



AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF ROCK HAVEN

Minutes from December 13, 2023

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Mawhinney calls the hybrid Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of Rock Haven meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. in the N1/N2 conference room of the County Courthouse.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT – Chair Mawhinney, Supervisor Whitledge, Supervisor Homan, Supervisor Rashkin, Community Member Casares, and Community Member Kolste

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT – Supervisor Leavy

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT – Natalie Rolling-Edlebeck, Administrator; Heather Kempf, Nurse Manager; Virginia Johnson, Administrative Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT – Josh Smith, County Administrator; Amy Spoden, Director of Human Resources; Supervisor Mary Beaver

APPROVE AGENDA – Supervisor Homan moves for approval of the agenda, second by Community Member Kolste. APPROVED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Supervisor Homan moves for approval of November 8, 2023 minutes, second by Community Member Kolste. APPROVED.

REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

CONSULTING SERVICES FOR TEAMBUILDING AT ROCK HAVEN – The committee discusses whether they would like to move forward in pursuing outside consulting services for Rock Haven. Josh Smith, County Administrator suggests that a way to start would be an employee engagement survey. Consultants can then work with staff to assist in implementing teambuilding.

Supervisor Whitledge joins the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

Amy Spoden, Director of Human Resources confirms Blackhawk Tech came in the past to assist other departments. Chair Mawhinney asks if past surveys worked. Josh states that it is possible if staff are engaged. He continues that they would need to develop something that will last after the consultants are gone. Amy adds that Rock Haven has a larger number of people and will be different than other departments. Amy states it would be a targeted employee engagement that would focus on teambuilding and morale.

Community Member Kolste asks what consulting services will cost. Amy states that it depends on the scope and the responses we are looking for. Chair Mawhinney asks if there is money budgeted for consulting. Josh answers that there is over \$100,000 budgeted for consulting services in 2024. Community Member Kolste asks if the budgeted money included consulting for assisted living. Josh states that is a possible use for those funds.

Natalie Rolling-Edlebeck, Nursing Home Administrator states that we are trying to stay positive and that we are reading *The Energy Bus* to facilitate teambuilding. She continues that if the committee feels it will help Rock Haven, she is open to consulting. Heather Kempf, Nurse Manager confirms with Natalie. She states that she doesn't believe Rock Haven needs a consultant to work on teambuilding. She continues that Rock Haven needs more nurses.

Community Member Kolste states that we should examine a broader scope such as putting in assisted living. Community Member Casares agrees and states we may need to focus more on wages. Community Member Kolste asks if we need a consultant for teambuilding or to look at a more feasible economic model. Chair Mawhinney answers both.

Supervisor Homan asks Natalie if a broader scope would be advised for consulting services. Natalie states she is not against consulting services, but she acknowledges Heather's point that we need nurses. Natalie is open to figuring out an angled approach to what we need.

Heather states that nurses are overworked. She states that Rock Haven currently has 21 nurse vacancies. These vacancies do not include 1 MDS nurse and 3 nurse supervisor vacancies. The staff that is currently employed are being asked to work multiple positions. She continues that some nurse applicants have turned down the position due to wages. She states that the new wage grid does not take years of experience into account. Josh concurs. He explains the wage grid was passed with the provision that we cannot hire non-exempt positions higher than step 1. He states that the Staff Committee will need to revisit the policy in the future.

Supervisor Homan asks if Rock Haven will need to shut down beds in the facility. Natalie states that they have had to reorganize the facility and place residents in wings that can accommodate our staffing. She states that for over a year they have not been able to fill 32 beds and are currently at a census of 96 residents. Natalie continues that they could open the wing if it only required CNAs, such as assisted living.

Community Member Kolste asks if we need to hire a consultant to determine what would make Rock Haven financially viable. Josh states that the Ad Hoc meeting was created to address the culture at Rock Haven and how to continue to operate it. Community Member Kolste states we need to review Rock Haven's financial viability, which would include assisted living.

Supervisor Homan asks if counties can open an assisted living facility. Josh confirms they can. He continues that we would need to investigate what modifications would be required to

turn the wing into assisted living. Natalie states that once we apply to operate an assisted living facility, the nursing facility would change from a large to a medium facility. She states that a consultant would need to advise us on how much is needed to get the wing certified to operate as an assisted living.

Supervisor Rashkin states we should examine what is the best use for Rock Haven. Community Member Kolste states that other nursing homes have had success making a similar change. Chair Mawhinney asks if there are consultants with that expertise. Josh confirms there are. Community Member Kolste states that the incentives can lead to alienating current staff. Community Member Casares states that we may need a consultant to direct us financially. He continues we need to give some flexibility with wages upon hiring.

Natalie states that Wisconsin does accept Medicaid for assisted living. She continues that many residents at Rock Haven no longer need skilled care, but they have had to wait because the assisted living facilities in the county do not have beds available. She states this could be an avenue for county constituents with Medicaid. She states that there would be interest for people with private pay as well.

Chair Mawhinney asks what staffing would be required for assisted living. Natalie states she does not have the exact number at this time. She continues that bringing in an expert could help with that information. Natalie clarifies that some departments could be shared with an assisted living facility, but some cannot. Community Member Kolste describes the pay structure for assisted living at other for-profit facilities. Natalie clarifies that we can set our own parameters for what services we charge as a non-profit county facility.

Supervisor Homan proposes expanding the size of the facility to add beds for assisted living. He continues the increased revenue may help offset the nursing shortfalls. Community Member Casares advises against assisted living if the facility is set up for skilled nursing. He explains that many renovations would be required to turn a wing into assisted living. Supervisor Rashkin states that these would be good questions for the consultant. He states the committee can make a decision with the information the consultant provides.

Chair Mawhinney asks if there are different levels of assisted living. Natalie confirms that is correct. Natalie clarifies that some assisted living facilities have no CNAs. Chair Mawhinney asks if there is a level of assisted living that would not require extensive renovations. Natalie states that she does not know the answer. She states an expert would need to advise on what is required.

Community Member Casares asks if a separate wage scale for Rock Haven staff would be possible. Josh confirms it is possible, but difficult. It would include not only clinical staff, but other departments such as administrative staff. He continues that it can be included in the consultant scope. Supervisor Whitledge states the consultant can provide the data needed to argue for increased pay for the nurses.

Community Member Kolste asks how the wage grid is divided. Amy states that the wage grid is divided into bands, and each of those bands has a group of job titles. Every position in a wage band has the exact same rates on each step of the grid. Community Member Kolste asks if they compared wages with other similar positions throughout the state. Amy confirms.

Supervisor Whitledge moves to hire a consultant for financial viability and sustainability, second by Community Member Kolste. APPROVED. Vote 6/0

DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYEE INCENTIVES – Community Member Casares asks if there were any applications for CNAs. Amy confirms there are 6 or 7 students that will begin the class in January. 1 student requested to begin the class in March. 5 students are currently completing the enrollment process with Blackhawk Tech. Community Member Kolste asks the length of the class. Amy states it is roughly 12 weeks long.

Community Member Casares states he has had a lot of interest in the CNA program. Amy states there are some applications they will review. She continues that we are working on a contract with Blackhawk Tech to be able to run our own class. The class would include 100% county students doing clinicals at Rock Haven. Supervisor Homan asks if Blackhawk Tech follows Mercy protocols. Amy states that Blackhawk Tech follows the licensure for CNA. Amy states Blackhawk Tech will do clinicals at a variety of locations. Chair Mawhinney asks which schools are involved. Amy states we will occasionally get staff from MATC, but most are primarily from Blackhawk Tech.

Amy recommends that reviewing incentives from other facilities be included in the consultant RFP. Josh states that it will likely be included with reviewing compensation. Chair Mawhinney asks what the projected timeline will be. Josh answers that March would be the earliest.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS –

NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME – January 10, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. Location to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT – Supervisor Homan moves to adjourn at 4:10 p.m., second by Supervisor Whitledge. SO ORDERED.

Respectfully submitted,
Virginia Johnson

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE.