



The Nathaniel Witherell
TOWN OF GREENWICH
CONNECTICUT

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 22, 2017**

Present: Laurence Simon, Chairman; Karen Sadik-Khan, Vice Chairman; Louise Puschel, Secretary; Lloyd Bankson; Frank Ennis, MD; Suzanne Hogan; Nisha Hurst; Richard W. Kaplan

Absent: Elizabeth Siderides, MD

Staff: Christopher Alexander, Finance Director; Lynn Bausch, Deputy Director & Director of Nursing; Allen Brown, Executive Director; Jack Hornak, Facilities Director; Linda Marini, Admin. Asst.; Scott Neff, FNW Development Director; Jalpen Shah, Rehab Manager; Justine Vaccaro, Social Work Director; Dr. Frank Walsh, Medical Director

Also: Patricia Burns, Commission on Aging; Mary Anne Chiappetta, Family Council; Gloria Guise, Family Council; Art Norton, BET; Paul Scholtes, Family Council

Mr. Simon noted a quorum was present and opened the meeting at 5:34 PM in the TNW Board Room.

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

Dr. Walsh reported that the number of Admissions to short-term rehab continues to be high; he had 9 new admissions over the past 4 days alone. He hears that many patients express that TNW is their first choice for rehab when they're being discharged from Greenwich Hospital. He also noted, however, that the hospital utilization people are held by law to offer three choices to patients for rehab; if always offering those three choices in the same order they can become 'suspect' of perhaps trying to sway a patients' decision. Dr. Walsh will speak further to the utilization people and express our desire to take as many admissions as possible.

Dr. Walsh will reach out to Yale New Haven Hospital and reassure them that we are interested in receiving patients for admission to our short-term rehab. We have received several patients from there following cardiac surgery in the past; however, recently one of Dr. Walsh's patients was sent to Regal Care on discharge without him being consulted first.

Mr. Simon introduced Ms. Patricia Burns, Chairman, Commission on Aging. He also welcomed Art Norton, BET, to tonight's meeting.

Mr. Brown welcomed Nathaniel Witherell's new Rehab Manager, Mr. Jalpen (JP) Shah, an employee of Select Rehab, to our team.

Review/Approval of Minutes of April 24, 2017

A motion to approve the minutes of April 24, 2017 was made by Mr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Ms. Sadik-Khan. After Mr. Bankson noted a correction to the minutes, the corrected minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0-0.

Executive Director's Report - presented by Allen Brown

Mr. Brown once again introduced Mr. Jalpen (JP) Shah, PT, the newly appointed Rehab Manager, and employee of Select Rehab. Mr. Shah began here at Witherell 3 weeks ago; he comes to us from Bethel Nursing and Rehab Center, a 200 bed facility in Croton-on-Hudson, NY.

Mr. Brown reported that Ms. Sally Van Leeuwen, Volunteer Coordinator, has informed him of her intention to retire this summer. Ms. Van Leeuwen was a volunteer at the Witherell before becoming the Volunteer Coordinator, a position she has held for the past 10 years.

Ms. Laura Mogil, Nathaniel Witherell's account representative with Harrison Edwards, has also announced her retirement effective May 26, 2017.

Media Coverage — On May 13th the Greenwich Time ran an article reporting that a law suit has been filed on behalf of the family of Mary Ann Bria. In 2015 Mrs. Bria, a 90 year old TNW resident, fell in her room and sustained a hip fracture. She had surgery to repair the hip fracture but subsequently died at Greenwich Hospital approximately 2 weeks later. The suit alleges negligence on the part of Nathaniel Witherell. When the Department of Health investigated this complaint they found no deficiencies on the part of Nathaniel Witherell. Also on May 13th, an unfavorable review of Witherell was posted on YELP by a dissatisfied family member. At this time, we are still researching to which patient the review may pertain and how we will respond to this review.

Fire Alarm – On May 5, 2017 at 5:15 AM, a short circuit of the HVAC unit in a patient room caused a smoke event on the 3rd floor. On-duty staff executed R.A.C.E. fire procedures as per their training, immediately removing both residents from the room, pulling the fire

alarm/calling 911 and closing all doors. Mr. Hornak said the night shift staff reacted extremely well and properly followed procedure and fire safety protocol. The building was returned to normal function by the fire department in less than an hour. There were no injuries and no damage to the area. We have now included Fire Response Plan Instructions in the Resident Guide in the short-term rehab rooms.

'Nathaniel at Home' – proposals were submitted by Constellation Private Duty, Daniel Care, Premier Home Health Care Services and Sterling Care in response to Witherell's RFP. The review committee will interview the the final candidates and anticipates selecting the winning proposal within the next two weeks. A start date for Nathaniel at Home services is anticipated in the fall.

Building Committee Report – presented by Louise Puschel

The TNW Building Committee met prior to today's Board meeting at 3:30 PM. Discussion included the following:

- No qualifying bids were received in response to the 2nd RFB for the Tower renovations. A third RFP has been reissued and bids are due Friday May 26th. With a start date projected for July 1, this project should take approximately 6-8 months to complete.
- Well Built, the company that completed the 5 room rehabilitation room project on the Garden Level, was awarded the Auditorium project bid. The Auditorium renovations should take about a month to complete.
- Greenhouse – the proposal from the first greenhouse company that the Committee researched was prohibitively high. The Building Committee is researching alternate cost and design options with another company in Pennsylvania.
- Pavilion - the basement cleanup is complete and storage areas for tenants and other storage will be striped and numbered shortly; new carpeting for the common areas on the first and second floors will be selected; the painting of the building's common spaces is finished; four apartments will be receiving new stoves. The committee is working on a long-range plan to keep the Pavilion in good physical condition. Mr. Simon commented that the increase in rent of about \$6K annually is being reinvested back into the building for upkeep and improvements.
- Mr. Simon noted that the Building Committee will develop a schedule of projects to be completed in FY2018. These projects will begin on July 1, 2017. The schedule will be presented at the June meeting.

Finance Committee Report - presented by Lloyd Bankson and Christopher Alexander

Mr. Bankson stated that we did well at the May 8th RTM Budget meeting. The Budget Overview Committee attempted to make a \$214,000 reduction to our budget, but following brief comments to the RTM by Mr. Simon, the motion to reduce Witherell's budget was defeated by a vote of 69 for the cuts and 113 opposed to the cuts.

Mr. Bankson reported the following:

YTD April 2017 Total Occupancy was 57,854 days (94.2%), compared to a Budget of 56,642 days (92.2%) resulting in a positive variance of 1,212 days.

We are very much in control on the Expense side.

YTD April 2017 Net Facility Operating Results were \$4,453,610 compared to a Budget of \$4,281,448 resulting in a favorable variance of \$172,162.

For the month of April 2017, Total Occupancy was 5,652 days (93.3%), compared to 5,740 days (94.7%) resulting in a negative variance of 88 days. Medicare Census at 847 days (15%) came in under the Budget amount of 1,192 days (20.8%), the only negative variance concerning occupancy. Mr. Bankson noted that Medicare continues to be a challenge.

Mr. Bankson happily noted that April 2017 Personal Services of \$1,429,407, came in under the Budget amount of \$1,445,828, resulting in a positive variance of \$16,421.

Mr. Alexander commented that they are currently running analysis on Personal Services, relating to internal and out-sourced labor, specifically part time hours and over-time hours, and where we stand with 2 months remaining in the fiscal year, and moving forward into next year.

Ms. Hurst questioned the BOC's contention that "Witherell's overtime budget was excessive, that unionized staff is overpaid and underproductive (Teamsters were singled out specifically)". Mr. Brown explained that this comment was made by the Chairman of the BOC at the Health and Human Services Committee and that he had explained that her information was incorrect. He explained that the majority of our Teamsters are made up of CNA's, housekeepers and food service workers, who are probably some of the lowest paid employees in the Town, some of whom earn only \$11/\$12 per hour. She repeated her inaccurate information at the May 8th RTM meeting as well.

Mr. Simon reported that we currently have 25 part-time employees averaging over 30 hours per week for the period from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017. As a consequence, they must be given the option to elect healthcare benefits, per the Affordable Care Act. This election is only good for one year, and then they have to requalify by working on average more than 30 hours per week. TNW will know how many employees elected insurance coverage after the Open Enrollment period ends on Friday May 26. The net cost of this health insurance will be added to TNW's cost budget.

Friends of Nathaniel Witherell (FNW) - presented by Karen Sadik-Khan

The official opening of the Friendship Garden on May 20th from 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm was quite a success. The Garden's creation was first initiated in 2006 by former TNW Board Member Chris Thurlow, and has been generously funded by a number of town organizations, including Hortulus, The Women's Club of Greenwich, Summer Rain, the Town of Greenwich and the Tree Conservancy. Grants such as the STEAP Grant and the Community Block Grant also helped to fund this wonderful garden space. The Friends also acknowledged Mr. Peter

Cummin, a renowned landscape architect and principal of Cummin Associates, Stonington, CT. He contributed the Garden design, oversaw the selection of plants, and personally placed 300-400 plants in the Garden himself.

The Friends' spring luncheon, with guest speaker Jane Bryant Quinn, Emmy-award winning commentator on personal finance, will be held at the Greenwich Country Club on Wednesday, May 24th at 12 noon. All guests will receive one of Ms. Bryant Quinn's books and she will also make herself available for book signing.

Clinical/Staffing Updates - Ms. Bausch reported that we have had a change in our Respiratory Therapist provided by O₂Safe. Our part-time psychologist, Dr. Sachler, who left in May, has been replaced and there was no gap in services. Dr. Kerner, ENT, who joined us as a consulting physician, is also working out well.

Resident Life Committee – presented by Lynn Bausch

The Spring Tea was held from 2–4 pm on May 13th. We received several complimentary letters regarding the event from family members. Those notes were included with your Board packet materials. Ms. Bausch pointed out that the Holiday Party in December and the Spring Tea are very special events that spread a lot of good will and bring a great deal of joy to our residents.

The Volunteer Luncheon is being held tomorrow, Tuesday, May 23rd, at 12 noon in the Auditorium, Board members are encouraged to attend.

The theme of this year's National Nursing Home Week, beginning May 14th was "Carnival". There were a lot of theme-related musical events and activities.

Our Summer Barbeques will begin on June 7th. They will be held every Wednesday at noon throughout the summer in the Rose Garden. Again, Board members are encouraged to attend.

Marketing and Website Development – presented by Suzanne Hogan

Ms. Hogan reported that May has been a heavy media month driven by the Friends luncheon featuring Jane Bryant Quinn.

In the May edition of the Greenwich Magazine there was a feature article on TNW resident Nola Larkin and her role in Hollywood's Golden Age. In the same edition, Witherell also had a full-page facility ad along with a half-page ad publicizing the Friends' Luncheon on May 24th.

There were many Facebook posts, including the Friends' Luncheon, Opening of the Friendship Garden, Volunteer Week/Luncheon, Ground-breaking of the Wellness Garden, and more. Ms. Hogan pointed out that our Facebook fans have increased 23% in the past 12

months; “Likes” have increased 18%; email addresses are up almost 600%. We do need to address how we will handle any negative reviews on social media.

Ms. Hogan comments that planning for 2018 will begin once there’s a replacement for Laura Mogil (Harrison Edwards). We should be considering an image survey among users and non-users to form a baseline of measurement.

Chairman’s Report – presented by Laurence Simon

Mr. Simon commented that we are making great progress all around, in the physical plant, in marketing, and in the closing of the fiscal year financially.

We have successfully worked through issues encountered with the RTM and the BET for our Budget for next year. Some planning will continue through the month of June.

Most importantly we need to continue to focus on and protect our 5 Star rating. Improvements in the physical plant, marketing, and working to continue high occupancy levels, will allow us to remain the best in Greenwich, or even lower Fairfield County.

New Business - none

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Louise Puschel, Board Secretary
May 24, 2017