

**Board of Trustees**  
**Meeting held via Zoom video/phone**  
**9 June 2021**  
**1300 hours**

**Present:**

Colonel Joseph Krawczyk, President  
 Colonel Gary DeGasta, Vice President  
 Michael Klopchin, Secretary  
 Kent Butterfield  
 Jennifer Carmichael

Arthur Charron  
 Charly Dickerson  
 BMCS Michael diMonda  
 LTC David Fabricius  
 Dr. Jacqueline Kelly

CAPT Peter Niles  
 Jamie Percey  
 Joyce Scribner  
 Robert E. Burke, Director, Vermont Office  
 of Veterans Affairs

**Excused:** Thomas Costello

CPT Brenda Cruickshank

Robert Hooper

**Guests:** Melissa Jackson, CEO  
 Melinda Crawl, Marketing  
 Shannyn MacVicar, Cardinal Unit Mgr  
 Cynthia Murray, Educator  
 Representative. Mary Morrissey

Asa Morin, COO  
 Jon Endres, Environmental  
 Steve McClafferty, Finance  
 Darlene Eriksen, Finance  
 Tonya Goodell, HR

Jean Cody, QA Nurse  
 Dr. Peter King, Provider  
 Patricia Crossman, DNS  
 Kimberly Telford, Supply Clerk  
 Robyn Boland, Executive Assistant

The meeting was called to order by President Krawczyk at 1300.

Roll call was taken by Secretary Klopchin and a quorum was announced.

Motion made by Mr. Arthur Charron to accept the 14 April 2021 minutes as written, second by Mrs. Joyce Scribner. Motion carried.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PRESIDENT WELCOME</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">President welcomed the Board and the new Board members present: LTC David Fabricius and CAPT Peter Niles to the Board of Trustees. Also welcomed guest Representative Mary Morrissey.</p> <p>LTC Fabricius provided a background of his connection to Bennington and his military experience including enlisted in the Marine Corp out of high school for a few years, then went to college, and taught school for several years. Tried to re-enlist in the Marine Corp after 9/11 but was sent to Officer Candidate School due to age and is now a Commissioned Officer of the US Army. Currently runs the Ethan Allen Training site in Jericho, Vermont as a full-time job. The reason for accepting the position on the Board of Trustees is due to the quality of care his father received as a resident while at the Vermont Veterans' Home (VVH). Felt the level of care was second to none and wants to give back to VVH and continue to move it forward.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INFO</b></p>

<p align="center"><b>EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION</b></p>	<p>CAPT Niles also provided his military background including recently retiring from the Coast Guard with 36 years active duty service and rose through the ranks from E1 to an O6. Commanded 4 ships and served on America’s Tall Ship, the Eagle, as the Operations Officer. He had spent almost 18 years at sea. Holds a lot of Incident Command qualifications and is always thinking what’s next, and motto has been it’s going to happen, it’s just a matter of when. Will bring that same thinking of what’s going to happen and are we prepared for it to VVH. Has ties to Bennington, father was a veteran, wife is retired Coast Guard, and his son will be reporting to the Coast Guard Academy soon. Also views this as he himself might be a resident one day at VVH and it behooves him to make sure it is the best home possible.</p> <p>On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the CEO presented (in person) VVH employees Darlene Eriksen and Kimberly Telford with Board of Trustee Coins. Steve McClafferty, Finance Director, read his nomination speech praising their efforts to secure and maintain the personal protective equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CEO and President Krawczyk also joined in thanking them for all their extra hard work during this critical time.</p>	
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>COMMITTEE RESTRUCTURING</b></p>	<p>Col. DeGasta reviewed the Performance Expectations (previously distributed to the Board members) document that establishes the performance expectations of the Trustees, Committee Chairs, and Committee members and tasks the Board Committees to accomplish the nine goals defined in the Strategic Plan. Also went through the mapping of Committees to Strategic Plan Initiative section which correlates the expectations of each Committee to the Strategic Plan. A summary of the template for the committee reports was also given.</p> <p>President Krawczyk then asked each Board member their thoughts on the proposed plan presented. Feedback from the members and staff that participated in the committee meetings was mostly positive, like the format, guidelines, gives structure to the meetings and is an excellent outline to success.</p> <p>CEO raised a question whether the staff that are assigned to the committees would be expected to attend (in person) the off-site meetings. Will wait and see how this evolves.</p> <p>President Krawczyk announced he would accept a motion to accept the Committee Structure as presented. Dr. Kelly so moved for the motion. Mrs. Scribner seconded the motion. Discussion regarding flexibility in the language if we need to warn the Strategic Planning Committee due to having 8 members, that Mr. Dickerson would remove himself as a member of the Executive Committee and not be on the Strategic Planning Committee to reduce the number to 7, but with the current wording of the motion, he would have to be. We are waiting to hear back from our attorney for clarification on the number of individuals on the committee and whether it would need to be warned. After discussion on</p>	<p align="center"><b>INFO</b></p> <p align="center"><b>CLOSED</b></p>

	<p>this matter, the wording “with respect to the Strategic Planning Committee, it can be modified at the discretion of the President of the Board based on technical warning requirements that might be needed” was added to the motion. “Call the question” was stated by Mr. Percey. Mr. Klopchin agreed and announced “Call the question”. No further discussion. Motion carried with none opposed.</p>	
TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>HOME REPORTS</b> <b>CEO</b></p>	<p>CEO gave a PowerPoint presentation and provided updates on many subjects: Since the last Board meeting, have had 5 employee and 1 resident case of COVID, most were asymptomatic, and were caught during testing. The resident had no symptoms and made a full recovery which shows the benefit of getting the vaccine. Starting to get back to normal: residents can have leave of absences, group activities and communal dining on the units, hairdresser has returned and spiritual visits on the units. Can’t commingle between the units yet. Families are still required to make appointments for their visits at this time. Most outdoor activities have been cancelled but do have Re-Creation coming in August.</p> <p>Reviewed the slides for the FY22 Budget. The General Fund number is substantially lower than previous years but must remember that starting last year we ask for annual budget adjustment for our Medicaid settlement. Also have the impact of COVID-for FY21 (current fiscal year) we are anticipating a budget adjustment between 3.5-4.5 million depending upon what the Medicaid settlement will be, and the costs related to COVID will be. Testimony went well this year. We did receive some money from the VA as part of one of the Recovery Acts, but in the most recent American Recovery Act that the State received close to a billion dollars, we were granted zero dollars for any of the projects submitted. We will maintain at least a 6-month supply of PPE going forward. Working on locating off-site storage. We need between 3-4 million dollars to fill the void in the budget.</p> <p>Census is slowly going up and we are working hard on admissions.</p> <p>Vaccination status is at 67%. Starting June 14 must report weekly to CMS the vaccination status of every resident, staff, and direct-care personnel (Agency staff, Hospice staff, contract staff and volunteers). Also, must provide proof of education to staff and residents of risks/benefits of the vaccine.</p> <p>Starting in-person staff meetings June 22 and 23.</p> <p>Certificate of Need is completed for the Security &amp; Access Control Project and asked for an expedited review, which was approved. Bids were due in May. Hope to select a contractor soon. We received 11 million dollars from the VA to renovate A wing. Will need to reduce the census and shift residents around to units. Once the project is done, we will not lose any bed count, just the layout will be different. The project will probably take a couple of years to complete.</p> <p>Have been working with several people to now have a standard format for the Land Use Agreement. Added language to the contract that the individual leasing the land is responsible for any remediation and repair of chemical spill, environmental damage found, etc. The National Guard contract is completed.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>

	<p>They advised they will be returning the parcel back to us when they build a new armory. The CEO asked for a 6-month notice or as much notice as they can. The lease with the Chamber expires next August and will need to update that lease. We own the land. The Chamber owns the building. The Farmer's Market is using land by the deer park. The high school and the Vermont Storm use the practice fields and working on updating their contracts and certificates of liability.</p> <p>CEO will not be here for the August Board meeting as will be attending the NASVH convention relinquishing her title of president. Will then be the Chairperson on the Liaison Committee that works between NASVH and the VA. The committee helps define regulations and the future of veteran homes.</p> <p>Update on projects: CEO is meeting with an Eagle Scout that would like to build a cover/shelter to block the sun on the air soft pistol range; we have money for parts of the mobility trail, but still needs to be put out to bid; the putting range has to go back out for bid as had to revise the proposal; ordering a golf cart that wheelchairs can be loaded onto and go for rides; received zero responses for the RFP on the feasibility study and will re-issue it with the marketing study portion as did receive feedback of such.</p>	
<p><b>PATRICIA CROSSMAN DIRECTOR OF NURSING</b></p>	<p>Recently promoted 2 RN's to Day Supervisor positions, but now need to fill their positions. Use Agency staff on an on-going basis as staffing continues to be an issue. Nurse Educator working on an LNA certification class for this fall. Staff has done an outstanding job in dealing with COVID. Mary Cicirello, Assistant Director of Nursing, has done an outstanding job and has been leading the testing process over the past year. Testing one day a week at this time with many staff helping out.</p> <p>Use of EMR (electronic medical records) has eliminated documenting behaviors on separate papers as the system prompts the staff member while they are in the record for them to document any behaviors. This frees up a lot of time for staff.</p> <p>Pressure ulcers and medication error rates are well below the national average. Falls are the most challenging and difficult. Falls seem to be happening in resident rooms and second shift, so focus is there.</p> <p>Each week checking for survey readiness to make sure maintaining our compliance by checking medication expired meds, 15 minute checks, infection control, hand washing, wearing proper PPE, Care Plans are updated, families are notified of new med changes promptly, documentation for changes in condition, etc. Feedback is that focus of surveyors is on infection control.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>
<p><b>DR. PETER KING MEDICAL DIRECTOR</b></p>	<p>Staff continue to do a great job. Community prevalence is down-Bennington County only had 12 positive tests in last 14 days. No longer need to wear face shields with face masks in common areas. Continue to offer discussion on how to obtain vaccinations for any staff interested in that. Only need to use the Department of Health now on a consulting basis as issues come up. Discussion to present Dr.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>

<p><b>MELINDA CROWL</b> ADMISSION/MARKETING</p> <p><b>STEVE MCCLAFFERTY</b> FINANCE</p>	<p>Mark Levine with a Board coin for all his help and assistance through the pandemic. Stacey Whitten has become a real asset and improving response to issues that come up, as well as routine updates and administrative roles. Echoed the praises of Darlene Eriksen and Kim Telford with all their efforts with the PPE supply.</p> <p>Current census 95, plus 5 on the DOM. Continue updating Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube accounts. Many updates to the website also. Advertising with Vermont Maturity, New York and Vermont Senior Times editions, Bennington Banner, Manchester Journal, Brattleboro Reformer, Rutland Herald, the VFW, American Legion yearbook and will be with the Garlic Festival over Labor Day. Nice article in Seven Days on Leney Barclay. Working on filling space on Touchtown. Will be attending the Veterans’ Summit next week. Doing more VVH branding. Enrolled in the Vermont Lead program which is a 12-month course being mentored by the leadership in Vermont.</p> <p>Interim audit will be taking place next week. They will be returning in September (for two weeks) for the final audit.</p> <p>Mrs. Scribner made a motion to write off debt for uncollectable accounts in the amount of \$554,091.98. This is for account receivables that did not pay through Medicare, Medicaid, co-insurance, or private pay and we need to get them off our books, so the account receivable is more accurate and current to operations. We have one year to bill Medicare and six months to bill Medicaid. Mr. Percey seconded the motion. The motion carried with none opposed.</p> <p>Discussion on status of the Board accounts. Mr. Dickerson and the Financial Director will be discussing a process to develop/adopt a framework of what to do on an annual basis from the income and gains on the Common Trust account – how to grow it and use it smartly.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p> <p><b>INFO</b></p> <p><b>CLOSED</b></p> <p><b>INFO</b></p>
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION</b></p>
<p><b>CHARLY DICKERSON</b> UPCOMING ELECTION</p> <p><b>BY-LAWS</b></p>	<p>Mr. Dickerson requested members to contact him in advance of the annual election held during the August meeting if they are interested in holding any one of the 5 offices: president, vice president, secretary, or the other 2 positions on the Executive Committee.</p> <p>Will work on updating the by-laws to reflect the current version of the committee structure. Has not heard back from our attorney, David Borsykowsky, to get clarity on warning committee meetings. Does</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>

	not see much in the by-laws that fundamentally need to be changed other than a descriptor of the Strategic Committee and at one point talked about electing officers for a two-year term, but our statutes calls for a one-year term.	
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>COL. GARY DEGASTA EDUCATION/TRAINING</b>	<p>Col. DeGasta announced the Education and Training Committee has made progress in planning the event for Tuesday and Wednesday, October 26 and 27 at the Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, Vermont. Dan Vogt from BerryDunn will serve as the facilitator and program leader. The theme will be “Strategy to Action” built around the Strategic Plan, Board committees, and feasibility studies. There may be a book to read in advance. Wednesday may have one session with State staff to break the meeting up a bit.</p>	<b>INFO</b>
<b>BOARD APPOINTMENTS</b>	<p>No update on any pending Board Member appointments from the Governor’s staff. The onus to recruit more Board members may fall more on the Board members at this time as the State is in the process of filling a massive number of vacancies they have throughout the state.</p>	
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>PUBLIC COMMENTS</b>	<p>Representative Mary Morrissey thanked the staff, administrative, Dr. King, and the Board of Trustees for their amazing job during the pandemic. Appreciated being able to use the Veteran’s Home as part of the National Guard sendoff recently. Is part of the National Guard Caucus and hope to be getting VVH involved in initiatives that we need or things that the legislator can address for us or put some support behind. Hope to have them tour the facility once guidelines allow. Recommended VVH could use some of the free access TV stations as free advertisement throughout the state.</p>	<b>INFO</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<p>President Krawczyk thanked Representative Mary Morrissey for all her support of VVH here, in the community, and in the legislature. Also thanked her for her part in organizing Memorial Day cards being made and distributed to our veterans at VVH and for all the other contributions she has made over time. Her support is much appreciated by the Board.</p> <p>Plans are being made to hold the August 11 Board of Trustee meeting at the local American Legion. It is a large facility to accommodate social distancing for an in-person meeting. Requested the COO to take charge of the plans and also coordinate a site visit. The Dietary Supervisor is working on logistics</p>	<b>INFO</b>

	to furnish the lunch. The meeting will start at 10:00 am with Committee reports and the open meeting at 1:00 pm.  Mr. Klopchin to check into access TV to video record the next Board meeting.	
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Carmichael, seconded by Col. DeGasta. Motion carried and meeting adjourned.	<b>CLOSED</b>

Meeting was adjourned at 1507. Next Board Meeting 11 August 2021.