Bigfork Valley
Hospital • Clinics • Communities
Where Skill Meets Compassion

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~Approved 10/27/2026~

Regular Board Meeting
Tuesday, September 29, 2026
9:00 a.m.
Board Room & Microsoft 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
Tom LaMont – City of Effie
Gordon Rahier – Pomroy Township
Larry Salmela – Carpenter Township
Sally Sedgwick – Wirt Township
Dan Sursely – City of Big Falls

Board Members Remote:
Heidi Watson – Koochiching County At-Large

Board Members Absent:
None

Staff Members Present:
Nathan Hough, Renee Tower

Staff Members Remote:
Nelly Becker, Sam Beckner, Alex Cleath, Randy Collins, Sara Elioff, Jennifer Francisco, Josh Kinn, Amanda Niemala

Others Present:
Darla Anderson, Ellen Bomstad, Jack Hillstrom, Bernie Hough, Bruce Sampson

Others Participating Remotely:
Jennifer Hollinday, Dawn Kern, Community Member (identity could not be verified)

Remote Participation Statement
Board Member Heidi Watson participated in the meeting remotely pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.02 due to caregiving responsibilities for her vulnerable adult son.

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.02, all votes taken during the meeting were conducted by roll call due to remote participation by a Board member.

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chair Clinton Cook and opened with a prayer.

A. **Community Comments** (3 minutes per speaker)

Darla Anderson, community member, commented on the organization's improved income statement and expressed concerns regarding the balance sheet and cash flow. She noted that, despite an estimated $5 million in additional cash inflows during the year, the organization had drawn on a line of credit to pay accounts payable. Anderson stated that she supports an increase to the tax levy but would like to see a plan to balance cash inflows and outflows. She also expressed concern regarding the accounts payable balance of $1.7 million, noting that it had increased by $1 million over the past year.

Bruce Sampson, community member, stated that he believes the hospital needs an influx of cash. He noted that margins appear favorable for the current year but may be more constrained in the following year. He encouraged Board members to develop relationships with legislators and county commissioners and suggested that one or two Board members meet with elected officials in person to provide input regarding the hospital and rural health care.

B. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Agenda
2. Regular Board Meeting Minutes (Aug. 25, 2026)
3. Medical Staff Meeting Minutes (June 29, 2026)
4. Credentialing

Teresa Kittridge made a **motion** to approve the consent agenda. Greg Anslemo seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was conducted:

- Greg Anselmo – Yea
- Clinton Cook – Yea
- Greg Cook – Yea
- Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
- Carol Gilbertson – Yea
- Dan Heinecke – Yea
- Teresa Kittridge – Yea
- Tom LaMont – Yea
- Gordon Rahier – Yea
- Larry Salmela – Yea
- Sally Sedgwick – Yea
- Dan Sursely – Yea
- Heidi Watson – Yea

Motion carried.

C. Information, Discussion and/or Action

1. Finance Committee Report

Treasurer Kurt Fredrickson summarized the Sept. 28, 2026, Finance Committee meeting.

a. Financials (July & August)

The July and August 2026 financial reports were provided for review.

A **motion** to approve the July and August financial reports was made by the Finance Committee and seconded by Greg Cook.

A roll call vote was conducted:

- Greg Anselmo – Yea
- Clinton Cook – Yea
- Greg Cook – Yea
- Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
- Carol Gilbertson – Yea
- Dan Heinecke – Yea
- Teresa Kittridge – Yea
- Tom LaMont – Yea
- Gordon Rahier – Yea
- Larry Salmela – Yea
- Sally Sedgwick – Yea
- Dan Sursely – Yea
- Heidi Watson – Yea

Motion carried.

b. <u>Accounts Payable (August)</u>

The August 2026 accounts payable, the accounts payable aged reconciliation report by invoice date as of Sept. 21, 2026 and the accounts receivable aging report as of Sept. 11, 2026 were provided for review.

A **<u>motion</u>** to approve the August 2026 accounts payable was made by the Finance Committee and seconded by Carol Gilbertson.

A roll call vote was conducted:

- Greg Anselmo – Yea
- Clinton Cook – Yea
- Greg Cook – Yea
- Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
- Carol Gilbertson – Yea
- Dan Heinecke – Yea
- Teresa Kittridge – Yea
- Tom LaMont – Yea
- Gordon Rahier – Yea
- Larry Salmela – Yea
- Sally Sedgwick – Yea

- Dan Sursely – Yea
- Heidi Watson – Yea

Motion carried.

2. **Line of Credit Update**

Nathan Hough reported that, as of Sept. 29, 2026, the Hospital District had no outstanding balance on its $1 million line of credit.

Nathan reported that the organization expects to draw on the line of credit to pay for the orthopedic surgical robot and repay the amount once reimbursement is received from the state through the Rural Health Transformation Program.

Nathan also noted that a small balance may need to remain outstanding to keep the line of credit open for future use. The amount required had not yet been determined.

The orthopedic surgical robot will be used for total and partial knee replacement procedures. The model also has the capability to support additional procedures, including total shoulder replacement and potentially total hip replacement.

3. **2027 Tax Levy (Due Date: Sept: 30)**

Nathan Hough recommended maintaining the 2027 tax levy at the 2026 amount of $975,000.

The Finance Committee made a **motion** to increase the tax levy by 4%, or $39,000, resulting in a 2027 final tax levy of $1,014,000. The motion was seconded by Teresa Kittridge.

Board members were given an opportunity to provide their perspectives regarding whether the tax levy should be increased, decreased or remain at its current level.

A roll call vote was conducted:
- Greg Anselmo – Yea
- Clinton Cook – Nay
- Greg Cook – Nay

- Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
- Carol Gilbertson – Yea
- Dan Heinecke – Yea
- Teresa Kittridge – Yea
- Tom LaMont – Nay
- Gordon Rahier – Nay
- Larry Salmela – Yea
- Sally Sedgwick – Nay
- Dan Sursely – Nay
- Heidi Watson – Yea

Motion carried, with seven voting Yea and six voting Nay.

4. **Financial Audit Firm Selection**

Hough recommended retaining CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) for the 2026 financial audit and cost report services for another year.

A **motion** to engage CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) to provide services for the 2026 financial audit, cost report, and other required reporting services was made by the Finance Committee and seconded by Larry Salmela.

A roll call vote was conducted:

- Greg Anselmo – Yea
- Clinton Cook – Yea
- Greg Cook – Yea
- Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
- Carol Gilbertson – Yea
- Dan Heinecke – Yea
- Teresa Kittridge – Yea
- Tom LaMont – Yea
- Gordon Rahier – Yea
- Larry Salmela – Yea
- Sally Sedgwick – Yea
- Dan Sursely – Yea
- Heidi Watson – Yea

Motion carried.

5. **CEO Report**

Nathan Hough provided the following updates:

EMS Services

- As of Sept. 28, Bigfork Valley is operating as a part-time advanced life support (ALS) service. The organization is awaiting a state inspection, with a final ALS licensure survey anticipated in late October.
- Bigfork Valley completed 20 basic life support (BLS) ambulance runs in August.
- Bigfork Valley also began a trial pharmacy delivery service through nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT) on Sept. 21. The service provides delivery within a 5-mile radius of Bigfork Valley Pharmacy at no additional delivery fee. Patients may arrange delivery with pharmacy staff when requesting prescriptions.

New Specialty Providers

- Discussions regarding dental services are continuing. He noted that Scenic Rivers Health Services was not interested in collaborating on use of the dental office and that the organization does not currently have the funding to equip and staff a seasonal dental office. The organization will continue to explore opportunities for dental services.
- Bigfork Valley is working with Sanford on interventional podiatry services in Bigfork.
- Dr. Nathan Goldin, urologist, will not be joining Bigfork Valley due to issues related to his medical malpractice tail coverage. The organization continues to seek a urologist.

Rural Health Transformation Funds

- The orthopedic surgical robot was delivered. The organization plans to pay for the robot and submit the payment documentation to the state for reimbursement once Sandra LeBlanc-Boland returns from vacation.
- Nathan reported that costs related to EMR enhancements have been paid and reimbursed since the previous Board meeting.

EMR Update

- The hospital remains in the post-go-live stabilization and optimization phase of the EMR project.
- Long-term care user acceptance testing began Aug. 31 and continued through mid-September. The tentative Oct. 1 go-live date has not yet been rescheduled following concerns identified during testing.
- Nathan met with OCHIN executives on Sept. 16, and a plan was developed for OCHIN to:
    - Review long-term care concerns identified during user acceptance testing and address workflow questions.
    - Identify remaining build, workflow, operational, training and dependency gaps.
    - Engage appropriate internal and external subject matter experts, including additional long-term care billing expertise.
    - Develop a consolidated remediation plan identifying recommended actions, ownership, dependencies and target timelines.
    - Following completion of these items, OCHIN will return the system to Bigfork Valley for additional review and testing.
- LTC go-live has not been rescheduled.

Other

- The Bigfork Valley Communities Quality of Life Survey for long-term care is scheduled for Oct. 12.
- A department-wide Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) state inspection for Radiology is scheduled for October.
- The Bigfork Valley Community Foundation Gala was held, with proceeds benefiting the Bigfork Valley ALS program.
- Long-term care resident fall color tours will begin Oct. 5.
- A Halloween event is planned for October, with local schoolchildren invited to participate in trick-or-treating.
- Families will be invited to participate in Thanksgiving holiday meals with residents.
- The continuity between the Villa and long-term care continues to be successful, with increasing participation in activities to the point that available activity space is becoming limited.

- The courier vehicle was involved in an accident and is likely to be totaled.

  A Board member inquired about the possibility of adding additional lighting to the Bible study room.

  A Board member inquired about the flagpole previously approved by the Board and requested that the project be completed.

6. **QAPI Committee Report**
   Dan Sursely summarized the QAPI Committee meeting held August 5, 2026.

7. **Employee Appreciation**
   The Board recognized Renee Tower for employee appreciation. Each recognized employee will receive a $25 appreciation gift certificate.

   A **motion** to approve the employee appreciation nomination was made by Carol Gilbertson and seconded by Greg Anselmo.

   A roll call vote was conducted:
   - Greg Anselmo – Yea
   - Clinton Cook – Abstained
   - Greg Cook – Abstained
   - Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
   - Carol Gilbertson – Yea
   - Dan Heinecke – Yea
   - Teresa Kittridge – Yea
   - Tom LaMont – Yea
   - Gordon Rahier – Yea
   - Larry Salmela – Yea
   - Sally Sedgwick – Yea
   - Dan Sursely – Yea
   - Heidi Watson – Yea

   Motion carried.

8. **November Board Meeting Date**

To avoid the need for two Board meetings in November and to accommodate the period for canvassing election results from Nov. 6 through Nov. 17, Kurt Fredrickson made a **motion** to reschedule the November Board meeting from its regular date of Tuesday, Nov. 24, to Tuesday, Nov. 17. Gordon Rahier seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was conducted:

- Greg Anselmo – Yea
- Clinton Cook – Yea
- Greg Cook – Yea
- Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
- Carol Gilbertson – Yea
- Dan Heinecke – Yea
- Teresa Kittridge – Yea
- Tom LaMont – Yea
- Gordon Rahier – Yea
- Larry Salmela – Yea
- Sally Sedgwick – Yea
- Dan Sursely – Yea
- Heidi Watson – Yea

Motion carried.

It was noted that financial reports may not be available for the Nov. 17 meeting due to the meeting being held one week earlier than the regular meeting date.

Teresa Kittridge and Larry Salmela reported that they will not seek re-election to the Board. The Board thanked them for their service.

9. **Housing Availability & Impact on Staff Recruitment**

Nathan Hough reported that housing availability is not currently an obstacle to employee recruitment.

10. **Board Meeting Agenda Topics for Next Month**

The Board did not identify any additional topics for inclusion on the next Board meeting agenda.

11. <u>Open Discussion</u>

It was noted that a learning session regarding data centers will be held at the Marcell Family Center on Oct. 14 at 6 p.m.

A Board member reported that HealthPartners and Essentia Health are expected to merge.

Board members reported receiving feedback from constituents regarding the tax levy, with opinions both in support of and opposed to changes to the levy.

With no further business to come before the Board, a **<u>motion</u>** to adjourn was made by Clinton Cook and seconded by Dan Sursely.

A roll call vote was conducted:

- Greg Anselmo – Yea
- Clinton Cook – Yea
- Greg Cook – Yea
- Kurt Fredrickson – Yea
- Carol Gilbertson – Yea
- Dan Heinecke – Yea
- Teresa Kittridge – Yea
- Tom LaMont – Yea
- Gordon Rahier – Yea
- Larry Salmela – Yea
- Sally Sedgwick – Yea
- Dan Sursely – Yea
- Heidi Watson – Yea

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:
Renee Tower
Executive Administrative Assistant