1. NW Board Of Directors Meeting Agenda Sept. 13, 2021

   Documents:
   
   TNW BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA 2021_09_13.PDF

1.I. NW Board Of Directors Meeting Draft Minutes Of July 26, 2021

   Documents:
   
   TNW BOARD MINUTES 2021_07_26 VERSION 2.PDF

1.I.i. NW Board Of Directors Meeting Approved Minutes Of July 26, 2021

   Documents:
   
   TNW BOARD MINUTES 2021_07_26 APPROVED.PDF

1.I.i.1. NW Board Of Directors Meeting Draft Minutes Of Sept. 13, 2021

   Documents:
   
   TNW BOARD MINUTES 2021_09_13 V3.PDF
Board Meeting  
Monday, September 13, 2021  

Time: 5:00 PM  
Virtual Meeting via ZOOM Webinar  

Webinar Link:  
https://greenwichct.zoom.us/j/85038000405?pwd=eTFvOGJtRTJIRnZZNkFIdUZ4amhaZz09  
To join by phone dial: 1 646 518 9805; Webinar ID: 850 3800 0405; Password: 2225159  

AGENDA  

1. Medical Director’s Report – Frank Walsh, MD  
2. Review/Approval - Minutes July 26, 2021 – Chairman  
3. Reports  
   a. Executive Director-John Mastronardi  
   b. Nursing-Nadia Benson  
   c. COVID-19 and Vaccination Status Report-Chris Ann Bennett  
   d. Therapeutic Recreation-Carissa Ronish  
   e. Building Committee – Paul Hopper and Larry Vanterpool  
   f. Finance Committee-Nisha Hurst and Nunzio Raimo  
   g. Marketing-Chris Carter  
   h. Friends of Nathaniel Witherell – Scott Neff  
4. Chairman’s Discussion – Laurence Simon  
   a. Draft of Calendar for CY 2022 meetings. Final vote on October 18, 2021  
   b. In person versus Zoom meetings  

5. New Business  
6. Adjournment  

2021 Calendar of Board Meetings  
October 18, 2021 November 15, 2021  

cc: Town Clerk
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.

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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.

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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.

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**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.

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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 ($666,368), resulting in a variance 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.
FNW 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 the 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 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
Board of Directors Zoom Board Meeting
Minutes
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Present: Laurence B. Simon, Chairman; Melissa Gibbons, Secretary; Suzanne Brown; Christopher Carter; Nisha Hurst; Richard Kaplan; Joan Merrill

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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

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● 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 ($666,368), resulting in a variance 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 Witherrill’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.
FNW 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 the 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
Mr. Simon opened the meeting at 5:00 PM via Zoom Webinar.

**Medical Director's Report – presented by Dr. Frank Walsh**

Dr. Walsh reported that the current census is 174, which is down slightly but not unexpected due to the holiday weekend (Labor Day) when a lot of discharges happen prior to the long weekend. Admissions have begun to increase over the last couple days.

All staff are required to submit an attestation form to the CT Department of Health verifying the validity of their COVID vaccination card. COVID-19 vaccination is now a requirement of anyone working in a nursing home. Anyone with an approved medical or religious exemption must be tested weekly. Vaccinations are becoming mandatory across the country and Connecticut has been one of the forerunners. Our Infection Preventionist has been assisting employees in many ways to make the it easier for them to receive their vaccines.
Dr. Walsh stated that we will be administering the flu vaccine to all residents and staff beginning late October/early November. The flu vaccine can protect an individual for up to 6 months. Based on previous years, flu strains are coming later in the winter and into the spring. If we administer the vaccine too early, Dr. Walsh noted, residents/staff will not be protected long enough and may require a second vaccine at a later time. Dr. Walsh commented that we saw very few flu cases last year which could be attributed to quarantining and masking.

**Review/Approval of Minutes of July 26, 2021**

A motion to approve the minutes of July 26, 2021 was made by Mr. Carter, seconded by Ms. Hurst. A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 6-0-0. Ms. Brown and Mr. Kaplan had not yet arrived at the time of this vote.

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

**COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate** - Mr. Mastronardi reported that on August 13th NW management issued a mandatory vaccination notice to all staff. At that time 81% of staff were vaccinated; today, 95% of overall staff have been vaccinated.
- 249 of 262 total employees, or 95%, have been vaccinated
- 135 of 139 full time employees, or 97%, have been vaccinated; of the 4 not vaccinated, 3 have approved exemptions and 1 is on FMLA
- 114 of 123 part time employees, or 93%, have been vaccinated; 9 employees are not eligible to report to work.
- Overall, 14 staff members, or 5%, remain unvaccinated at this time: 4, or 1.5% (3 full time & 1 part time) have received approved exemptions through the Town Human Resource and Legal Departments.
- All employees must complete and sign an attestation as to the validity of their COVID vaccine cards. These must be uploaded to the CT Department of Health (DPH) by Sept. 28, 2021, or the facility could face a monetary penalty of $20K per day for non-compliance.
- The DPH is closely following potential updates on recommendations for COVID-19 booster doses. No official FDA or Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) decision or recommendation has been made to administer the booster doses to any population, though we acknowledge this is likely and may happen soon. If and when a recommendation from the FDA or ACIP is issued, DPH will follow up with additional guidance and information on long term care facilities and getting those eligible the third booster shot.

**Census/Medicaid** – For August 2021, the average daily census was just over 180, compared to 178 in July 2021. The new Medicaid rate that was approved, effective July 21st through March 31st of 2022, was $335.65, an increase of $43 per day.

**IT Support Position** – We are in the final stages of selecting an appropriate candidate to fill this role. This individual will help us with our onsite technology needs and will also act as a liaison between NW and the TOG IT Department.
RFPs – Mr. Mastronardi reported that as a strategic part of our fiscal responsibility plan, our leadership team has been reviewing, revising, and submitting RFP’s with a particular emphasis on our most costly vendors:

- **Food & Nutritional Services** – With a response deadline of September 21st, the pre-bidding meeting was held today; we had seven companies participate and tour the kitchen the CAFÉ.
- **Rehab Services** – We have reviewed and revised the rehab contract and are in the final stages of submitting an RFP for those providers to bid on services.
- **Pharmacy** - Over the next two weeks we will be reviewing and revising our current pharmacy contract with a goal of awarding a contract at the start of the New Year.

Mr. Simon asked Mr. Mastronardi to comment on the new potential state mandate requiring facilities to have 1 full time Social Worker for every 60 beds. Mr. Mastronardi confirmed that under this mandate NW would need 4 full time Social Workers; we currently have 2 full time and 1 part time Social Worker. The State will be providing facilities with additional money to help pay for this mandate.

Mr. Simon stated that we have money from the state that we can use to incentivize or increase wages for staff. Mr. Mastronardi confirmed that we have approximately $542K that we should be spending on staff. Our leadership team has been working to formulate a plan as to how best to utilize those resources and how to allocate them.

Ms. Hurst asked Mr. Mastronardi to comment on the feeling/morale among employees, families, and staff in the facility since the August 13th vaccination mandate. Mr. Mastronardi believes the majority of staff are fine and have willingly received the vaccine for the safety of themselves, the residents and their families and peers. He believes the high percentage of staff that have received the vaccine speaks for itself. For the most part, staff are feeling “safer and sounder”. Mr. Carter congratulated Mr. Mastronardi and the staff for their work and amazing results. Mr. Mastronardi thanked everyone on the team for their efforts.

Mr. Simon asked how we communicate to families what our visitation status is. Mr. Mastronardi explained that it is updated on our website. Ms. Ronish has also been updating the email blast list so that an email could be sent out to communicate significant changes. Mr. Carter confirmed that the information is easy to find on the website, in the Family Section, located in the top right corner on the home page. Current visitation information and the most recent COVID-19 numbers are located here.

**Therapeutic Recreation – presented by Carissa Ronish**

Ms. Ronish stated that since her report in July the residents continue to attend a variety of Therapeutic Recreation activities.

The Recreation Department has conducted outdoor concerts in the courtyard, ice cream socials, and featured the summer’s sporting events, such as tennis and the Olympics, on the big screen TV. Residents continue to enjoy weekly exercise classes, Bingo and news programs.
Last week the residents viewed a patriotic slideshow in commemoration of September 11th.

In celebration of National Grandparents Day, residents received cards and puzzles and attended a music program honoring all of the NW grandparents and great-grandparents.

Darby Cartun, a local art historian, recently gave a lecture on Greenwich Art History and an in depth look of how the Bruce Museum came to be.

This month we have 2 outdoor BBQs and birthday celebrations planned for Wednesdays 9/15 and 9/22, at 12 noon in the Rose Garden. Mr. Simon encouraged Board members to attend one of these events; they are truly crowd favorites.

Fall events will include an Oktoberfest party, Halloween costume & pumpkin carving contests, autumn crafts, and our annual Veterans Day ceremony.

Ms. Ronish has also added an interactive art program based around Norman Rockwell that will be scheduled for October.

Ms. Ronish noted that we have not faced any transport challenges and volunteers continue to assist.

Ms. Ronish knows that families are beginning to think about what the holidays will look like this year. Although still a bit too early to tell, over the past several months Therapeutic Recreation has created meaningful holiday events, no matter what the circumstances. The same will hold true for this holiday season. There will be more to come on the holiday party and other events at a later time.

The monthly calendar of events, along with the monthly newsletter, continue to be posted on our website.

Ms. Amy Badini stated that Family Council’s main concern is engaging the residents, mind and body. She stated that in the past there were morning and afternoon activities. She asked what specific measures are being done to expand the current offerings? She suggested reaching out to local yoga studios for volunteers. She was aware that Ms. Mary Tate had put an ad for volunteers in at the Senior Center; but she suggested other alternatives where volunteers could be found, i.e. Next Door Greenwich, FaceBook groups.

Ms. Ronish reminded all that while in Outbreak Testing activities are brought back on unit. Weekend programs on TV are available on the units and any staff member can assist residents with that. We do currently have exercise programs 3 times per week in the morning (mornings work better with our population). She thanked Ms. Badini for the yoga suggestion and noted that it would perhaps be revisited.
**Nursing Report - presented by Nadia Benson**

Ms. Benson thanked the staff and Ms. Chris Ann Bennett, Infection Preventionist, for the tremendous job they did on the push to get employees vaccinated. Ms. Bennett has offered transportation to vaccination locations and has offered her support and encouragement to those with fears and hesitation about the vaccine. This has greatly contributed to the 95% staff vaccination rate we have attained to date. There are still a few unvaccinated staff who we are trying to encourage to either get the vaccine or to let us know what their intentions are so that we may staff accordingly.

Ms. Joanne Kotulski will be here beginning tomorrow to train and evaluate the nursing staff on the units.

**Vaccination Report – presented by Chris Ann Bennett**

Ms. Bennett reported that to date:
- 95% of the staff have had at least one dose of the vaccine
- 88% of the staff are fully vaccinated; 97% of full-time staff are vaccinated

Ms. Bennett is monitoring to make sure staff members receive their second shot. Although the 2nd dose has a schedule of 21 to 28 days from the first dose, there has been no strict guidance that it must be on the 21st or 28th day. Ms. Bennett is working with a couple of individuals who are not, or close to not, being compliant with getting that 2nd dose.

In the last DPH meeting attended by Ms. Bennett, it was discussed that the boosters are coming, but they do not know what the plan is yet or how it will be implemented. Since it is not possible for us to send our residents out of the facility to receive their boosters, Ms. Bennett believes there will be a clinic offered here onsite.

Ms. Sheilah Smith commented that family members have been on the floors helping out and she believes it is clear that the staff cuts are significant and there are not enough staff available. Ms. Smith questioned what is being done, and when will this situation change so that there is adequate staffing?

Ms. Benson responded that what Ms. Smith is seeing on the units does not correlate with the staff cuts she referenced. The cuts involved 3 PCC’s and 4 CNA’s (one of which was brought back). Ms. Benson stated that what is being seen on the floors, primarily among the CNA’s, is the result of call outs, FMLAs, PLOAs, vacations, etc. Ms. Benson believes we will see improvement in this situation toward the end of the year.

Mr. Mastronardi commented that saying the staff cuts were “deep” is simply not true. With 196 nursing staff, the elimination of 3 CNA positions does not symbolize deep cuts. All facilities are experiencing this situation post pandemic, this is not exclusive to NW; some CNA’s and LPN’s are actually reconsidering their occupations. Mr.
Mastronardi noted that our staffing is actually much better than other facilities. We are doing the best we can with what we have and the challenges we face.

Mr. Simon noted that we have money to put toward salary incentives for staff. We need to use this money to increase wages or incentives so that the CNA's/Nurses want to work with us and consequently have better attendance records. This has become a very changing, competitive environment. Fortunately, the State is giving us $540K that must be spent by the end of the year on staff wage increases; this will be a great help.

Building Committee Report - presented by Larry Vanterpool

Mr. Vanterpool announced that this is National Housekeeping Week and we are planning several activities next week to honor these very committed individuals. He encouraged everyone as you walk through the facility and encounter a Housekeeping staff member, to please thank them for their service and for the job they do. Mr. Vanterpool commented that this department is, by far, one of the best groups of people he has every worked with; during the pandemic he received zero pushback from them about coming to work, which is a great reflection on their strong work ethic.

The Pavilion External Renovations – Mr. Hopper reported that this project is now nearly complete. A final walk-through/punch list will take place at the end of this week. The completion of this project was extended slightly due to all the rain we have experienced, and also to include the necessary repairs/updates to the fire escape. Mr. Hopper noted that the deadline wasn’t as important as the quality of the work and the end result of the complete project.

Tower Electrical Panel upgrade – Mr. Vanterpool reported that all of the parts have been ordered and the electrical contractor should receive them within the next couple of weeks. We have a lot of work to do internally in terms of how we are going to manage and coordinate the necessary shut downs to facilitate the upgrade. We will also need to make our second attempt at receiving approval from DPH. Mr. Vanterpool does not anticipate any pushback and will expect approval by late October or early November. Mr. Vanterpool also stated that because we utilized only approximately 55% of the original budget, the building committee is considering advancing the progress of the second upgrade of the localized panels in the patient care areas. We have engaged another engineer to develop those plans, and those plans should be finalized this week and an RFB will be developed. Hopefully, the numbers will not exceed the remainder of those available funds.

American Rescue Plan (ARP) – Mr. Vanterpool stated that the Town is in the very early stages with their involvement in the American Rescue Plan (ARP). The Town has received approximately $31M in conjunction with this plan, and there will be preliminary meetings held with the Town Administrator and other Town Departments to determine the best use of these funds. We hope it will allow NW to advance some of our physical needs/improvements. Mr. Simon suggested addressing 3 areas: 1.) the accumulation of water in the water pit from Parsonage Road; 2.) the rooftop units that will need replacing; and 3.) improving the filtration system and the overall air quality and flow throughout NW.
Interior Maintenance Plan – We have engaged companies with current Town contracts and solicited quotes for frequencies and painting of different areas. Mr. Vanterpool has also engaged Red Thread, a Town vendor, to gauge and divide the costs of carpet replacement and the vinyl flooring throughout the facility. Once we have these numbers, we may move into the second phase of this interior plan, which could include upgrading resident televisions to larger sizes. Mr. Vanterpool noted that we need to do the best we can to utilize the limited funds available.

Ms. Gibbons asked if we have a sustainability plan in place. Mr. Vanterpool responded that every time we can engage into more sustainable solutions we will certainly evaluate them. Although, he did note that in his experience, those solutions often come at double the cost of a more standard project solution.

Mr. Simon noted that at the October Board meeting he would like to discuss how the Board visualizes the single and double rooms to look, for interior design. In October/November the Board will need to vote on a capital budget and we will need to know whether we need more money for interior/exterior improvements. It would also be helpful to know the amount of ARP funds we will have come our way.

Mr. Simon reported that EBI Consulting performed a comprehensive survey of our building to determine its’ physical needs and capital assessment. Mr. Simon will distribute this report to the Board. He noted that our main budget item for next year is repairing/replacing the elevators which was not a major focus of this report.

Finance Report – presented by Nunzio Raimo

Mr. Raimo reviewed the Financial Statement and Operating Results for the period ending August 31, 2021 (first 2 months of FY 2022):

- NW Census by payer class for August 2021: total days billed were 5,595.
- Occupancy Percentage for August 2021 was 89%, off budget by only 4%; average beds per day for August 2021 was 180.5. Our occupancy percentages are good for Private Pay and also Medicare A, and are exceeding or somewhere near budget for the numbers that provide us with the highest reimbursement.
- Revenue by Payer Class: August revenue from operations was $2,731,569. Private pay was budgeted at 26% but was actually 27% of revenue for August 2021.
- In both July and August, for the first time in a very long time, we have actually beat our budgeted targeted revenue. The budgeted monthly targeted revenue for fiscal year 2022 is $2.43 million. Income from operations for July and August was $2.56M and $2,731M respectively, and is census driven.
- We saw better revenue for the months of July and August also due to an increase in the Medicaid rate. The rate increased by $42.98 from $292.66 to $335.64 starting on July 1st through March 31, 2022.
- Two efficiency metrics were highlighted: 1.) Monthly revenue per FTE (which is an indicator of staffing efficiency) for August 2021 was $12,072; 2.) Revenue per billable patient day (which shows the efficiency of our revenue stream from operations) for August 2021 was $488.00.
● Revenue August YTD Actual was $5,291,110, compared to budget of $4,861,040, resulting in a positive variance of $430,071.
● Expenses from Operations for August 2021 YTD Actual were $2,795,630 compared to budget of $3,444,618, resulting in a negative variance of $648,988.
● For August YTD 2021 Salaries & Wages were under budget by $271K.
● For August YTD 2021 OTPS were $58K under budget.
● For August YTD 2021 Supplies & Materials were below budget by $311K.
● For August YTD 2021 Maintenance expenditures were under budget by $7,400.
● For August YTD 2021 Benefits were under budget by $135K.
● August 2021 YTD Margin Before Debt & Allocation of $2,495,480, $1M over Budget.
● August 2021 YTD Margin Before Debt & Capital was $1,680,782 compared to our budget of $461,534 resulting in a variance of $1,219,248. Actual Capital Expenditures were $297,683. Operating Profit before Debt Service was $1,383,099 with a positive variance of $1,219,248.
● Overall Gain/(Loss) Fiscal Year to date at $238,653.

Mr. Raimo noted that with the additional $542,000 that we have to allocate to payroll right now, the indication is, we can only spend that on payroll. It will not cover any benefits, payroll taxes, or anything beyond that. Any allocation that we make for staff in order to try to attract new staff and reward current staff members, it has to be non-pensionable/non-benefit salary.

Marketing – presented by Christopher Carter

Mr. Carter reported the following:

The two-month geofencing ad campaign with Today Media ended in August. The campaign garnered over 208,000 impressions and over 600 visits to the website. The greatest engagement with our ads were with prospects at the Montefiore area, St. Joseph’s Medical Center, Burke Rehab and St. John’s Riverside.

In August the Witherell concentrated all of its’ advertising dollars on Google pay per click ads; no Facebook ads or Google ads. We had over 45,000 impressions and 2,000 visits to the site.

Mr. Carter reported that we just started our print ads this September and will feature skilled nursing in both Greenwich and Stanford Magazines, the Greenwich Time the Stanford Advocate and the Greenwich Symphony program.

In an effort to get a better understanding of our advertising effectiveness, Harrison Edwards will be developing a questionnaire for the Admissions Director, so he can ask prospects where and how they may have heard about NW.

There were 26 Facebook posts since the last Board meeting, including Simple Ways Caregivers Can Stay Active. They also included the return of the outdoor barbecues in September during resident lunchtime.
Mr. Carter stated that the website is continually updated to reflect the latest COVID information and visitation guidance. The new website is moving forward and doing well with its main goal of attracting new residents.

Two new blogs were posted: 1.) The Challenges of Aging - What Caregivers Should Know; and 2.) Making our House a Home, the Witherell Facilities Team, featuring Larry Vanterpool and Michel Baptist.

There was an article in the Greenwich Time that spotlighted World War II veteran and NW resident Mr. George Tai who received the Congressional Gold Medal for his service.

Mr. Carter noted that that there was some unspent marketing money at year end. They will make sure that Harrison Edwards is using all the available money this Fiscal Year and exploring other ways that we can grow our business.

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

Mr. Neff reported that the Friends of Nathaniel Witherell Annual Meeting will be held via phone conference on Wednesday, Sept. 22, 2021 at 9:00 AM.

The fall Community Appeal direct mailer is currently being developed and will be mailed to approximately 15,000 Greenwich households during the first week of October.

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

Mr. Simon distributed a draft calendar of Board Meetings for 2022. A vote will be taken at the October Board meeting. If Board members have any comments or major conflicts, Mr. Simon asks that they notify him in advance of the October meeting.

Ms. Merrill is absent this evening as she has experienced a great deal of personal property loss and damage due to Hurricane Ida. Mr. Simon shared that our thoughts are with her.

**Hurricane Ida and Regal Care** – Mr. Mastronardi explained that our Mutual Aid Plan was enacted when Regal Care on King Street needed to evacuate. The Mutual Aid provides a venue/agency for us to coordinate emergency services, via website, email, and phone. It involves facilities calling each other for bed availability, vehicle availability, and help by the GPD, EMS and GFD as well. Mr. Mastronardi and Ms. Benson remained in touch with these parties throughout the day/night. NW would have been able to provide 15 safe and appropriate beds for evacuated residents. However, Greenwich Woods, because of their extremely low census, was able to take all residents that were evacuated into a vacant wing of their facility; along with their staff, pharmacy, linens, supplies, etc. Regal Care does not know when/if they will be able to open again due to the damage they suffered. That combined with the fact that Greenwich Woods has filed plans to become an Assisted Living Facility, may provide the Witherell an opportunity to increase admissions. Mr. Simon stated that we did a very good job in our participation with the Mutual Aid network.
Virtual / In-person Board meetings – Mr. Simon asked if Board members wanted to return to in-person meetings or to some hybrid schedule of in-person and virtual meetings. Mr. Simon is in favor of beginning with the October meeting, meeting in-person in the Chapel, unless we have an outbreak or change in circumstance. He asked Board members to call or email him to discuss their preferences.

Mr. Simon stated that healthcare has turned out to be quite a dynamic environment over the last year and a half. The Federal and State Governments are dispersing money to nursing homes to ensure that the elderly are well cared for, and that people will want to come and work in these facilities. It is a challenge to keep track of the funds that are coming to NW, to spend them effectively, and continue to maintain and run the Witherell in a way that is in accordance with the town requirements and to make money.

The Teamsters represent all of the CNA’s, LPN’s, Food Service Workers and Housekeepers at NW. Their Contract will be submitted to the RTM in October for approval. The Teamsters have not seen a wage increase in over 2 years. Mr. Simon commented that when we offer a CNA a starting position at $18 per hour, they are not going to choose to work for us because everyone else is now going to be paying more than that. That is where the sign-on bonuses or the stipends are going to come to our advantage. Mr. Simon also said that we pay part-time, non-represented Dietary employees $13/hour. We need to find a way to pay them $17/$18/$19 per hour to work for us. We need to improve our competitiveness. The State continues to give nursing homes money and they want us to have staff to provide proper nursing care.

Mr. Simon stated that although there is money coming to nursing homes from Federal/State Governments, there are also many staffing challenges. We at NW need to find the correct way to navigate it all, in order to provide the right kind of nursing care and determine the best way to attract people to the Witherell so we may continue our current good performance.

**New Business - none**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 PM was made by Ms. Hurst, seconded by Mr. Carter and approved by a vote of 8-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Marini
Sept. 21, 2021