 YTD Margin Before Debt & Capital was ($2,433,384), compared to our budget of ($1,767,016). Actual Capital Expenditures were $452,627. Operating Profit before Debt Service was (635,002), with a positive variance of $664,366.

Net Revenues/(Expenses) are ($968,633). Mr. Simon noted that it is commendable that we beat our projection by $665K, considering this was a COVID year.

Mr. Raimo reported that we came in under budget in every expense category.

Benefit Summary for YTD June 2021 variance to budget was a savings of $298,966.

For June YTD 2021 Salaries & Wages were under budget by $1,105,858. Mr. Raimo attributes this to right sizing of staff and good management of overtime.

For June YTD 2021 OTPS were $665,042 under budget.

For June YTD 2021 Supplies & Materials were below budget by $321,766.

For June YTD 2021 Maintenance expenditures were under budget by $71,288.

Overall Gain/(Loss) Fiscal Year to date at ($3.2M); after COVID money at ($968,633).

Mr. Raimo reported that Census is running at 178 so far for July 2021, which would put us in the best month of the entire prior fiscal year. Our expected Revenue is $2.4M. We have been reaching the low to mid-180’s with a goal of 188.

Mr. Simon stated that as of July 1 we have received a Medicaid rate increase of 10% for the next 9 months. With 60% Medicaid Census, it is the equivalent of 120 patients. With a 10% increase in the rate, that is the equivalent of having another 12 people, which brings us over the 188 number and brings us very close to running on budget for August, if not July.

Mr. Simon noted the favorable payer mix and the number of admissions has been very high. We have 146 long-term patients and have been running at 37/39 short-term.

Ms. Gibbons asked if upon admission, are we collecting information about how patients are coming to us and where they have heard of us? If so, how are we tracking that type of information? Mr. Mastronardi confirmed that we do track that information. It has been a manual process in the past and using PatientPing will help us do a more effective job of tracking those patients, while they are with us here and also post discharge.
Mr. Simon noted that the financial reports show $60K less than budget was spent in advertising this past year. Mr. Carter does not believe the final payment has been made for the new website development. He stated that once all the charges are in for the new website, we can start the new fiscal year working with Harrison Edwards to determine what other ideas we could be working on from a marketing perspective.

**Marketing – presented by Christopher Carter**

Mr. Carter reported the following:

We have 1 week left on our geofencing ad campaign with Today Media. With the latest update we have had over 170K impressions and 541 visits to the website. During the first flight of our campaign we had some good engagement with Montefiore and St. Joseph’s Medical Center. The second flight had good engagement from St. John’s Riverside and Burke Rehabilitation. Mr. Carter will have the full report from the entire campaign at the September Board meeting.

We continue to concentrate ad dollars on the Google pay per click ads and Facebook ads.

There have been no print ads over the summer but we will run some skilled nursing ads again in September with half-pages in Greenwich and Stamford magazines, and ads in the Greenwich Times and Stamford Advocate.

Google ads created nearly 5,000 visits to our website.

There were 17 Facebook posts since the last Board meeting, including talk about past volunteers coming back into the building, i.e. the United Way Teens Car Parade, our news team, fitness professional, and musical entertainers.

We had over 10K impressions of our Facebook posts and 300 watchers of the virtual tour on the website come in via Facebook.

The website is fully up and operational and is continually updated to reflect the latest COVID information.

Two new blogs are being posted, one on the Culinary Wellness Garden, with input from Board Member Suzanne Brown, and a second on how summer heat can impact older adults.

There was an article in the Greenwich time that spotlighted how a bride held her wedding on the Witherell’s grounds so her 99-year old grandmother could be part of this day. The article described how the staff went above and beyond to help the bride and her grandmother arrange and enjoy this special day.

**Therapeutic Recreation – presented by Carissa Ronish**

Ms. Ronish reported the following regarding Resident Life activity:
We continue to slowly & safely re-introduce pre-COVID activities in a larger group setting. Activities that have resumed in the Auditorium include: Concerts, crafts (most recently tie dyeing and jewelry making), ice cream socials—the ice cream truck was here last Wednesday and was a big hit with residents and staff. Thank you to the Brennan family for that event. We have also resumed our weekly bingo games and monthly birthday parties. Sporting events are shown on the big screen TV including baseball, tennis and the Olympic Games.

Future considerations include planning community outings, our “pooches on parade” event made possible by volunteers, and the return of the Bob Button Orchestra on Saturdays. We will also reconnect with schools in the community for intergenerational programs such as a Halloween parade, holiday concerts and story-telling.

Most recently we have had community involvement from Greenwich Junior United Way providing a car parade on the property, hand-made cards delivered by Cos Cob library, and a puzzle donation from the Boys & Girls Club.

Volunteers are back assisting with transport to and from activities, bringing residents outdoors for fresh air and providing 1:1 help for those who need support in programs such as bingo, art, and card games. We have had several volunteers return and new volunteers from local high schools.

We are planning to hold 2 outdoor BBQs in September as a farewell to summer event. These have been missed by all and will be a nice way to close out the summer months.

Our activity schedule along with the monthly newsletter can be found on the Nathaniel Witherell website under the tab “Events & Newsletters.”

The guidance is for residents who are not vaccinated to continue to wear masks, which is universal in the building, and to maintain distancing, which we also do in general. We also try to be as discreet as possible to not impinge on anyone’s right to privacy regarding vaccination status.

To Ms. Gibbons question regarding communal dining, Ms. Benson stated that we have been having communal dining on the floors for months now while adhering to social distancing protocols.

**Friends of Nathaniel Witherell (FNW) – presented by Scott Neff**

Mr. Neff reported the FNW Community Appeal concluded along with the Friends fiscal year on June 30, 2021. The Community Appeal received donations from 447 donors and exceeded last years’ contributions by 20%.

Mr. Neff extended his thanks to the Brennan Family who funded this year’s ice cream social with a donation through the FNW which they have been doing for several years.
FBN continues to help with support of resident related activities, whether it is for special concerts or other programs related to support of the volunteer services.

**Chairman’s Discussion – presented by Laurence Simon**

Mr. Simon stated that census is increasing, admissions are increasing, more and more recreational activities are back and continue to be added. Slowly but surely, we are returning to some degree of normalcy, although we are still faced with many challenges. We need to continue to improve our level of care to our residents.

Mr. Simon reported that he has engaged Joanne Kotulski, Interim Administrator at the Witherell before Mr. Mastronardi, for two weeks in August to evaluate and train the nursing staff. We look to find ways to continue to upgrade and improve our medical care so that, as we take more complex patients, we are able to take care of them and have the right medical specialists available to give us the support we need.

Mr. Simon stated that he is very encouraged that we continue to look at ways in which we may refine the quality of our operations and find ways to be more cost effective.

Mr. Andy Duus, BET Liaison to The Nathaniel Witherell, stated that these were very nice numbers to finish the fiscal year on. He was pleased to see the improvement in performance, and he thanked everyone for putting in the hard work this past year. He expressed that he was very pleased that even with the challenges we faced from COVID, that we have come so close to budget. He stated that they were all very appreciative of the hard work and results.

Mr. Simon spoke regarding the RFP:
- The RFP process is still ongoing, and no selection has been made yet as to what might be the best candidate.
- Mr. Simon is still waiting on a legal opinion from the Town Attorney on the Board of Director’s role in the decision-making process. Mr. Simon believes the Board has the full legal authority to make all decisions for Witherell.

**Mandatory staff vaccination** – Mr. Simon would like to propose to set September 30, 2021 as a deadline for all staff to be vaccinated (unless they have a medical condition or religious exemption or have previously had COVID). If a staff member refuses to be vaccinated their employment will be terminated.

Ms. Benson asked if weekly testing of unvaccinated staff could be an option. If we terminate staff who refuse to be vaccinated, our staffing will be strongly impacted, and we are already dealing with a staffing crisis. What interventions can we put in place to make sure we can replace staff that refuse the vaccine?

Mr. Kaplan suggested some staff may not working currently because they do not want to be around unvaccinated staff. If we mandate the staff to be vaccinated, perhaps these staff would come/return to the Witherell.
Ms. Gibbons questioned whether we should wait until we the vaccine has full FDA approval to implement the mandate. She noted that vaccinated people are also contracting the delta variant of the virus; vaccination does not keep anyone entirely safe. What will the protocols be in terms of testing with the delta variant? Ms. Benson explained there will be the same protocol in place that we have right now. There is nothing to suggest that it should be anything different than the current CDC and DPH guidance.

Mr. Kaplan stated that it could be another 6 months before the FDA gives full approval of the vaccine.

If we issue a vaccine mandate, Ms. Benson believes we could lose 25% (4-5 full time staff members) of the staff that are currently unvaccinated.

Mr. Vanterpool expressed his concern about this mandate with relation to our support services. Dietary, Housekeeping and Maintenance have been experiencing hardship in hiring. If we consider this mandate, it will put an extra burden on those departments that have high numbers of unvaccinated staff. The hiring difficulties we are already experiencing are starting to have an impact on how we deliver support services for the nursing department.

Mr. Mastronardi stated that if we are going to commit to a mandate, we need a contingency plan as a fallback for staffing.

Ms. Hurst asked if our administration would support a vaccine mandate: Mr. Mastronardi said yes, he would support the mandate with a proper contingency plan in place; Ms. Benson said no, not without knowing how it would affect staffing; she may reconsider with the proper staffing contingency plan in place.

Ms. Gibbons suggested instituting the policy once the vaccine was fully approved. Ms. Benson believes that would increase the number of staff willing to be vaccinated.

A motion to mandate the COVID vaccine for staff, working along with Administration, NW Board and the Town to develop a policy with appropriate exemptions, was made by Mr. Simon, and seconded by Mr. Kaplan. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-1 (Ms. Hurst abstained).

**New Business - none**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 PM was made by Mr. Simon, seconded by Mr. Carter and approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday, September 13, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Marini
August 2, 2021