

**NORTH DAKOTA VETERANS HOME
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Held at North Dakota Veterans Home, Lisbon, North Dakota
June 10, 2005**

PRESENT: Daryl Beard - Chairman

Norris Braaten

Larry Dakken

Orletta Kilen

Darrol Schroeder

Robert Volk

Neal Asper, Administrator-NDVH

GUESTS: Kristin Lunneborg, Accounting Manager

Margie Ourenhagen, Executive Secretary

Jake Reuter, Social Services

Michael Jenkins, Field Representative for Earl Pomeroy

Meeting called to order by Chairman, Daryl Beard. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a moment of silence for the POW/MIA's.

MINUTES: Motion was made by Larry Dakken, seconded by Norris Braaten to approve the April 06, 2005 minutes as mailed.

CHAIRMAN: Daryl Beard's Report

AUDIT PERFORMANCE STATUS: (See Audit Follow-up Report of the status of Recommendations from North Dakota Veterans' Home Performance, Audit No. 3019, dated February 14, 2005) This Performance Audit Report was read and discussed at length.

As a result of the follow-up review, 25 recommendations were determined to be fully implemented, 15 were determined to be partially implemented, and 6 were determined to be not implemented. The Governing Board felt even though all the items are not completed, they were satisfied with the progress being made.

SENATE BILL # 2007: (See Handout) Discussion was held on this S.B. which is the 2005-2007 biennium budget. Section 4, is a Legislative Intent, which states it is the intent of the fifty-ninth legislative assembly that the Veterans Home review its policy of staffing for basic care services, including the number of licensed practical nurses as compared to certified nurse assistants scheduled for each shift, and to present a report to the appropriations committees of the sixtieth legislative assembly during the agency's budget presentation regarding justification for the staffing policy and information on savings that may be realized from changes in the policy.

Praise was given to Peggy Baumgart for her dedication as Director of Nursing of the Veterans Home.

PHARMACY MEDS FOR SPECIALTY CARE: (See Handout) Chairman, Daryl Beard, reported on his discussion and letter from David Garland, Fargo VA Business Office Manager, concerning the VA Medical Center filling medications for veterans at the North Dakota Veterans Home who are service connected for psychiatric related problems and for which the home has

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contracted with the Stadter Center, a non-VA provider based in Grand Forks, ND to provide psychiatric services. Since this provider is a non-VA provider the Veterans Home is responsible to pay for the medications.

There are approximately 35-50 residents seen per month by a psychiatrist. Some are seen by Dr. Johnson from the Stadter Center and others are seen by the VA psychiatrist, however the prescriptions are sent back to the Veterans Home to be filled. Specialty care residents must be seen by the Fargo VA at least once per year. The residents who are reimbursed by the Fargo VA are the Aid and Attendance and Housebound residents.

Michael Jenkins, Field Representative for Congressman Earl Pomeroy, was in attendance at this board meeting. He will contact Doug Kenyon to arrange a meeting between the Fargo VA and the Veterans Home Staff to discuss the specialty care of residents.

GOVERNING BOARD APPOINTMENTS: Darrol Schroeder has accepted the three year appointment to the Governing Board from July 2005-June 2008.

MAINTENANCE; Bob Nelson, Supervisor

ASBESTOS REMOVAL UPDATE: Bob Nelson and Darla Seelye, Housekeeping Supervisor, will attend the Asbestos Abatement Contractor/Supervisor Initial Course next week at UND. Upon completion of these classes they will be certified for one year. They can be recertified by attending an EPA approved refresher course.

CHILLER: The new air conditioning chiller is to be operating by next Tuesday. This is a 187 ton unit which will be 25% more efficient. With the maintenance agreement our cost was approximately \$80,000. Another company quoted us an estimate of \$117,000.

ENERGY AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS: The new ballasts and tubes have been delivered, and are being installed as the old ones go out or as time permits.

Praise was given to Bob Nelson and the Maintenance Department by the Governing Board for their dedication in the upkeep of the buildings and grounds at the Veterans Home.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Neal Asper

INVENTORY PURCHASES:

- Medical carts and two week pill fill cartridge system for both basic and skilled unit.
- 2200 Utility Vehicle
- S 185 Bobcat Skid Steer Loader
- Office Chairs
- Flags

WAGE & SHIFT DIFFERENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS: (See Handout) Discussion was held on the wage and shift differential adjustment scale implemented at the Veterans Home. We plan another adjustment when resources are available.

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MEMORIAL DAY FESTIVITIES: (See Handout) the parade started at 10:00 am with a patriotic program performed at the bridge where the different organizations gave a speech and tossed a spray of flowers over the bridge; then on to the Veterans Cemetery where another speech was given and each organization posted a wreath of flowers at the Veterans Monument. This was a real nice tribute to those men and women who served, are serving, or have given their lives for the freedom of our country. Following the program the American Legion Auxiliary served a great lunch.

The highlight of the day was the ceremony in the afternoon at the ND Veterans Home put on by the Lisbon Girl Scouts, members of the VFW, Paige Elijah of Lisbon and Josh Knutson of Milnor. After the VFW performed a flag ceremony, Paige played taps on the keyboard and the Girl Scouts handed out 3 carnations (red, white, blue) to each resident. Josh presented and donated a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall that he made out of fired clay. On it are the names of service men and women from North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota who gave their lives.

There were many compliments from our residents stating that this was the best Memorial Day that they could remember in a long time.

TRAVEL MEETINGS:

- AMERICAN LEGION CONVENTION – Minot – June 24, 25 & 26
- VV Motorcycle Club – Lisbon - July 9th
- VVA STATE MEETING - Park River – July 15, 16 & 17th
- John Coyne, former member of the Administrative Committee, Golf Tournament at Mayville, July 29th

NDVH HIGHLIGHTS CALENDAR: See the attached report for April, May & June 2005.

SOCIAL SERVICES: Jake Reuter

DRUG & ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE: (Handout) Jake Reuter reported on this policy. All staff in-services will be held on July 13th and July 20th. Employees who do not attend one of these meetings will need to complete power point training, developed by our Addiction Counselor, on their own time.

Discussion was held on the safety sensitive positions and when these employees will be tested. The drug and alcohol testing will be done by the Family Medical Clinic at the following times:

- At the time of hire of safety sensitive employees.
- Ten percent of those who are participating in the random testing will be tested every quarter.
- If a supervisor has reasonable suspicion, a request can be made to have an employee randomly tested.
- Employees who are not in the safety sensitive positions may sign a release to be put in the random testing.
- If a staff member is requested to do random testing and refuses, this will be considered a positive test. Employees who test positive maybe referred to a treatment center. We can also discipline the staff member up and to including termination. We have an Employee Assistance Program available for treatment or the employee can choose a provider of

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their own choice. Any employee who is tested positive will be subject to five random tests, plus any requested quarterly testing within the next year.

- The drug and alcohol testing program will be implemented August 8th.

PER DIEM RATES: (Letter from Neal Asper) Discussion was held on the North Dakota Veterans Home per diem rates. The \$59.36 per diem payment we receive from the VA can no longer be used to offset Medicaid anymore.

Congress recently passed a law that pertains to the VA per diem that state veteran nursing homes receive. This law states that state veteran homes can no longer reduce the daily charges of veterans on medical assistance by the VA per diem.

North Dakota has a regulation that requires all nursing homes to charge the same rate for similar services. This equalization of rates regulation was implemented to protect nursing home private pay residents from being charged significantly more than residents on medical assistance. Since we cannot reduce the medical assistance recipients' bills we cannot reduce private pay bills.

Section 202 of HR 3936 of the federal law in conjunction with North Dakota's equalization of rates regulation requires that the North Dakota Veterans Home no longer reduce our daily rate by the VA per diem.

North Dakota Department of Human Services sets the maximum rate which we can charge for nursing home care. Our nursing home rates will be increased \$59.36 per day for all nursing home residents effective July 1, 2005.

Family Members of a Resident, who is private pay, shared their concerns with the Governing Board. Discussion was held on the per diem rates, the veterans who are eligible to go to the Fargo VA for medications, and primary care and medications which are currently being offered by the ND Veterans Home. Also discussed was the impact these costs will have on our budget.

Motion was made by Darrol Schroeder, seconded by Norris Braaten to lower the daily rate on the skilled care unit by \$20.00. Motion carried (Roll call vote # 1). This new rate will go into effect July 1, 2005.

This will be discussed further at the Administrative Committee of Veterans Affairs meeting July 29th & 30th at the Bismarck Comfort Suites.

OPERATIONAL PLAN STATUS: (Handout) Jake Reuter gave a progress update.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Kristin Lunneborg reported on the following issues

- **PRESCRIPTION BILLINGS: (Handout)** these billings were sent out for the first time today.
- **FINANCIAL REPORT: (Handout)** our revenues are slightly behind. We still have expense money available so we will purchase carpeting for the skilled unit, chairs for the skilled dining room, smoke detectors, and equipment for the nursing units. All of the Capital Improvement will be spent by the end of the biennium. We will be turning back a

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portion of the \$200,000 for the deficiency appropriation which was requested for the pharmacy and primary care, and approximately \$500,000 from the salary line item.

Kristin finished the Medicare training and is working with I.T.D. on filing these billings. Prior Medicare billings have all been processed.

Small payments are being made on most of the outstanding accounts on the Skilled Unit. We will have to go back to the emergency commission for permission to accept the dollar amounts of Medicare Funds received which we will need to spend before we spend our General Fund Monies. There will be pharmaceutical money to turn back to the State.

- **CENSUS DATA: (Handout)** the census on the skilled unit has had a very high turnover due to deaths. Three beds are still open. Basic Care census is still at an average of 77.
- **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE (Handout)** Kristin gave an update of these accounts.
 - **SKILLED CARE UNIT: (Handout)** Small payments are being made on most of these accounts on a regular basis.
 - **BASIC CARE UNIT: (Handout)**
 - **WRITE OFFS** Motion was made by Darrol Schroeder, seconded by Larry Dakken to write off account #'s 1,2,5,6,7, & 10. Motion carried (Roll call vote # 2). These accounts will stay on the books, but will not be entered into the new computer system. If we should by chance receive a payment on the judgments, or one of them win the lottery or for some reason make some payments that account will then be added on the computer.

ADMINISTRATORS APPRAISAL: Bob Volk, Larry Dakken & Norris Braaten will meet with Administrator, Neal Asper, to discuss his evaluation.

MEETING DATES: The NDVH Governing Board will meet, Friday, August 12th at 10:30 am at the NDVH in Lisbon.

Meeting adjourned.

Neal Asper
Administrator

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