

**REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Public Hospital District No. 1-A of Whitman County, Washington
d/b/a Pullman Regional Hospital
Wednesday, June 4, 2025 at 6:00 PM In-Person or Virtually by Zoom**

Board of Commissioners

P-Tricia Grantham, President
P-PJ Sanchez, Vice President
P-Cheryl Oliver, Secretary
P-Joe Pitzer, Commissioner
P-Anna Nofsinger, Commissioner
E-Michael Cady, Commissioner
P-Shane McFarland, Commissioner

Hospital Personnel

P-Matt Forge, CEO
P-Steve Febus, CFO
P-Tammy Needham, CNO
P-Bernadette Berney, CHRO
P-Carrie Coen, CRO
P-Rob Rembert, Legal Counsel
E-Nancy Panko, M.D., Medical Staff President
P-Karly Port, CPSO
E-Peter Mikkelsen, M.D., CMO
P-Erin Sedam, Executive Assistant
P-Linda Infranco, Executive Director
P-Alison Weigley, External Relations Director

Guests:

Wayne Druffle
Lennis Boyer
Dave Williams
Katie Van Wyngarden
Zanye Hunter

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Grantham called the meeting to order at 6:00p. Roll call was taken with the following Commissioners answering present: Grantham, Sanchez, Oliver, Pitzer, Nofsinger and McFarland. Commissioner Cady was excused.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Commissioner Sanchez moved to approve the minutes for the regular meeting of May 7, 2025.
Commissioner Oliver seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. MODIFICATION TO AGENDA

Steve Febus requested to remove "Audited Financial Report" from agenda.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Oliver moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Sanchez seconded the motion. The following committee reports were approved unanimously.

- Medical Executive Committee
- Finance Committee
- Quality Management System
- Strategic Planning Committee
- Foundation Board of Directors
- Approval of Warrants

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

President Grantham opened the floor for public comment. No comments were made by the public in attendance. President Grantham closed the floor for comments.

VI. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Governance Committee Report:

Vice President Sanchez reported that the Governance Committee did not meet this month. However, the Finance Committee reviewed the Bylaws recommendations previously forwarded by the Governance Committee. During that discussion, additional revisions were proposed and will be sent back to the Governance Committee for further consideration.

a. Legislative Updates:

This topic was not addressed.

B. Finance Committee Report:

Secretary Oliver provided an overview of the most recent Finance Committee meeting. She reported a slight decline in financial performance for the month of May but noted that this was anticipated due to seasonal trends. She also referenced the Employee Retention Credit (ERC), which had been previously booked and then unbooked. Payment is expected soon and will positively impact future financials. Additionally, Secretary Oliver shared that the clinic network footprint continues to grow with the onboarding of Inland Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine Clinic and Palouse Medical. This expanded network enhances the organization's ability to ensure appropriate patient referrals.

a. Financial Update:

Steve Febus provided a financial update to the Board of Commissioners. He noted that the first four months of the year produced strong results; however, he cautioned that revenue typically declines during the summer months based on historical trends. Mr. Febus reported that accounts receivable (AR) days are currently at 50.7, bringing the organization close to its goal of remaining below 50 days. May saw approximately \$13 million in cash receipts, significantly above the typical monthly average of \$2 million. He noted that the financial team continues to operate without a Financial Patient Services Manager. In the interim, Steven Matthews, Executive Director of Revenue Cycle, is temporarily filling that role to maintain operational continuity. Recruitment efforts are active, and the team anticipates announcing a new hire in July. Current AR stands at \$47 million, with a goal of converting \$10 to \$12 million of that into cash. While the industry benchmark for AR days is around 55, Pullman Regional is currently performing better than that threshold. The finance team also reported an increase in Days Cash on Hand—now at 112 days—boosted in part by recent Employee Retention Credit (ERC) receipts. One additional ERC payment remains outstanding but is expected within the next six weeks.

b. Expansion – Early Procurement:

Steve Febus presented a recommendation for early procurement related to the hospital's expansion project. He explained that early procurement enables the project to move forward without delay, specifically through a contract modification that allows electrical work to begin ahead of the full construction schedule. Mr. Febus recommended that the Board ratify Matt Forge's signature on the amended contract authorizing the early procurement. Commissioner McFarland moved to approve the ratification of the early procurement agreement. Commissioner Pitzer seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

c. ERC Payment:

Steve Febus provided historical context on the Employee Retention Credit (ERC), explaining that the hospital district's application covered eligible quarters in 2020 and 2021. Based on guidance from the auditor, the ERC was initially booked and then subsequently unbooked in 2024 due to its pending status. Mr. Febus reported that the district has recently received payment for one of the three quarters, resulting in a positive financial impact. The remaining two quarters are still pending.

C. Strategic Planning Committee Report

Matt Forge provided an overview of the Strategic Planning Committee, outlining its role in guiding the organization's long-term direction. He then reviewed the Strategic Dashboard, highlighting key metrics related to culture, reliability, and organizational growth.

a. Nursing Strategic Plan:

Tammy Needham presented the Nursing Strategic Plan for Pullman Regional Hospital, which outlines long-term goals for the period of April 2025 through January 2028. She emphasized that the plan's objectives are closely aligned with the overall strategic goals of the organization. Ms. Needham walked the group through the L.I.C.E.N.S.E. model, which serves as the framework for the plan:

L – Leadership

I – Independent Nurse Practice

C – Collaborative Nursing Practice

E – Environment

N – Nursing Innovation and Research

S – Safety and Quality in Nursing Care

E – Excellence in Nursing Care

Each category includes specific focus areas and actionable tasks designed to advance nursing practice and improve patient outcomes throughout the hospital.
presented

b. HAI Quality:

Tammy Needham presented findings from a recent hospital-acquired infection (HAI) event involving *Clostridioides difficile* (*C. difficile*). She reported that one case had been identified and emphasized the importance of early detection in preventing further transmission. Ms. Needham also highlighted the continued need for education and vigilance around proper hand hygiene and thorough environmental cleaning to mitigate the risk of future infections.

c. Primary Care Presentation:

Matt Forge presented the hospital district's vision for strengthening primary care services. The vision aims to address ongoing access challenges and meet growing community needs, with the overarching goal that when someone calls to see a doctor, the answer is "yes." Mr. Forge emphasized the importance of building upon the hospital's already strong foundation in primary care by expanding services, particularly in adult medicine. He highlighted a significant regional shortage in internal medicine, noting there are currently only five internists serving approximately 150,000 people in the area. This underscores the critical importance of successful internal medicine recruitment efforts at Pullman Regional Hospital.

d. Provider Recruitment Update:

Karly Port provided an update on provider recruitment efforts and began by outlining the recently implemented physician leadership structure and its connection to ongoing recruitment strategies. She reported active recruitment in several key areas:

- Internal Medicine: One offer is currently pending.
- Family Medicine: Recruitment continues with an upcoming site visit and another offer pending.
- General Surgery: One offer is pending, with an additional site visit scheduled.
- Urology: Recruitment remains challenging, particularly for candidates experienced in surgical robotics.
- ENT: Efforts are underway to recruit a partner for Dr. Goodrich.
- Orthopedics: Site visits are scheduled with potential candidates.
- Non-Physician Clinicians: Several site visits are upcoming.

Ms. Port also shared that Dr. Martin will be retiring from general surgery.

e. Expansion Update:

Carrie Coen provided an update on the hospital's expansion project, reporting that progress remains on schedule. The preliminary submission to the Department of Health has been completed, and the final user group meetings have concluded. The project team is now finalizing design finishes and addressing final details in the plans. Ms. Coen also highlighted an innovative cost-saving solution led by Imaging Director Austin Swopes, who developed a scenario for CT scan equipment that will fit within the existing Nuclear Medicine space. This creative approach resulted in an estimated savings of \$500,000.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Foundation Board Year End Meeting, June 20, 12p-3p, Palouse Ridge
- B. 2025 AWP/PHD & WSHA Rural Hospital Leadership Conference, June 22-25, Chelan, WA
- C. PRH Employee and Family Summer Fun Event, July 26, 12-4pm, Reaney Park, Pullman, WA
- D. Board Retreat, September 12, Location TBD

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:00p President Grantham announced that the meeting would go into Executive Session for 15 minutes to discuss the granting, denial, revocation, restrictions, or other considerations of the status of the clinical or staff privileges of a physician or other healthcare provider, consider personnel issues, and consult with legal counsel. At 8:15p, President Grantham extended executive session for 5 more minutes. At 8:20p, President Grantham extended executive session for 5 more minutes. At 8:25p, President Grantham extended executive session for 10 more minutes.

IX. OPEN SESSION

The meeting resumed in Open Session at 8:35p.

- A. Credentials Report

Commissioner Oliver moved to approve the credentials report. Vice President Sanchez seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Oliver issued a call to the Board of Commissioners, administrative team, and others in attendance to remain steadfast in their commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). She emphasized the importance of continued learning and growth in understanding diversity, particularly within the context of healthcare. It was suggested that the Governance Committee explore opportunities for board education and training focused on DEI in healthcare settings.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:38p.

Respectfully submitted by:



Erin Sedam

Executive Assistant

Cheryl Oliver, Secretary

Board of Commissioners
*(Minutes are not officially approved
until the next Board Meeting.)*