



Ventura County Community Health Center (CHC) Board Meeting Minutes

Theresa Cho, MD
Ventura County Ambulatory Care
Chief Executive Officer
Medical Director
CHC Executive Director

Lisa Canale
County of Ventura
Assistant County Counsel

Chaya Turrow
Ventura County Ambulatory Care
CHC Co-Applicant Board Clerk

Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2023
12:30 - 2:00 PM

2240 E Gonzales Rd
Suite 200,
Oxnard, CA 93036

CHC BOARD MEMBERS:

DAVID TOVAR, District 3
Chair

JAMES MASON, District 5
Vice Chair

RALPH REYES, District 3
Secretary

RENA SEPULVEDA, District 1
Treasurer

MANUEL MINJARES, District 3

RENEE HIGGINS, MD, District 3

SUSAN WHITE WOOD, District 5

MELISSA LIVINGSTON, District 4

ESPY GONZALEZ, District 2

ROBERT RUST, District 3

MONIQUE NOWLIN, District 1

Call to Order:

David Tovar called the meeting to order at 12:35PM.

1. Roll Call

David Tovar	Present
James Mason	Absent
Ralph Reyes	Present
Rena Sepulveda	Present
Manuel Minjares	Absent
Renee Higgins, MD	Absent
Susan White Wood	Present
Melissa Livingston	Present
Espy Gonzalez	Absent
Robert Rust	Present
Monique Nowlin	Present

Roll call confirmed that a quorum was present.

2. Ventura County Staff Present

Theresa Cho, MD, HCA – Ambulatory Care CEO
Lizeth Barretto, HCA – Ambulatory Care
Barry Zimmerman, HCA - Director
Luis Torres, HCA – Ambulatory Care
Allison Blaze, HCA – Ambulatory Care
Marty Knutson – County Counsel
Dee Pupa, HCA - VC Health Care Plan
Christina Woods, HCA – VC Health Care Plan

Public Present

None

3. Public Comments

None

Action Items:

4. Approval of CHC Board Meeting Agenda for May 25, 2023

Board Member Reyes motioned to approve the agenda; Board Member Nowlin seconded. The motion passed with no dissensions or abstentions.

5. Approval of CHC Minutes for April 27, 2023

Board Member White Wood motioned to approve the minutes; Board Member Rust seconded. The motion passed with no dissensions or abstentions.

6. Review and Approve the Sliding Fee Discount Program Policy and Procedures

The Board has reviewed and approved the separate policy and procedure previously. Dr. Cho mentioned that the staff combined the policy and procedures and made minor revisions based on OSV recommendations. The minor revision in the policy focused on the language regarding nominal charges from the perspective of the patient and not based on the cost of the service. The procedures had some revisions made that there are clear expectations about how the program is implemented. This has helped answer some of the front office questions.

Board Member Rust moved to approve. Board Member Sepulveda seconded. The motion passed with no dissensions or abstentions.

7. Review and Approve Ambulatory Care Procurement – Federal Awards Policy

Dr. Cho said it was also a previous policy with changes from the OSV team. Dr. Cho and the team presented a procurement policy from both GSA and Ambulatory Care, but the OSV team really wanted to see that procurement was a “full and open competition” and they wanted a specific reference to Subpart D and E, which talks about federal award procurement. Our internal team took the notes from the OSV reviewers and updated the Ambulatory Care policy to include the verbiage requested.

Board Chair Tovar asked for clarification that these were all part of the CRO for the OSV and are remediable. Dr. Cho confirmed that with these changes, we will be compliant with this section.

Board Member Sepulveda moved to approve. Board Member Nowlin seconded. The motion passed with no dissensions or abstentions.

8. **Appointment of Nomination Committee for Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer)**

Ms. Barretto and Ms. Turrow explained that this was supposed to be brought to the Board in April, so since this is May, we have a shorter timeframe to nominate. Official nominations and elections will take place in June, and then the appointments will take place in July. Ms. Turrow and Ms. Barretto requested three or four Board members to volunteer for the Nomination Committee. The Nomination Committee will only meet one time between the May meeting and June CHC meeting to determine who to nominate as the Executive Committee members. Ms. Turrow also requested that if a Board member is interested in serving on the Executive Committee, to email chcboardclerk@ventura.org. An email will also be sent out to the entire Board after this meeting, requesting interest to serve on the Executive Committee. If you are on the Nomination Committee, you can still be nominated for the Executive Committee.

Board Members Livingston, Sepulveda and Tovar volunteered to serve on the Nomination Committee.

Board Member White Wood moved to approve. Board Member Nowlin seconded. The motion passed with no dissensions or abstentions.

Presentation Items:

9. **Ventura County Medical System Budget**

Dr. Cho explained that we shared financials at the last meeting, but she asked Barry Zimmerman, the HCA Director, to come to this meeting to share financials as an entire system. Mr. Zimmerman presented on the Ventura County Medical System budget. Mr. Zimmerman provided a brief overview of the public hospital system, including ambulatory care clinics and 2 hospitals. Mr. Zimmerman explained that the “safety net” system faces the financial challenges of serving a large proportion of MediCal patients.

Ventura County works with the State to participate in waiver programs that provide “supplemental” funding. Rather than a surplus, it is filling in the gap left from MediCal payments. Mr. Zimmerman explained that the clinic and FQHC system have access to supplemental funding because they are associated with our hospitals, whereas other clinic systems who are not associated with a public hospital do not have this access. There are programmatic requirements associated with the funding. The revenue side of supplemental funding is looked at as a whole system aggregately.

Mr. Zimmerman further explained that without supplemental funding, VCHCA would not be running the system we have today. As for next year, we’re budgeted a negative 1.3%, due to higher labor costs, payor rates, etc. VCHCA targets a breakeven plus. Additionally, Mr. Zimmerman explained that we run the hospital and medical system as an enterprise fund within the county government. Enterprise funds are separated out from the county operations and run like a business. VCHCA is generating revenue based on the work being done, while

also creating equity. Over the last three years, prior to COVID, VCHCA had seen a hefty trend to build net equity position. The financials remain stable regarding the equity, but there is a loss in cash operations.

Board Member White Wood mentioned that we get a reimbursement rate per visit, and asked if that prospective payment rate falls within the Medicaid/MediCal reimbursement? Mr. Zimmerman explained that it would fall within the net patient revenue. Additionally, Board Member White Wood asked where HRSA grants would fall, and Mr. Zimmerman explained that, while he is not entirely sure, he believes that they would not be supplemental, and would be considered, "other funding". Board Member White Wood said it sounds like it would be split between the two, and Mr. Zimmerman confirmed.

Discussion Items:

10. Tattoo Removal Clinic

Board Member White Wood met with Dr. Cho, Dr. Higgins, and Lizeth. She had mentioned that years ago the system had a tattoo removal clinic.

Dr. Cho said that Ambulatory Care had one at Las Islas and the Santa Paula Clinic. She said that the machines are about 20 years old. One machine broke and one clinic had to halt tattoo removal due to the pandemic. At the time, when the clinics were performing the tattoo removals, there were few physicians available to perform the service, and Ambulatory Care then had to find the funding.

Dr. Cho also explained that this is not a typical in-scope visit, and more of a community service activity. The funding needed would cover staffing cost for support staff and the machines. The physicians work as a voluntary service. Dr. Cho and team are open to further discussions.

If Ambulatory Care were to restart the program, Dr. Cho hopes to lend structure to the clinic (appointment slots rather than first-come-first-served, how to register in Cerner, and train volunteers). Mr. Zimmerman said they would be supportive in a structured model but mentioned that the Board has not approved the cost, yet.

Board Member White Wood said that having gang tattoos removed can be life changing for some people. She would like if this could be kept on the CHC Board and the internal team's radar to start back up.

11. Continued Business

a. HRSA Operational Site Visit

Ms. Turrow thanked the Board for their help with the Operational Site Visit. Dr. Cho will get into the specifics, but overall, it was very successful. HRSA is a year behind in their site visits, so we may only have two years, rather than three, until the next site visit – and the next one will be in person.

b. Other Grants Updates

The Expanding COVID-19 Vaccination grant through HRSA has been extended until the end of the year. The original end date was May 31, 2023. Still working on the Test to Treat grant through CDPH. Working on this grant in conjunction with MICOP. The grant will conclude within the next couple months.

Ms. Barretto mentioned that we are still working on the Dental Expansion at Magnolia. We have purchased much of the imaging equipment related to this grant, but we are still working on the dental expansion. Looking at a September completion. Board Chair Tovar requested a Board tour prior to the clinic opening.

12. **CEO Update – Dr. Theresa Cho, HCA, Ambulatory Care**

Dr. Cho updated the Board regarding the Operational Site Visit (OSV). The CHC meeting today took care of two of five findings, one was a change in scope, and two others are billing related, where the fee schedules originally provided were outdated. The average number of findings are 7-10 and we had 5. We were well prepared for the audit, with many compliments from the reviewers. Important to note that these are not official findings, and we have a two-week period to correct the “findings”. Board Member Livingston said Dr. Cho has really changed the organization around, positively, from where it was to where it is now. Dr. Blaze congratulated her team for receiving no clinical findings, which means our patients are getting the care they need and deserve.

Dr. Cho explained that two sites are having improvement work done – Water trickled down at the 5-story building. The specialty clinic was most affected and had to move to another clinic. Currently waiting to put in new floors, drywall, etc. The team has rallied to take care of everything. The second site was the Santa Paula Medical Clinic. The clinic works out of mobile trailers, and we have been wanting to move for a long time, but it hasn't been built yet. The trailer we use has damage to the roof and mold found in the ceiling, due to all the heavy rains this season. Staff has all moved out into another trailer and some nearby clinics. The team is redirecting patients, text messaging, utilizing Uber Health, etc. But no services have been disrupted and the care is ongoing.

Finally, Dr. Cho explained that the team is continuing performance improvement and quality work. We are adding some hours and Saturday slots, which has increased some of our vaccine clinic availability, as well.

Ms. Woods said their department was informed of Santa Paula but weren't told about the 5-story. Dr. Cho confirmed that services haven't changed and no one has actually moved from the building, just to different suites, so care was not changed.

13. **Board Comments**

If you'd like to be nominated for an Executive Committee position, please reach out.

14. **Staff Comments**

No staff comments.

15. **Adjournment – Adjourn 1:32pm.**

Audio files of the CHC Co-Applicant Board meetings are available by contacting the CHC Co-Applicant Board Clerk at chcboardclerk@ventura.org

Minutes submitted by: Chaya Turrow, CHC Board Clerk

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 22, 2023
2240 E Gonzales Road, Suite 200, Oxnard, CA 93036