

OHIO HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION
Home Care and Hospice Board Meeting

July 13, 2023, 11:00am
Zoom Conference Call

MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Gen Stelzer opened the meeting and welcomed board members. She reminded members of the antitrust, conflict of interest and confidentiality policies located in the online folder.

Attendees included: Pete Van Runkle, Josh Anderson, Heidi McCoy, Erin Hart, Eric Talbert, Bryan Casey, Mark Knepper, Mike McConnell, Laura Dales, and Gen Stelzer.

Ms. Gen Stelzer asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. There was a motion given, another second and the motion was approved.

Mr. Pete Van Runkle made reference to the bylaws which were included in the online folder. Mr. Van Runkle explained that they need some technical corrections because they were based on the entire membership and not a specific HCH Board. He stated we should proceed with elections and update the bylaws in a future Board meeting.

Ms. Stelzer stated that she has assumed the Chair role since the previous Chair, David Walsh, is no longer with OHCA. She introduced Laura Dales as a potential new Board member. Ms. Dales introduced herself and gave her background and her intention to serve. Ms. Stelzer made a motion to nominate Ms. Dales to the Board. Mr. Mark Knepper seconded the nomination. A vote was held, and Ms. Dales was unanimously elected.

Ms. Stelzer then stated a new Vice Chair was needed. She made a motion to nominate Mark Knepper as Vice Chair. Mr. Mike McConnell second the motion. A vote was held, and Mr. Knepper was unanimously elected.

Mr. Pete Van Runkle then turned to the state budget and developments for home care and hospice providers. He stated that for purposes of home care and hospice, the final version mostly matched what was included in the House version. There was a veto from the Governor to remove the language that specified the amount of increases to rates for home and community services. This was expected and is typical for this and previous administration's desire to keep specific rates out of statute. Nonetheless, the appropriation remains and the administration is supportive of the rate increases which should boost average rates for direct care workers to \$17/hr starting 1/1/24 and \$18/hr starting 7/1/24. We are waiting to see how state departments set the rates by rule.

Mr. Van Runkle then shifted the conversation to House Bill 45. He stated that the portal is now available for hospices but not yet for HCBS providers. For Hospice, providers have until the end of the month to apply. Mr. Knepper stated he had applied but not yet received funds. He stated he found a website which tracks the funding, and it shows no hospices have been paid yet.

Mr. Josh Anderson discussed the CMS proposed Medicaid Access rule. He explained some of the details of the rule, including the disturbing provision to require 80 percent of Medicaid rates to go towards direct care wages. He stated that OHCA provided comments and also signed on to extensive comments from our national association, NAHC.

Mr. Josh Anderson then discussed the CMS CY24 Proposed Home Health Payment rule. He detailed the carnage represented by an overall 2.2% decrease to payments. CMS intends to fully implement a budget neutrality adjustment which more than swallows up a small inflationary increase. Mr. Anderson explained that the inflation calculation is lower than expected because it is an estimate for calendar year 2024 and doesn't adjust for corrections to previous year's estimates. He also gave a summary of the other home care related provisions of the rule. One silver lining is CMS did not propose to recoup funds from CY20-22 just yet, but that when they do, the estimated overpayments total almost \$3.5B. He explained that NAHC has already filed a lawsuit, but will continue advocacy on all fronts to stop the cuts from being finalized.

Ms. Heidi McCoy then provided a summary of the hospice related provisions from the proposed Home Health Payment Rule. She stated that most were involving program integrity. She referred Board members to a recent NewsBites article for full details.

Ms. Erin Hart asked for volunteers to speak at a Cleveland area school career planning forum. Ms. Dales volunteered.

Mr. Anderson then stated OHCA would be having a meeting with ODH staff next week and asked for topics to discuss. Ms. Stelzer said it would be good if ODH could update the lists of top deficiencies. Mr. Anderson said he would add to his list which also included updates on surveys and home health licensing.

Ms. Stelzer then reminded Board members the next meeting is set for September 20th at 11am. She asked for any further topics of interest. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.