

Gracedale Advisory Board  
January 12, 2017  
Minutes

Members Present: Rosemarie Fehr; James Irwin; Susan L. Lawrence; Maryann Schmoyer; Kenneth Sun, MD; Ann Terres; Honorable Robert Werner

Members Absent: Deborah Jean DeNardo, J.D.; MaryAnn McEvoy

Public Present: Jack D'Allessandro, Sally Ferraro, Judy Ryan

Staff Present: Susan Edwards, Jennie Repsher, Raymond Soto, Amy Trapp

**Call to Order/Welcome:**

The meeting was called to order by J. Irwin, Chair. He extended a welcome to the visitors.

**Approval of November's Minutes:**

A motion was made by A. Terres and seconded by Dr. Sun to accept the minutes from the November meeting. Motion carried.

**Courtesy of the Floor:**

By Guests:

J. Ryan asked where we are with getting an ATM in the facility; it was supposed to be installed by the end of November. The vending machines have credit card readers, but we do not have one in the cafeteria. We keep turning people away who want to pay with credit.

J. Ryan stated that Sodexo is interested in doing a food drive for the Nazareth Food Bank. Sodexo promotes all of their units to do things that stop hunger. Sodexo gets food points with different products they purchase, and currently they have a grand prize of a large color television that they could raffle off in conjunction with the food drive. Sodexo could also get other prizes, all with no cost to Gracedale. The goal is to get the community involved. You could either buy raffle tickets or bring in donated food to earn raffle tickets. All money and food would go to the Nazareth Food Bank. We need approval from Allison Frantz. S. Edwards suggested that J. Ryan email Cathy Allen to ask for permission. A. Terres asked if the Advisory Board could endorse it. A motion was made by A. Terres and seconded by M. Schmoyer to have Sodexo hold a food drive at Gracedale. Motion carried. J. Ryan stated that they would like to run it in April. J. Irwin stated that the AFSCME Union would be interested in helping.

By Committee Members:

R. Fehr stated that while working as a volunteer, she has come across a lot of residents at different functions without ID on. Volunteers are looking in the residents' clothing to figure out what unit to take them to. S. Edwards stated that sometimes residents take their IDs off, but if

they do, staff must make sure the bracelets go back on. We can also put the ID bracelets on their ankles.

B. Werner stated that as of today, the County sent in paperwork for the IGT money for 2017. We would be receiving between \$2.4 and \$2.6 million. It was asked what account the IGT funds will go in. B. Werner stated that it is first placed in the general fund, and will then be disbursed to Gracedale. The county contributes \$7 - \$10 million, which is invested with 16 other counties, and is then returned to the county with a dividend.

B. Werner stated that next week will be the final meeting to set up the Friends of Gracedale Foundation. It is a nine person board, a 501c3 that can accept money for Gracedale from large corporations, giving them tax incentives. The foundation's only purpose is taking the dollars and putting them in Gracedale programs. It will have no effect on unions or personnel. The meeting is Monday, the 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. J. Irwin asked if the members of that board will vote on where the money will go. B. Werner stated that the company may tell the board where the funds are needed, or the money could go in the general fund.

**Chair Report:**

J. Irwin stated that he is no longer the business agent that represents the Gracedale Business Local. Any conflict of interest that may have been perceived no longer exists.

The terms for the following members are set to expire: Deborah DeNardo (04/19/2017), Rosemarie Fehr (04/19/2017), James Irwin (03/15/2017), Sue Lawrence (04/19/2017), Maryann Schmoyer (04/19/2017), and Kenneth Sun (03/15/2017). A motion was made by A. Terres and seconded by B. Werner to approve the members for an additional term. Motion carried.

**Director of Human Services Report:**

A. Trapp stated that in 2016, the AFSCME Union reduced their number of sick occurrences by 50%. Because they met this goal, per the terms of their contract, their salary increase for 2017 is 1.5% instead of 1%. It was asked if we know the savings from last year. A. Trapp stated that Human Resources continues to monitor the difference in the decrease of sick occurrences along with the delta of the FMLA policy, but does not think there would be a good measure of savings at this moment. Mid-year of 2017 would provide a more accurate number, after the FMLA policy has been out for six months. With the decrease in sick occurrences, there was some increase in FMLA, but there were a significant number of union members who received the sick leave bonus. Use of either FMLA or non-FMLA sick time disqualified employees for the bonus.

A. Trapp stated she will find the exact numbers regarding sick time usage and share them with J. Repsher.

**Gracedale Administrator's Report:**

Census dropped in December; there were 32 deaths in December 2016. There were almost double the number of deaths in December 2016 compared to December 2015. Our average

census for the year was 662, placing us above our benchmark budget. Census also dipped in December due to an increase in residents discharged home from the short term rehab unit. We have had 30 referrals in the past week, eight people were admitted, three admissions are scheduled for today, and two admissions are scheduled for the future.

Overtime was high in November because of the one-on-one (1:1) shifts. Overtime decreased in December because the number of 1:1s have decreased. Agency costs were also reduced. We had one complaint visit from the Department of Health in both November and December. Both visits were substantiated, and systems are in place to correct the deficiencies.

S. Edwards stated that presently, the Department of Health (DOH) is in the building for their annual survey. It was asked if Gracedale participates in a mock survey. S. Edwards stated that we do, in October.

R. Soto stated that under Quality Measures, long term pain has decreased, but the decline in ADL metric increased. The physical therapy department is addressing this. Antipsychotic medication use is on the rise; we have a committee reviewing residents to reduce usage. Pressure ulcers increased, but 30 of them are now resolved. The turnover rate for nurses has increased. Many left due to life changing events or finding employment elsewhere.

It was mentioned that the Governor is closing some behavioral facilities, and a number of people will be mainstreamed. Will this affect Gracedale? S. Edwards stated that she has not seen any referrals yet. It was asked if we took people from Allentown State when that facility closed. S. Edwards stated that we did; she visited the facility and decided which residents Gracedale could take.

R. Soto stated that nursing care occupancy is at its lowest level since 2005. National rates are at 86.8%; Gracedale is at a 93% occupancy rate.

It was noted that SNF means “skilled nursing facility” and ALF means “assisted nursing facility”.

It was asked if the attempted suicide affected Gracedale’s star rating. R. Soto stated that it has not yet affect the rating. By the end of the first quarter of 2017 we will see if the rating has reduced or stayed the same.

It was asked how the current annual survey is progressing. S. Edwards stated that we will know more information tomorrow. Currently, Administration is looking at things the DOH found. We never know what we will be cited on. Sometimes they will group deficiencies together under the same tag. We should not get anything serious like a level G. We have received a lot of compliments on the food.

**Other Business:**

It was mentioned that communication could be improved between Administration and the Advisory Board, considering the board did not know about the attempted suicide. It was requested that when the Annual survey results come in, they are shared with the board. The board needs the information. If it is marked as confidential, the board will not share it with anyone else. It was countered that the board does not need to know everything. B. Werner stated that at council, they ask questions and are given a report. It was noted that if something is happening at Gracedale, the board should find out about it from Administration, instead of reading about it in the newspaper. It was countered that if there is something confidential going on at Gracedale, it should not be shared in an email.

B. Werner stated that sometimes there are emergencies brought up hours before Council that are voted on because they are emergencies. It was asked if the appropriate time to ask questions would be after County Council. B. Werner stated that calling Administration directly is better, because they are the direct source.

It was mentioned that perhaps, after the news is in the paper, that Administration could send an email to the Advisory Board, informing them of the news. It was countered that the email could be forwarded. It was suggested that the Advisory Board was not created to govern Gracedale, it was created to advise. S. Edwards stated that we must be careful from a legal point of view.

**Next Meeting:**

J. Irwin reminded Advisory Board members that the next meeting will be held on February 9, 2017, at 4:30 PM.

A motion was made by B. Werner and seconded by M. Schmoyer to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 5:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennie R. Repsher