

BENEWAH COMMUNITY HOSPITAL  
Thursday, June 26, 2025, 7:30 a.m.  
Francie Walters Board Room, Benewah Community Hospital, St. Maries, Idaho

MINUTES

Attendees: Gary Coats Tom Ebert Suzy Epler  
Dan Hammes Carol Humphrey Mike LaPlante  
Gary Green, via phone

Staff: Burt Keltner, *CEO* Lori Minier, *CFO* Becca Plante, *Board Secretary*  
Amy Edwards, *DNS* Dr. Cooper Wester

Other: Mark Reynolds, County Commissioner  
Community Members: Doug McKelvey, Kris Brock, Michelle Peterson,  
Mike Stoltey, Jennifer Izzarelli, Mike Moore

1. **Call to Order** –Chairman LaPlante opened the meeting 7:45 a.m.
2. **Regular Session**
3. **Positive Update/Celebrate Wins** – Welcoming new Board members Kris Brock and Doug McKelvey (starting July 1, 2025).
4. **Approve Minutes** – A **motion** made by Humphrey, seconded by Coats, to approve the meeting minutes from May 29, 2025. The motion passed.
5. **Open Forum/Visitors** – Community members in attendance introduced themselves. Discussion regarding posting the Finance Committee meetings on the website. Izzarelli stated that she was the one who organized the town hall meeting, trying to help bridge the gap in the community/help the hospital gain trust; discussion followed.
6. **Board Committee Reports**
  - 6.1. **Performance Improvement Committee** – The PI Committee meets in July.
  - 6.2. **Finance Committee** – The finance report was given during the Finance Committee meeting.
    - 6.2.1. **May Financials** – A **motion** made by Hammes, seconded by Humphrey, to approve the May financials. The motion passed.
    - 6.2.2. **Employee Discounts** – Kelter stated that he has started a conversation with the manager group about more ways to bring in employees/incentives. Item tabled; Keltner to bring more information to the July Board meeting.
  - 6.3. **Board Nominations and Bylaws/Policy Committee** – Green stated that the committee met and went through a pile of Board applicants. Our new Board members have been appointed by the County Commissioners to start 07/01/2025. The committee also discussed the slate of Board Officers and discussed two options. Option #1: Board Chairman: Suzy Epler, Board Vice Chairman: Tom Ebert, Past Chairman: Mike LaPlante (no changes in Board Secretary or

Treasurer). Option #2: Board Officers remain the same as they are now for one more year, with no Past Chairman as Humphrey's term will be ending; discussion followed.

6.3.1. **New Board Trustees as of 07/01/2025** – Brock and McKelvey attended the meeting today as community members.

6.3.2. **Board Officers/Committees** – The committee first presented Option #1:

**Board Chairman:** Suzy Epler, **Board Vice Chairman:** Tom Ebert,

**Past Chair:** Mike LaPlante, **Secretary:** Rebecca Plante, **Treasurer:** Burt Keltner.

A **motion** made by Humphrey, seconded by Green, to approve Option #1 as presented above.

Roll call vote: 4-Yes, 1-No, Epler and LaPlante abstained from voting. The motion passed.

*Option #2 not presented as motion carried for Option #1.*

6.4. **Medical Staff Committee** – Epler stated that Medical Staff met and their biggest discussion focused on Hospice patients/process. Kelter explained what we have been discussing about our Med. Staff taking care of hospice patients (comfort care) in-house. Discussion followed.

## 7. Medical Staff

### 7.1. Initial Appointment

7.1.1. **Alejandro Toscano, MD** – Wester stated that we recruited Dr. Toscano from Texas, and the Medical Staff believes he is a great candidate. Start date: July 15<sup>th</sup>. The Medical Staff is recommending the initial appointment of Dr. Alejandro Toscano. A **motion** made by Epler, seconded by Ebert, to approve the initial appointment for Dr. Toscano. The motion passed.

7.2. **Reappointments** – Wester stated that the Medical Staff approved and is recommending the following provider for reappointment:

7.2.1. **Jacob Pickering, DO** – A **motion** made by Hammes, seconded by Ebert, to approve the reappointment of Teleradiology provider, Dr. Jacon Pickering. The motion passed. *Wester exited at 8:12a.m.*

## 8. Contracts

8.1. **Cardinal Health (Remote Pharmacy)** – Cardinal Health will be our new after-hours remote pharmacy service; lower cost than current company. A **motion** made by Hammes, seconded by Epler, to approve the contract with Cardinal Health for Remote Pharmacy. The motion passed.

8.2. **Endoscopic Tower for Surgical Services** – The Endoscopic tower is at end of life. We are no longer able to find a vendor to do repairs. Cost: \$3,500/month. With the lease of the new machine, we will get a discount on consumables; discussion followed. Keltner explained the RFP process of obtaining quotes and our buying group. A **motion** made by Humphrey, seconded by Hammes, to approve the lease for the Endoscopic Tower for Surgical Services. Roll call vote: all ayes. The motion passed.

8.3. **High Point Medical Inc, dba HighPoint IT** – We are trying to move away from Nuvodia, our current IT support vendor. Nuvodia has agreed to lower our monthly bill by \$17,000 as we have taken on more duties in-house; Kelter is pushing for even more. The agreement with High Point Medical will be \$5,000 a month for after-hours support. Kelter added that we would love to buy our own servers someday. *Moore exited at 8:23 a.m.* A **motion** made by Hammes, seconded by Coats, to approve the High Point Medical Inc. agreement. The motion passed.

8.4. **Streamline ReVID Tracker** – Kelter stated that the Streamline ReVID Tracker agreement will allow us to have a single dashboard for all departments to review their charge data. *Moore entered at 8:26 a.m.* Contract is a 3-year term, but Kelter is trying to negotiate a 6-month agreement. Set-up fee will be waived. Discussion followed regarding PT not using Cerner. Discussion regarding financial situation. A **motion** made by Hammes, seconded by Ebert, to

approve the Streamline RevID Tracker agreement, if they agree to a 6-month term. Roll Call Vote: 6-yes, 1-no. The motion passed.

**8.5. Ziply Fiber (Telephone Services)** – Kelter stated that our new agreement with Ziply Fiber will be a monthly cost savings of \$2,000. 3-year agreement with a 30-day out. We will move to a fiber network, should have better service, and our internet should be three-times faster. A back-up phone switch included is also included in the agreement. Keltner will request a cost comparison between the School District as well. A **motion** made by Humphrey, seconded by Epler, to approve the Ziply Fiber agreement for Telephone Services. Roll call vote: all ayes. The motion passed.

**9. Administrative Reports/Questions** – The Board and Administration had discussions regarding the following items: Walla Walla Community College Nursing Program outreach and future collaboration; Idaho Medical Academy contract for clinicals in the ER for advanced EMT training.

## **10. Follow-Up Items**

**10.1. Chemo Hood Updates** – Kelter stated that a state law changed, requiring a larger version of filtration for compounding hoods, making our hood out of compliance. *Hammes exited at 8:44 a.m.* We have a company coming to inspect the hood in hopes of getting recertified as we have made some improvements. We are also looking into a grant if more improvements/construction is needed. *Hammes entered at 8:45 a.m.* Edwards added that we will need to get a nurse certified to mix chemo. as we no longer have a certified chemo. nurse.

**10.2. BCH Providers Meet & Greet** – Keltner stated that Dr. Sterling is doing a lot of PR herself, checking in with Marimn Health and local clinics. Plante and Keltner will talk with the Surgeons next week about a potential meet and greet.

## **11. Communications**

**11.1. BetterCARE Update** – Epler stated that BetterCARE has the following, upcoming events; The Memorial Walk August 1<sup>st</sup>, and the Scrubby Bear Golf Tournament August 9<sup>th</sup>. Epler is the Treasurer of BetterCARE, and Keltner did request \$25,000 from BetterCARE for each scope. This request is on-hold until a formal treasurer report is presented at their next meeting. Epler added that BetterCARE is the fundraising arm of the hospital and is a 501c3. Their Board consists of 11 members, who are volunteers in this community. BCH has a part-time grant writer now who can run grants through the 501c3.

Discussion regarding requests from the County. Kelter stated that we were unaware that the County requires a budget from the hospital to coincide with their fiscal year as we had never been asked for one until this year. A draft budget was given to the commissioners by Keltner to fulfill this request; discussion followed. *Pettersen exited at 9:00 a.m. Patterson entered at 9:02 a.m.* Salary increases in this document were brought up at a county meeting. Keltner stated that an increase in labor costs will lead to increased revenue, adding that this item did not include big salary increases, but was being optimistic of being fully staffed (no contract labor). Discussion regarding wages being less than other hospitals in our area. Kelter stated that he will work on another projection after June numbers are available (end of July). Kelter stated that the cardiac program he is looking into will only be able to happen if we receive grant funding. Reynolds stated that he can really see the hospital's efforts and they seem to be working.

## 12. Executive Session

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At 9:08 a.m., a **motion** made by Humprey, second by Coats, to adjourn into executive session per Idaho Code 74-206(1)(b) Personnel and Idaho Code 74-206(1)(j) Provider Contract & Other Contract Matters. Roll Call Vote: All ayes. The motion passed.

*Present at this time: Coats, Ebert, Epler, Green, Hammes, Humphrey, LaPlante, Keltner, Plante, Minier Edwards, Reynolds, McKelvey, Brock, Peterson, Stoltey, Izzarelli, and Moore*

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*Plante, Minier, Edwards, McKelvey, Brock, Peterson, Stoltey, Izzarelli, and Moore exited at 9:08 a.m.*

*Ebert exited at 9:20 a.m.*

Meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

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Rebecca Plante, Secretary

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Suzy Epler, Board Chairman