

Gracedale Advisory Board
January 14, 2016, 4:30pm, Tower 1 Conference Room
Minutes

Members Present: Deborah Jean DeNardo, J.D.; Reverend David H. DeRemer; Rosemarie Fehr; James Irwin; MaryAnn McEvoy; Maryann Schmoyer; Kenneth Sun, MD; Ann Terres; Honorable Robert Werner

Members Absent: Susan L. Lawrence

County Council Member: Honorable Hayden Phillips

Public Present: Jack D'Allessandro, Judy Ryan

Staff Present: Catherine Allen; Susan Edwards; David Holland, Ph.D., RN; Craig Gardner; Wendy Haggerty; Hector Rivera; Jennie Repsher

Call to Order/Welcome:

The meeting was called to order by A. Terres, former Chair. She extended a welcome to the visitors.

Approval of November's Minutes:

A motion was made by M. McEvoy and seconded by M. Schmoyer to accept the minutes from the November meeting. Motion carried.

Courtesy of the Floor:

By Guests:

It was asked if R. Werner knew how many veterans the Slate Belt and Bangor area services. R. Werner stated that he does not cover that area. It was stated that roughly 1,400 veterans from both Pennsylvania and New Jersey are serviced by the Slate Belt Veterans Association. A nursing home for veterans would be a good idea for this area.

It was also recommended that Gracedale consider advertising on placemats at both the Nazareth Diner and the Palace Restaurant.

By Committee Members:

None

Chair Report:

Nomination Committee:

D. DeNardo stated that the Gracedale Advisory Board bylaws call for us to elect officers at the September meeting. We are considering appointing officers for the next few months, and then holding officer appointments in September. We would also need someone to chair the advisory board since Paul Brunswick resigned.

A. Terres moved to keep the current officers in place until the August meeting. M. Schmoyer stated that J. Irwin would make a good chair. J. Irwin volunteered to chair the committee until August. D. DeNardo seconded the appointment. All members in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

Members were advised to think about serving on the Nominating Committee, which will be needed in July.

Reappointment of Terms:

The following terms are set to expire on 3/15/2016: D. DeRemer, M. McEvoy, A. Terres, and R. Werner. All agreed to serve another term. A motion was made by D. DeNardo and seconded by M. Schmoyer to approve the nominations for an additional term. Motion carried.

Director of Human Services Report:

D. Holland gave the Director of Human Services Report. A. Frantz had another commitment and apologized for not being able to attend. She offered special thanks to the advisory board for its perseverance and to Paul Brunswick for his time and commitment as Chair and as a board member. It is greatly appreciated.

County Council resolved at the County Council meeting on January 7, 2016, for Premier to provide a no cost overview of how a skilled nursing facility operates under a 501(c)(3) organizational structure.

“Now, therefore, be it hereby resolved that the Northampton County Council requests that the Director of Human Services and Premier Healthcare Resources prepare and present an analysis of the prospect and procedures of transitioning the Gracedale Nursing Home to an Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The analysis and presentation should provide an understanding of the major challenges and benefits of such a decision if the Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) organization is an undertaking that warrants further County Council consideration. The cost of said report shall be included under the existing management contract between Premier Healthcare Resources and Northampton County.”

Premier will be providing this presentation to the Advisory Board as well. Dates are being finalized.

R. Werner stated that he is in agreement with having the analysis completed. Between the efficiencies put in place, the approval of House Bill 1062, and the IGT Program that was presented to County Council, we might not even have to discuss a 501(c)(3). C. Allen stated that separating Gracedale from the county would be extremely difficult.

It was noted that a union contract was just negotiated in which the sick leave policy was reexamined, resulting in only one call-off in the housekeeping department over the past two weeks. D. Holland stated that next month, the dashboard should show a drop in the amount of overtime. C. Allen stated that \$2.5 million was spent on call-offs, but only two weeks into the current year the number of call-offs has reduced by half.

An update on House Bill 1062 was requested. The House is just now starting to come out of budget meetings. The representatives were not going to discuss anything else until a budget was determined.

H. Phillips stated that he spoke with John Belko of Premier and A. Frantz regarding the 501(c)(3) budget, and the information can be presented to the Advisory Board during the February meeting. A lot of people do not understand what a 501(c)(3) is. Premier will discuss the pros and cons of a 501(c)(3) and will answer any questions the Advisory Board may have. It was asked when the 501(c)(3) overview would be presented to County Council. H. Phillips stated that Premier will try to present it to the Advisory Board on February 11th and then to County Council on February 18th.

It was noted that people are still working on creating a foundation for Gracedale.

Gracedale Administrator's Report:

The average daily census for 2015 was 664.9, the benchmark was 660. The year-to-date cost per resident was \$264.50 per day. We anticipate this number changing this year because of the contract changes regarding the sick leave policy. The hours per patient day were at 3.18 for December. We have had some staffing challenges around the holidays, but 3.18 is well above regulation. S. Edwards stated that we had one complaint visit in each of the past three months, all due to one disgruntled family member. All the complaints were found unsubstantiated.

An update regarding the bed sale was requested. C. Allen stated that they are working on the contracts. The company wanting to purchase the beds needs more than the 37 Gracedale is selling. Premier is working with the company to find the additional beds at other facilities. The selling price is around \$870,000 overall for the 37 beds; all of which will go directly to Gracedale.

S. Edwards noted that we did meet the Case Mix Index last quarter. AdvantageCare, our rehabilitation company, helped us reach that goal. This means we will be paid for performance, which will add roughly \$201,000 to our bottom line. It also looks like we will meet the Case Mix Index in February.

It was asked if County Council had a separate fund for Gracedale. R. Werner stated that there is.

Other Business:

D. Holland stated that we are now in our survey window for our annual Department of Health inspection, as well as Life Safety. Last year, the Department of Health came in on January 27th.

It was asked how many stars Gracedale currently has. D. Holland stated that we still have an overall rating of three stars, with four in regulatory compliance, three in staffing and one in quality measures. The quality measures include data that measures pressure ulcers, levels of pain, physical restraint use, falls, weight loss, etc. Most county homes experience a challenge with antipsychotic med use because of the population being admitted. County homes tend to

take more people with psych issues. There is no qualifying measure for taking residents with psych issues; county homes are compared to private homes equally.

It was mentioned that Gracedale is accepting more people with mental illness as opposed to average nursing home residents. Has Gracedale provided any additional training or treatments in dealing with these types of residents? D. Holland stated that Gracedale is meeting with the Lehigh Valley Physician Group Medical Director to discuss psych doctors and behavioral plans for staff education. There is also a meeting scheduled with representatives from Easton Hospital's geriatric psych unit. Our responsibility is accepting the residents and safely training staff.

It was asked if Administration was considering creating a psych unit in the future. D. Holland stated that right now, these types of residents are placed wherever there is a bed, but a specialty unit could eventually be considered.

D. Holland stated that we are in the process of interviewing for several key positions. We are filling two Social Service Coordinator positions, a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Nurse, and an RNAC. The new Human Resources Director, Amy Trapp, has been working with Gracedale Administration, Nursing Administration and our Human Resources team to help streamline our processes. We are looking forward to changes in the future to create a better service product for the employees.

It was asked if the star rating goes from 1 – 5; D. Holland stated yes. When the system was revamped everyone's ratings dropped. The fact that Gracedale's rating is back up to three stars overall is good. Other county nursing homes are having issues. It is difficult for them to get three stars. There are 23 county-owned nursing homes left in 19 counties. Gracedale is the second largest in the state. Fair Acres, in Delaware County, is the largest with 908 beds.

It was mentioned that the Advisory Board sent D. Freeman a certificate to recognize him for his service. A. Terres moved to send a letter to P. Brunswick, thanking him for his service. D. DeNardo seconded the motion. All approved, motion carried.

Next Meeting:

D. DeRemer moved to adjourn, R. Werner seconded the motion. All approved, motion carried.

J. Irwin reminded Advisory Board members that the next meeting will be held on February 11, 2016, at 4:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 5:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennie R. Repsher