

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jennifer Mowen at 9:47 AM.

Members Present

Joanne Beeler
Bill Corbin
Mike Elbe
Lynn Fisher
Monica Foster
Henry Gauwitz
Dick Huddleston
Shannon Kachinovas
Koleen Lord (Lesley Savage)
John Meixner
Jennifer Mowen
Kathy Osment
Michael Pearson
Kim Pierce
Seamus Reilly
Darla Rischar
Dane Simpson
Carole Thoele
Cheryl Welge
Connie Wessels
Lila Whestine
Dawn Wild

Members Absent

Dan Bentz
Kip Colgrove
Diana Doran
Amy Greer
Andrew Heath
Michelle Reyburn
John Sanez
Bob Spears

Presenter

Laura Kessel

Staff

Lorraine Crawford
Howard Kirchner
Blanche Shoup

Guests

Salvador Garza
Samantha Harnack
Curtis Harn
Mike Inman
Kathryn Jennings
Brenda Middendorf
Kristen Norvell

Chair Mowen welcomed members and guests to the WIB meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

Mowen referred members to the May 17, 2022, meeting minutes. She asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes. There were none.

A motion to approve the May 17, 2022 meeting minutes was made by Dawn Wild and seconded by Shannon Kachinovas. The motion carried by roll call.

III. Chairperson Report

Mowen reported that in 2021 Knapheide Manufacturing Company was one of the statewide recipients of the Business Leadership Award. She noted that Knapheide is represented on the WIB and a member of the Executive Committee. Mowen reviewed their partnership in other

workforce programs. She stated since there was no in-person event last year and as this is the first time since January 30, 2020, the WIB has met in person, we wanted to take this opportunity to recognize Knapheide.

Joanne Beeler, on behalf of Knapheide, accepted the certificate.

IV. Healthcare Sector Update

Mowen explained that today's meeting will focus on the health care sector. She noted that three of our WIB members will speak today on healthcare. Mowen stated that Bill Corbin, V.P. HR representing McDonough District Hospital, Macomb, IL; Connie Wessels, registered nurse, representing OSF Healthcare St Mary Medical Center in Galesburg; and, Dawn Wild representing Blessing Health Systems in Quincy will provide comments on how health care has changed since COVID, different trends in the industry and challenges and opportunities they are experiencing in their facilities.

Corbin spoke about the challenges that are facing McDonough District Hospital (MDH). He stated staffing shortage, financial issues, patient safety and quality issues, behavioral health and Cyber Security are the immediate concerns. Corbin noted that the hospital has had to hire during the height of the COVID pandemic traveling personnel to fill the staffing shortages. He mentioned while they filled positions, it did impact us as we found that some of our staff decided to take higher paying traveling positions. He said we are focusing on filling our vacancies. Corbin noted to help remedy the problem we are offering sign on and retention bonuses in some of our departments and enhanced pay rate for those employees working with COVID patients. He stated we looked at market data also and based on that information, staff below market salaries will receive adjustments. He noted that over the course of last year we saw our operation expenses increase about 15% due to staffing, supplies and utilities. Corbin explained we rely heavily of Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements and the timing of payments. He said at this time we are focusing on how we can reduce our operating costs. Corbin said in an effort to reduce staff cost we are trying to fill vacancies so we can cut back on the cost of traveling personnel which will assist in reducing costs over time. Corbin said we are facing the same challenges as many others across the industry. He asked if there were any questions.

Mike Elbe asked what the retention bonus looks like. Corbin said the retention bonus in place involves staff remaining at the hospital for a two-year period.

Connie Wessels RN with OSF St Mary's Hospital in Galesburg, Illinois noted that the hospital has come a long way regarding the COVID pandemic. She said at the beginning of the pandemic we expanded our already existing Telehealth and Digital Technology. Wessels reviewed how the technology and remote monitoring tools are utilized, especially in the rural settings. She said there will continue to be more need for virtual care. Wessels said because of the innovations at OSF healthcare we are fortunate to work with a larger health care system that provides us the opportunity to have access to more equipment and partner with other facilities such as the University of Illinois. Wessels remarked there is a lot more to come in regards to

digital technology. She said one of the most critical issues is working with virtual care, workforce strategies, supply chain and future planning. Wessels said staffing shortage, retention and employee engagement are some of the challenges we face. She noted many staff have stepped away from health care for different reasons, which represented a challenge. Wessel pointed out that access to health care is so complex in giving the care people need. She said more urgent care, prompt care and long term COVID care clinics are being opened up to address health care needs. Wessels noted we are looking at setting up “hospital at home” care whereby the needs of the patient are addressed at their home versus going to a hospital which will increase the family experience and reduce costs. She noted we are always trying to serve and satisfy the needs of our patients. Wessels explained that transportation and costs for patients is something else that needs to be address. She related that virtual care, remote monitoring, home care will continue to grow.

Dawn Wild, Director of Human Resources at Blessing Hospital reported our challenges aren't unique from what other hospitals are facing. She mentioned that staffing remains a challenge. Wild explained we developed an internal agency position to recruit staff. She explained that we recently completed our annual staff market review and evaluation of our competitiveness to consider market adjustments. She said we now try to balance retention with referral bonuses and loan forgiveness. She stated our focus is on the well-being of our employees. She reported we recently attained Magnet designation that recognizes exceptional care to our community. Wild commented that the hospital has an internal program development that includes, but not limited to, certified nursing assistant (CNA), certified medical assistant (CMA), social worker career path, and Radiology Tech training. She said Blessing is identifying other programs to develop. Wild reported there is a new workforce development position that will concentrate on building stronger relationships and untapped pipelines within the communities we serve. She said our efforts will be working with schools and facilities to recruit our work force. Wild stated we just finished our employee engagement survey and are now providing the results and education to our leadership team for them to work on action plan. She remarked further, we are focusing on diversity and inclusion training as a result of the recent survey.

A question-and-answer period followed.

V. Rural Telehealth Presentation

Mowen noted that one of the key changes in health care in telehealth. She stated today's speaker, Laura Kessel, will present a Power Point on the changes in health care with a focus on rural Telehealth. Mowen reported that Laura Kessel is the Director of Telehealth for SIU School of Medicine. Mowen noted her role as director is she is responsible for managing SIU's telehealth activities. Mowen reported Kessel is a member of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC), and is the immediate past chair of Rural Partners which is the state's rural development council. She is active in her community by serving on the Fulton County Board of Health and recently elected to the Fulton County Board. Kessel has earned a bachelor's degree of Social Work and a master's degree in Social Science.

Kessel stated telehealth is part of the future of rural (and urban) health. She stated telehealth is a broad concept that includes the use of electronic information and digital technology to support remote clinical health care, health-related education for patients and care providers, public health, and healthcare administration. She reviewed the benefits of telehealth which includes keeping the patient close to home which help reduce financial and transportation issue, reduces unnecessary risk for patient and care providers and provides access to health care that might not have been available otherwise.

Kessel reviewed the number of ways telehealth is offered. She stated remote patient monitoring and mobile health care all fall under that telehealth umbrella. Kessel said this included reading of X-ray remotely, patient data from a holster monitoring, and glucose monitoring that is sent to the provider. She noted, for example, text messages can be sent reminding patients that they are due for a vaccine. Kessel reviewed traditional health care to telehealth to the home. She reported that live video is the most common way telehealth is provided and it is in “real time.

Kessel provided statistics on how telehealth has grown exponential from March - April 2020, due to the pandemic, to now. She pointed out that the current average telehealth to the home, or direct to the consumer current average is approximately 4,000 per month. Kessel reviewed the home counties of patients served by telehealth for the months of March 2020 through September 2021.

Kessel commented on the future of Telehealth at ISU School of Medicine and how they are working to secure a telehealth-specific platform for future use in telehealth to the home/direct to consumer and in our traditional telehealth program as well. She pointed out that telehealth it is user-friendly for patients, providers and staff, patient satisfaction survey is built-in, it is virtual waiting room, and hopefully in the future traditional telehealth program will continue but the hope is to also continue offering offer telehealth to the home long-term depending on if telehealth reimbursement changes can be made permanent. She said there are still a lot of rules and regulations that need to be followed such as looking at the reimbursement issue. Kessel explained we want patients to feel comfortable using telehealth, how it works and what to expect. She noted moving forward, telehealth is no longer the future but part of the package of services already offered. Kessel noted there is a sunset date on telehealth and is hopeful legislation will be passed to expand COVID-era services.

Kessel noted that workforce is key to healthcare personnel expansion. She provided statistics of clinical shortages and the poor distribution of maternal-fetal medical specialists and subspecialists in various states and the potential employee needs related to telehealth. Kessel pointed out the potential employee needs related to health care that include Practitioners/Healthcare Providers, nurses, community health care workers, telehealth peer support specialists, information technology associates, sonographers/imaging staff, and others.

Kessel said, in closing, telehealth needs to be incorporated into a regular practice rather than a stand-alone, move from crises to a new normal and payment parity. Kessel referred members to telehealth resources listed and said she can be reached at lkessel21@siumed.edu.

A question-and-answer session followed.

VI. Committee Reports

Mowen referred members to the June 23, 2022, and August 11, 2022, Executive Committee meetings summary included in their packet. She stated a vote to approve the Committee's action is required. Mowen noted if anyone that may has a conflict of interest must abstain from discussion and the vote. She asked if there were any comments or concerns regarding the minutes.

A vote to approve June 23 and August 11, 2022, Executive Committee's Report was made by Mike Elbe and seconded by Cheryl Welge. The motion carried by roll call.

VII. Election of Officers

Mowen reported that the Executive Committee, acting as the Nominating Committee, presents the following Slate of Officers: Joanne Beeler, Chairperson and Cheryl Welge, Vice Chairperson.

Mowen opened the floor for additional nominations. She said hearing none, nominations are closed.

A motion to close the nomination and unanimously elect Joanne Beeler Chairperson and Cheryl Welge Vice Chairperson was made by Mike Elbe and seconded by Dick Huddleston. The motion carried by roll call.

VIII. Old Business

Shoup reported the Illinois Workforce Commission has concluded their work in reviewing the Workforce System in Illinois and are drafting their recommendations. A paper for public comment is schedule to be available the middle of September. She noted as soon as she receives the information it will be shared with the membership. Shoup said one observation from the system review was that there are a number of technology systems in the state that do not communicate with each other. She explained this makes it difficult to work with common customers. Shoup stated additionally there are no marketing funds available. She reminded members that programs funds cannot be used for marketing. Shoup explained this may be the reason for the lack of access and knowledge about our programs in Illinois.

Mowen asked if anyone else had any old business. There was none.

IX. New Business

Mowen asked if members had any updates they would like to share.

Mike Elbe announced there would be a groundbreaking ceremony next week Wednesday at 10:00 am at the Workforce Development Center which is an expansion of their Center.

Sal Garza with DCEO announced the next round of Back to Business grants to assist small business should be available sometime in September and he will be sharing details in the near future.

Shoup reported that September is Workforce Development Month, and she will be sharing with everyone the many activities across the nine counties. She noted that October is Manufacturing Month and many activities are being planned throughout the nine counties. Shoup stated the activities will be posted on the website managed by Pat Davis Design Group. Shoup remarked that the focus for our website this year will be on business services for our business customers. She explained that last year our focus was on job seekers. She announced that new legislation passed by the General Assembly includes the Climate & Equitable Jobs Act that puts new equity and job requirements on renewable energy projects. Shoup said our area is not identified as one of the hub centers, but we will be looking what we can do in our region and who can be connected to those centers. She said she will keep members informed on how we can become engage in the project.

Shoup said the next WIB meeting will be late October and no later than early December. The sector focus will be on manufacturing. She said she wanted to take this opportunity to thank Mowen for her leadership during very challenging time. Shoup said the meetings will continue to be hybrid. She invited those in attendance to lunch after the meeting to recognize Jennifer Mowen's leadership as WIB Chair.

Mowen thanked all for helping her to get through the last couple of years of challenges and is looking forward to working with everyone in a different role.

X. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

XI. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn at 11:05 am was made by Joanne Beeler and seconded by Cheryl Welge. The motion carried.