

Gracedale Advisory Board  
May 12, 2016  
Minutes

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

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

Public Present: Jack D'Allessandro

Staff Present: Susan Edwards, Allison Frantz, David Holland, Jennie Repsher

**Call to Order/Welcome:**

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

**Approval of April's Minutes:**

A motion was made by B. Werner and seconded by S. Lawrence to accept the minutes from the April meeting. Motion carried.

**Courtesy of the Floor:**

By Guests:

None.

By Committee Members:

It was asked how council will handle the management bids for Gracedale. B. Werner stated that the Request for Proposal will have to be put out for bid. A. Terres stated that she was on the original committee that chose the current management firm, and the work of the committee was extensive. A. Frantz stated that there will be a committee to review the RFPs. It was noted that if Premier is not chosen, the committee should look carefully at the other management firms and interview residents and employees that currently use those firms. It was asked if there will be any consideration regarding Premier's previous work at Gracedale. A. Frantz stated that in general this is an RFP process and not a lowest bid process. The quality of Premier and their history with the county can be factored in, but the RFP cannot be specifically tailored with information that only Premier knows. The RFP must be fair and transparent. It was suggested that someone from the Gracedale Advisory Board serve on the committee. A. Frantz suggested that A. Terres volunteer to serve on the committee again. A. Terres agreed to do so.

**Chair Report:**

None.

**Director of Human Services Report:**

**Management Services RFP:**

It was asked if there is a timeline for the management services RFP. A. Frantz stated that first we need to officially provide 30 days' notice to County Council. During those 30 days, we will create the RFP. Once the RFP is released, there will be a specific amount of time for companies to respond. We will review and rank the responses. If there are a few companies that are closely ranked, we will visit and interview facilities. We are hoping to have the process complete within three to four months. Premier's contract ends in September and the goal is to have a seamless transition. Our fallback is to have a month-to-month contract with Premier until a final company is chosen through the RFP. We have a tight timeline, but know what we are looking for.

**IGT (Intergovernmental Transfer):**

The IGT has been approved. The county will give money to the state, who gives it to the federal government. The federal government returns the original amount, plus more, back to the state, which then returns it back to the county. All the other county owned/operated nursing homes are on board, meaning the net gain will be maximized. The more money put into the program, the more money will come back from the federal government. Northampton County will have to transfer a little over \$7 million, and will get back \$2 million plus the original \$7 million. The IGT is scheduled to occur mid to late June. The money will be returned to the county, which will then have to transfer it to Gracedale. It was asked if the money will be returned to Gracedale in one lump sum. A. Frantz stated it would be a lump sum. It was noted that 501c3 nursing homes can participate in the IGT if they are county affiliated, but private nursing homes cannot.

A. Frantz stated that the IGT program stopped for a number of years because there were questions regarding where and how counties were getting the money to give to the state. Parameters are now in place directing counties on the types of acceptable funds. You cannot take out a loan and use that money. We are using money from real estate taxes. No money is being used from the reserve fund. We also made sure we are using an approved banking institution.

**Gracedale Administrator's Report:**

The census dipped a bit in March but returned to 665 in April. It was asked if we are close to having every bed filled. D. Holland stated that on average, 670 of our 688 beds are filled.

Overtime hours are up in all groups, but there were three pay periods reported in the month of April. If you take out a third of the overtime number listed, it is an even comparison to other months.

It was noted that agency costs for LPNs decreased. D. Holland stated that there are either fewer call offs or more staff picking up those shifts.

D. Holland stated that our star rating has now increased from three stars to four stars overall. The star rating is one tool that consumers use when choosing a nursing home. Organizations using ACOs and bundled payments are also picking skilled nursing providers based in part on their star rating.

It was asked if Gracedale's quality measures are improving. D. Holland stated that the quality measures are discussed at our Quality Assurance meetings. We still struggle with the use of antipsych meds. We are reducing our use of them, but are still above the benchmark due to the types of residents we accept. We are a large facility, but have to meet the same standards as smaller facilities.

It was asked if there is a benchmark or target for overtime hours and agency costs. D. Holland stated he would bring statistics from the 2015 dashboard.

**Other Business:**

A. Terres stated that the Area Agency on Aging recently hosted their Outstanding Senior Awards. Ten individuals and groups were honored for donating their time and talents over the years.

**Friends of Gracedale Foundation:**

B. Werner stated that he is looking for a few more people to serve on the Board of Directors for the Friends of Gracedale Foundation. He is trying to create a diverse group and would like about seven individuals to serve on the board. Once the board meets, they can send the Articles of Incorporation to the IRS. Once approved, the foundation is established and they can talk to Gracedale about using donations. The foundation will run parallel to County Council. Once money starts accumulating, the foundation can approach County Council to accept the donations on behalf of Gracedale. A. Frantz stated that this is a good segue between the Gracedale Advisory Board and County Council to know the needs of the residents.

It was asked if other county homes have a foundation. B. Werner stated that other county homes do. It was asked if there will be a special line item in Gracedale's budget for this money. A. Frantz stated that no, the money would be considered a donation. The foundation would have to approach County Council, County Council would have to accept the donation, and then the money would be given to Gracedale. B. Werner stated the process could be a little different if the funds are restricted – if the person donating the funds directs what the money should be used for.

It was asked if Gracedale has a wish list. A. Frantz stated that there is a capital improvements list. It was noted that there are certain items that are not considered capital improvements, but that residents need, such as televisions.

**Next Meeting:**

J. Irwin reminded Advisory Board members that the next meeting will be held on June 9, 2016, at 4:30 PM.

A motion was made by A. Terres and seconded by S. Lawrence to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennie R. Repsher