

The purpose of Redwoods Rural Health Center is to provide responsive, preventive, high quality primary health care services, through a variety of healing disciplines, to all people without regard to social or economic status. We emphasize the client's right and responsibility to participate in his or her own health care decisions. It is our hope that the clinic be a place where the needs of the whole person are met-body, mind, and spirit.

**Redwoods Rural Board Meeting
July 28, 2009
At the Redway clinic, set to start at 6PM**

Board members present: Thad Horner, Shon Wellborn, Shelby, Janet Fitzgerald, Sydney King, Kathy Epling

Board members absent: Carol Lee, Pamela Moore (family emergency); Rick Silva (on vacation out of town)

Staff present: Anne Staunton, RRHC executive director; Jeanie Eldridge, RRHC CFO; Megan McCormack, Dental department head

President Thad Horner brought the meeting to order at 6:22PM.

MOTION: That the Agenda be approved as submitted.

The motion was made by Sydney King and seconded by Shon Wellborn.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

A report from Linda Piehl was handed out to the board.

The board reviewed the departmental reports which had been included in the board packet; Thad wanted to know a bit more about the Next Gen computer software mentioned in passing in one report; Anne Staunton noted that she would cover this, and the whole Electronic Health Records question, during her executive director report a bit later in the meeting.

MOTION: That the Consent Agenda be approved as presented.

The motion was made by Shon Wellborn and seconded by Sydney King.

MOTION PASSED unanimously

The items on the Consent Agenda were: The minutes of the June 2009 Board Meeting; the minutes of the June 2009 Finance committee meeting; July 2009 reports from Behavioral Health, Dental, Medical, Finance and Operations departments and the Quality Improvement Report; May and June 2009 financial reports.

Correspondence

Board Secretary Kathy Epling had received a letter from a RRHC client directed to the Board; all board members had reviewed this letter requesting that the board waive the requirement that sliding scale fee dental clients live within the service area to be eligible

for sliding scale fee discounts. The client lives in McKinleyville, but had been receiving dental care at RRHC through MediCal. With the State of California removing adult dental services from MediCal, the client cannot afford full pay services. Client said that more local clinics (Open Door) were not taking new patients.

This poignant letter was reviewed and considered by the board.

Anne Staunton spoke of the value of policies; how can the front desk decide to accept one client who is out of area and not another? These are times of difficult and heartwrenching decisions. She advised the board to stand behind stated policy.

A lengthy discussion followed; Anne was directed to contact the client and explain the sad realities to him. Board secretary Kathy Epling will send him a note thanking him for contacting us and telling him the board has asked Anne to talk with him.

The sobered Board then listened to Anne's ED report.

Executive Director Report

She spoke of ELF, "electronic leap forward"; a concept that she hopes will bring information and excitement to the health center as the center starts the process of choosing, installing, and implementing a practice management system and electronic health records.

She spoke of the recent conference in Sacramento on this theme, which she attended with some of the staff.

The process needed is to define what is needed now, what does the clinic need to do now, rather than getting dazzled and lost in the myriad of problems and possibilities with this new technology.

Anne's report was detailed and included a number of questions and answers from the board.

Jeanie and Megan, who had attended the Sacramento conference, chimed in with their reports and concerns (Mark Mowrey was the 4th staff person attending).

The timeline that RRHC is viewing is for a practice management system to be chosen by December and installed in time for the Jan 1 reports to be done on the new system.

The board greatly admired the ELF concept (Shon Wellborn is going to liberally borrow this concept for use at the Credit Union) and looks forward to learning more as the process continues.

Anne briefed the board on changes in hours of operation and challenges met in doing these changes.

She passed out a new organizational chart and explained the thought process behind the changes.

She updated the board on the status of Acupuncture and Physical Therapy.

Anne once again noted the many programs and funding streams now eliminated by the California governor, funds and programs that are crucial for the care of our vulnerable populations: EAPC, the Rural Health Grant, slashes in case management programs and in AIDs programs, and hits to other programs as well.

Considerable discussion ensued. Much of this information was very recent, and board and staff will be watching for further reports from the California Primary Care Association.

A policy and procedure was in the board packet requiring approval; the CREDIT POLICY.

Sydney King noted a couple minor errors of grammar.

MOTION: with the corrections supplied by Sydney King, the Credit Policy and Procedure be approved by the Redwoods Rural Board of Directors.

MOTION was made by Shelby and seconded by Sydney.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Anne Staunton brought to the board a Sliding Scale Fee Schedule Policy and Procedure with some major changes in the nominal fees (those asked of the most impoverished). She had checked with our federal project officer and determined that the health center could have different nominal fees for different departments; thus the new Fee Schedule set the nominal fee for Medical at \$30, the nominal fee for Dental at \$40, and left the Behavioral and auxiliary services fee at \$20 (this would include such things as acupuncture).

There was considerable painful discussion.

Thad wanted to know how much the raise in fees would really be; last summer when we looked at this it didn't seem to be that much overall.

Kathy wanted the board to remember that we must always balance the question of increasing fees to maintain our health center against the possible block to access for the neediest of our clients. Would doubling the nominal fee for dental services mean in fact that people no longer seek those services? Are we setting up a situation in which people will be going without care?

Having said that, she stated she would reluctantly support the change in the sliding scale fees, because of course without a clinic here at all—and with the Governor's cuts clinics would be closing throughout the state—then no one would receive services.

Jeanie went to get the actual figures while this discussion continued.

The Budget that the board was to approve today is based on the change in fee rates.

Jeanie returned with the figures, which seemed to indicate a difference of about 63K.

MOTION: That the revised Sliding Scale Fee Structure be approved.

The motion was made by Janet Fitzgerald and seconded by Shon Wellborn.

MOTION PASSED unanimously

MOTION: That the FYE 2010 budget be approved as presented.

Motion was made by Shon Wellborn and seconded by Janet Fitzgerald

MOTION PASSED unanimously

MOTION: The Redwoods Rural Board of Directors authorizes a draw down of up to \$80K (eighty thousand dollars) from the Board Reserve Account at the Community Credit Union in Garberville in order to cover necessary expenditures. The expectation of the board in allowing this draw down is that the monies used will be repaid into the reserve account as soon as is feasible.

The Motion was made by Shelby and seconded by Sydney King.

During the discussion the board recognized that under the current circumstances in the State of California it might well not be until 2010 that this draw down is repaid.

MOTION PASSED unanimously

There was some wistful discussion of the monies owed RRHC under the PPS reconciliation and whether we were ever likely to actually see those funds.

MOTION: That RRHC staff are duly authorized and empowered to apply for a line of credit from the NCB bank Corporation in the amount of \$1000K (one hundred thousand dollars).

Motion was made by Kathy Epling and seconded by Shon Wellborn.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Shelby expressed some concern as to how RRHC would pay back such a line of credit and was reassured by Shon that we have had such situations in the past and paid the monies back bit by bit over time.

Monday August 31, 2009 from 5:30-8 at the health center there will be a meeting of the board and leadership team of RRHC. This is an informal potluck meeting to discuss at more depth the challenges faced by our health center in these times of budget cuts and uncertainties.

The next finance committee meeting will be August 25, 2009 (Tuesday) at 5PM at the health center.

Following the finance committee meeting the Board meeting will start at 6PM.
Wendi Joiner's presentation on cebaxone, a drug to help with opiate withdrawal treatment may happen at that meeting.

MOTION: That the board adjourn into executive session to hear information about contracts and personnel issues.

The motion was made by Kathy Epling and seconded by Janet Fitzgerald.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

The board went into executive session at 8:09 and returned to open session at 8:28, adjourning by general consensus fairly immediately.

Respectfully submitted, Kathy Epling, RRHC board secretary