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CASCADE MEDICAL
PARTNERS IN YOUR HEALTH

**Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting**
Chelan County Public Hospital District No. 1
Administration Conference Room & Zoom Connection
January 21, 2026

**Present:** Cary Ecker, Vice President; Diane Blake, Chief Executive Officer; Pat Songer; Chief Operating Officer/Chief of EMS; Marianne Vincent, Chief Financial Officer; Melissa Grimm, Chief Human Resources Officer; Natasha Piestrup, Senior Director of Nursing; Megan Baker, Executive Assistant; Nicole Edwards, RN

**Zoom:** Dr. Jesse Knight, Commissioner; Jessica Kendall, Commissioner; Kathy Jo Evans, Accounting Director; Julie Pankow, Community Member

**Excused**: Shari Campbell, President; Tom Baranouskas, Commissioner

| Topics | Actions/Discussions |
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| **Call to Order** | • Vice President Cary Ecker called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM and then led the Pledge of Allegiance. |
| **Consent Agenda** | • Dr. Knight moved to approve the consent agenda. Jessica seconded the motion; motion unanimously approved. |
| **Community Input** | • None |
| **CM Values** | Diane Blake provided the report.<br>• Cascade Medical's shared value of *Community* was highlighted, reflecting the team's commitment to delivering effective, high-quality care while supporting individuals and families during difficult times.<br>• At a recent Cascade Medical Foundation Board meeting, a prospective board member shared a personal reflection on how Cascade Medical has been woven into their family's life over generations, noting that care extends beyond patients to families and loved ones.<br>• Gratitude was expressed for the compassionate care provided to a patient during their final days, as well as for the support shown to the patient's mother—underscoring the deep sense of community at Cascade Medical. |
| **Committee Reports** | **A. Medical Staff**<br>Dr. Jesse Knight provided the report.<br>• Updates were shared on Medical Staff governing documents, including changes to the practice agreement of Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) to align with changes in state law. APPs will now practice under collaboration agreements, eliminating the need for routine chart co-signatures and helping streamline care delivery. Dr. Jerome will continue serving as Interim Emergency Department Medical Director. Endoscopy services are now available two days per week. A new Caregiver Support Group is launching under the leadership of Dr. Moholy to support community members caring for loved ones.<br>**B. Board Quality Rounding**<br>Dr. Jesse Knight provided the report.<br>• Employee Health shared progress on annual respirator fit testing, with a goal of reaching 100% compliance by the end of 2026. An Employee Health EMR has also been launched to centralize records and support regulatory requirements. |

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| | • The Emergency Department is working to improve home medication reviews to reduce medication errors and support safer patient transitions, with a target of screening 90% of patients. |
| **Q4 2025 Dashboard** | **Diane Blake led the review.**<br><br>**Out of the organizational successes in 2025, which are you most proud of? Which do you believe will have the greatest long-term positive impact on how we serve our community?**<br>• The group reflected on key organizational successes in 2025, including employee listening sessions, expanded mobile clinic hours, passage of the EMS levy, and the CNA program. Expanded clinic access and progress on employee compensation were highlighted as having strong community impact.<br>• Positive feedback was shared on the new AI tool used in the clinic, with anticipation for greater benefits once fully integrated into the EMR.<br>• Strong employee retention was noted, particularly in comparison to other hospitals experiencing layoffs, reinforcing Cascade Medical's stability as a rural healthcare organization.<br><br>**Out of the objectives that were incomplete at yearend, which are you most concerned about, from a broad strategy perspective?**<br>• Areas of concern among unfinished objectives included parking capacity; market expansion; and strengthening community connection efforts, including with Spanish language speakers; as well as longer-term organizational sustainability.<br><br>**What additional information do you need to feel confident in your understanding of CM's strategic direction?**<br>• Commissioners requested periodic updates related to the Master Facilities Plan. |
| **2026-2028 Organizational Objectives and 2026 Annual Objectives** | **Diane Blake led the review.**<br>• Two versions of the long-term objectives were presented. Version A reflected prior formats, while Version B included a brief preamble with the same annual objectives and more concise long-term goals. The Board expressed a preference for Version B.<br>• Discussion focused on shifting from tracking individual project completion to measuring outcomes tied to the greatest drivers of community impact. The intended audience for the objectives includes the Board, Administration, employees, and the Cascade Medical Foundation.<br>• Key performance indicators reviewed included patient experience metrics such as Net Promoter Score, quality benchmarks tied to accreditation standards, and growth in empaneled patients relative to the district population.<br>• Long-term parking solutions were identified as a priority, with the possibility of earlier Board involvement. Administration is working toward having clearer direction by end of June.<br>• Administration plans to return to the Board in February with finalized 2026–2028 long-term objectives and 2026 annual objectives, for final approval.<br><br>**Strategic Pillar Highlights:**<br>• *Patient and Family-Centered Care*: Emphasis on accreditation, improving patient experience, expanding market share, and using data to better understand community need and gaps around behavioral health services.<br>• *Financial Stewardship*: Commitment to meeting 2026 margin and cash |

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| | goals, with continued focus on improving Rehab Services performance.<br>• *Our People*: A number of tasks will roll up to support the overall focus of sustaining and continuing to grow organizational culture.<br>• *Community Connections*: Focus on communication regarding expanding access points and increasing community awareness of available services to improve care accessibility. |
| **Action Items** | **MOTION: Approve Resolution 2026-01: Surplus Equipment**<br>• Jessica moved to approve, Dr. Knight seconded, and the motion unanimously approved.<br><br>**MOTION: Approve Credentialing**<br>• Credentialing Candidates<br>  ○ Selemani Wambuzi, PA-C<br>  ○ Caylon Haggard, PA-C<br>• Dr. Knight moved to approve, Jessica seconded, and the motion unanimously approved. |
| **November Financial Report** | Marianne Vincent provided the report.<br>• November closed slightly below budget, driven in part by delays in coding as staff addressed a backlog of HIM documentation, which temporarily reduced revenue. Operating expenses were higher than anticipated, largely due to professional fees, recruiting costs, locum coverage, and consulting services.<br>• Year-to-date performance remains positive overall and ahead of budget expectations.<br>• Cash receipts were lower in November but are expected to rebound, with cash balances currently approximately $1.7 million ahead of projections.<br>• Days in Net Accounts Receivable increased due to a Medicare adjustment.<br>• Results from the recent 340B audit were received in December, and Cascade Medical elected to continue participation in the program. A quarterly oversight committee will be established, policies formalized, and changes made to the third-party administrator.<br>• Work has begun on audit preparation and cost report compilations, and year-end gross revenue targets remain on track. |
| **Administrator Report** | **Diane Blake provided the report**.<br>• **Recruitment and Staffing Updates**: Cascade Medical has hired a new Rehabilitation Director who will begin in mid-March, with a transition period alongside the Interim Director. The new leader brings experience in critical access hospitals. Clinical capacity continues to grow, with Endoscopy services now available two days per week. In January, Justin Stoltzfus, NP joined full-time and is building a patient panel. Dr. Dannica Ballard has been hired and will join Cascade Medical in late September following completion of residency, with plans to support endoscopy services in addition to working in family medicine. Additional physician recruitment is ongoing, including a clinic physician with leadership capacity and a full-time Emergency Department physician. Dr. Dixon is also scheduled to join the team in November after completing residency in Alaska.<br>• **Advocacy Efforts**: The state legislative session is underway, with hospital leaders focused on protecting healthcare funding amid a challenging state budget environment. Recent years have brought increased taxes and reduced reimbursement for hospitals. Diane will participate in Advocacy Days in Olympia later this month to meet with state legislators. Commissioners are encouraged to engage with advocacy action alerts shared by the Washington State Hospital Association**.**<br>• **Safety Net Assessment Funding:** A federally directed payment |

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| | program that helps support care for Medicaid patients is at risk due to CMS changes, with significant payment reductions beginning in 2027 as a result of HR1. This is a widespread issue impacting hospitals across the country.<br>• **Rural Health Transformation Program**: A new federal initiative will distribute $50 billion over five years to support rural healthcare, intended in part to offset funding losses from HR1. Washington State will receive approximately $181 million this year, though future annual amounts remain uncertain. A portion of funds will be allocated through processes led by the Washington State Hospital Association and the rural hospital committee working to establish fair distribution methods. Additional funding opportunities focused on revenue cycle improvements are also being explored. Cascade Medical is actively monitoring and preparing to pursue these opportunities.<br>• **Capital Asset Purchase**: CM will replace a failed dietary freezer at a cost of $7,400 to maintain safe food service operations.<br>• **Compact Work:** Physician and administrative interviews are underway to establish a shared understanding and agreement on how medical staff and administration collaborate, with the goal of defining clear roles, expectations, and processes for working together effectively. |
| **Board Follow Up Items / Meeting Evaluation / Commissioner Comments** | • Kudos for recruitment and hiring efforts!<br>• If you're interested in joining Advocacy Days, please let Megan know. |
| **Adjournment** | • Cary moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 PM and the group unanimously approved. |

Signed by:
Cary Ecker
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Cary Ecker, Vice President

Signed by:
Jessica Kendall
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Jessica Kendall, Secretary