



~Pending Approval~

Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Board Room & Teams

Board Members Present:

Greg Anselmo – Itasca County Unorganized
Clinton Cook – Bigfork Township
Greg Cook – Koochiching County Unorganized
Kurt Fredrickson – Stokes Township
Carol Gilbertson – Itasca County At-Large
Dan Heinecke – City of Bigfork
Teresa Kittridge – Marcell Township
Gordon Rahier – Pomroy Township
Larry Salmela – Carpenter Township
Sally Sedgwick – Wirt Township
Dan Sursely – City of Big Falls
Heidi Watson – Koochiching County At-Large

Board Members Remote:

None

Board Members Absent:

Tom LaMont – City of Effie

Staff Members Present:

Darla Anderson, Nathan Hough, Heidi Powell, Jennifer Rissanen, Renee Tower

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Staff Members Remote:

Samantha Beckner, Kyle Buckingham, Alex Cleath, Sara Elioﬀ, Dawn Jourdan, Sandra LeBlanc-Boland, Karlee Mann, Amanda Niemala, Mike Olson

Others:

Bernie Hough, Gene Rajala, Chris Virta

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Clint Cook. The meeting opened with a prayer.

A. Community Comments (3 minutes/speaker)

There were no community comments.

B. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Agenda
2. Regular Board Meeting Minutes 4/29/2025
3. Credentialing

EMS Services was added to the agenda as an action item.

A **motion** to approve the consent agenda was made by Larry Salmela, seconded by Greg Cook. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Information, Discussion and/or Action

1. EMS Services

There was discussion regarding Bigfork Valley potentially assuming ownership and operation of the local ambulance service, currently member-owned and unaffiliated with the City of Bigfork. The board acknowledged the vital community need. Initial projections indicate a potential breakeven if Advanced Life Support (ALS) ground transports were added.

A proforma will be presented at the June board meeting.

Teresa Kittridge made a **motion** to accept the ambulance service under Bigfork Valley's operations, should it be formally offered, and authorized CEO Nathan Hough to negotiate the terms. Seconded by Heidi Watson. The motion passed unanimously.

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2. **Employee Appreciation**

The board recognized the following employees for exceptional performance: Diana Hill, Tristen Griffith, Pam Burns, and Allyssa Pitzen, each to receive a \$25 appreciation gift certificate.

Dan Heinecke made a **motion** to approve the nominations, seconded by Greg Cook. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Finance Committee Report**

Treasurer Kurt Fredrickson summarized the May 20, 2025 Finance Committee meeting.

Nathan Hough reported that a termination notice will be issued to Senior Life Solutions on August 16, 2025, with services ending 90 days later.

A board member inquired about the timeline for including the prompt pay discount information on patient billing statements. It was noted that clearly communicating the 10% prompt pay discount is important so that patients are aware of the opportunity. Nathan confirmed that Amanda is actively working on having this note added to billing statements.

The Finance Committee made a **motion** to accept the financial report and accounts payable for April, seconded by Greg Anselmo. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Quarterly Strategic Action Plan Update**

Nathan provided a quarterly update on progress related to the strategic plan.

The board commended Nathan on the clarity and thoroughness of his report.

Nathan recommended that once the nursing home census reaches 27, the organization should confirm it is operating at a breakeven point. At that time, the strategic goals of increasing resident capacity beyond the newly renovated rooms should be reevaluated for financial feasibility.

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5. CEO Report

CEO Nathan Hough provided the following updates:

Providers

- Dr. Benjamin Roy, General Surgeon, has begun seeing patients at Bigfork Valley.
- Dr. Michael Baich will begin providing Wound Care services, with a target start date later this summer.
- Preliminary discussions are underway with Bonner Eye Clinic to potentially provide services in Bigfork.
- A nurse practitioner candidate for Specialty Care was recently interviewed and is under strong consideration. An on-site visit is being coordinated to allow current Specialty Care providers to meet with the candidate and offer feedback.

Long-Term Care

- Deb Morell will retire from her role as Director of Nursing (DON) at the end of the month. Patty Rich, current Assistant DON, will serve as interim DON until a replacement is hired.
- Jessica Anderson is currently serving as Interim Director of Senior Services, in addition to her responsibilities as Social Worker.

Other Updates

- Middle School Scrubs Camp is scheduled for June 18.
- A Summer Kick-Off Party will be held at the nursing home on Friday, June 27 from 2:00–4:00 PM in the Aspen parking lot. This public event will include food trucks, lawn games, and music.
- Ben Johnson was honored as the Bigfork Valley 2025 DAISY Award Recipient in May.
- A recognition event for Bigfork High School graduates entering healthcare careers was held on May 21 in the Wanigan.
- Bigfork Valley has launched a new TV commercial.
- Nathan will be out of town June 14–20 and again June 26–30. During the latter period, he will be reachable by cell phone if needed.

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- Shockwave Therapy is now available at the Bigfork Valley Chiropractic Clinic. It is offered as a cash-pay service at \$20 per treatment, with no referral required.

6. Governance Committee Report

A summary of the May 20, 2025 Governance Committee meeting was provided. The committee continues to make progress on revising board policies; however, the work is still in progress and not yet complete.

7. Meet the Board: Website Questionnaire

The board reviewed example introductions for several members to be shared on the website, Facebook, and facility display screens.

Dan Heinecke made a **motion** to approve publishing the board member spotlights with participation encouraged but optional. Seconded by Greg Anselmo. The motion passed with 11 in favor, 1 opposed.

8. Legislative Education Committee Report

Sally Sedgwick provided a summary of the May 20, 2025 Legislative Education Committee Meeting.

9. QAPI Committee Report

Dan Sursely provided a summary of the May 14, 2025 QAPI Committee Meeting.

10. Annual Meeting

Discussion regarding ideas and a proposed date for the annual meeting will take place at the June board meeting.

11. Hospital Local Art Collection

Sally Sedgwick is getting a quote for plaques to accompany the artwork, which will highlight the local artists.

12. MHA Summer Trustee Conference

Larry Salmela made a **motion** to approve associated costs, including travel and lodging, for any board members who chooses to attend the

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MHA Summer Trustee Conference. Seconded by Carol Gilbertson. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Department Introduction: Middle School Scrubs Camp

Heidi Powell provided an overview of the student engagement opportunities available at Bigfork Valley. She shared details about the upcoming Middle School Scrubs Camp, scheduled for June 18, which is open to students entering grades 6 through 8.

14. Board Meeting Agenda Topics for Next Month

The topic of the “Annual Meeting” will be included on the agenda for the June board meeting.

15. Open Discussion

A board member, on behalf of a constituent, inquired about contingency planning related to potential Medicare and Medicaid funding cuts. CEO Nathan Hough reported that, at this time, there is no indication of changes that would significantly impact Bigfork Valley. Current information suggests no major implications for the nursing home.

A Cardiology Kickoff Event is scheduled for June 27, intended to promote heart health awareness. Cardiology services are expected to begin shortly thereafter, although a specific start date has not yet been determined and the agreement is still under negotiation.

Nathan provided an update regarding the recent data security incident. The facility is actively working with legal counsel in response to a class action lawsuit that has been filed. In addition, the Office for Civil Rights is conducting an investigation. A second class action suit has been filed, though the facility has not yet been officially served.

It was suggested that a “Medicare and Medicaid Legislative Update” be added as a standing item on future board meeting agendas, in order to provide regular updates on federal and state legislative developments that could affect healthcare operations and reimbursement.

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With no further business, a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 a.m. was made by Dan Sursely, seconded by Gordon Rahier. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Renee Tower

Executive Administrative Assistant

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