



The Nathaniel Witherell
TOWN OF GREENWICH
CONNECTICUT

**Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
September 29, 2008**

Present: David Ormsby, Chairman; Chris Thurlow, Vice Chairman; Thomas Saccardi, Secretary; David Ayres; Lloyd Bankson, Bruce Dixon; Dr. Frank Scarpa; Paul Toretta; Lin Lavery, Board of Selectmen

Staff: William Kowalewski, Executive Director; Raymond Augustine, Director of Financial Operations; Susan Welsh, Director of Admissions; Jack Hornak, Facilities Operations Manager, Frank Walsh, MD, Medical Director; Christina Tholen, Development FNW

Also: Peter Arturi, Board of Health; Gerald Isaacson, RTM; Leslie Tarkington, BET; Karen LaMonica, Commission on Aging; Joyce Jordan, Family Council; Mary Anne Chiappetta, Family Council

Mr. Ormsby opened the meeting 5:35 pm in TNW Board Room.

Mr. Ormsby initiates a change to the order of the Agenda, and requests the Medical Director report first.

Medical Director's Report – presented by Francis X. Walsh, MD

Dr. Walsh states that things have been running well since he has assumed his position in August as TNW Medical Director – he has been coming to TNW for 35 years. Dr. Walsh visits 13 nursing homes and finds the Witherell to be the best of those facilities; he is proud to be its Director.

Dr. Walsh states that they have been working on finding new sources of Admissions, especially Rehab or short-term patients. Two major sources at Greenwich Hospital are the Westchester Medical Group, consisting of approximately 130-140 physicians with 2 large offices in White Plains and Rye - they are a big admitter to Greenwich Hospital and they do not service nursing homes. We would like to have them steer their rehab patients toward TNW upon hospital discharge. The other source is the orthopedic/neurosurgical physicians who have traditionally sent their patients to the Osborne in Rye for rehab – Dr. Walsh would like to see them get more oriented to their “home town” and refer patients to TNW for rehab. Mr. Ormsby suggests an “open house” type function to give these doctors an overview of The Witherell and to encourage their patient referrals.

Ms. Thurlow states that she has seen information on community notices for flu and pneumonia shots and asks when we are scheduled here at TNW. Dr. Walsh says we will administer flu shots during the 3rd week of October. He states that the flu season the last 2 years has been more the month of March, and often the effects of the shot wear off after 6 months. We did here at TNW have a couple of cases of flu around the March timeframe – reason was either that it was the wrong vaccine or that the time on the vaccine had run out.

Mr. Bankson asks if Dr. Walsh has made any immediate observations of things that need change - first impressions, things that could be better? Dr. Walsh states that the strong point of Nathaniel Witherell is the stable nursing staff: that is the difference between a good nursing home and a bad one. To maintain that is of utmost importance. He sees nothing immediately as far as improving the quality of care, but will certainly keep observing. Over his time here Dr. Walsh states that he has always spoken up if he felt something needed improving, and certainly will continue to do so.

Presentation by Jack Hornak, Facility Operations Manager
“Facilities – Operations, Maintenance and Housekeeping”

Mr. Hornak begins his presentation with an overview of where Witherell has been as far as Operations and Facilities, and what the direction is currently, what the goals of the Facilities Department are.

Mr. Hornak reviewed the projects that were begun during the start of his tenure here at TNW, and have since been completed:

Boiler upgrades	New roof, GADC, Director, WW, Chapel,
Nurse Call System	New roof Auditorium
Water pressure regulators	Card access system
WW RTU AC	PT renovation
CCTV system	TNW Interior painting
Person-Centered Dining Renovations	

Projects that are continuing or future projects:

- TNW interior painting – the intent is to paint 1/3 of the facility each year, to add to our residents safety and quality of life.
- Walking Path
- Security – card access
- CMM – software system to monitor all necessary systems and assure that they are functioning properly.

Mr. Hornak refers to the 3 most critical systems in place: fire protection; HVAC and Heating; and the Generator. It is necessary to determine which systems may require immediate replacement vs. those which may be repaired, until the decisions are complete with regard to Project Renew.

Mr. Hornak reviewed the inspections which are performed either by our facility or by the state on a daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly or seasonal basis.

Ms. Thurlow asks if the TOG assists TNW with any of these inspections –the answer is no. The town does not actually maintain anyone to do these inspections - TNW has great relationships with the outside vendors used. Mr. Kowalewski does make the point that the Town has been extremely responsive to us whenever we have needed assistance (ie, power outages, threat of loss of water, etc). This is definitely confirmed by Mr. Hornak. Any time our facility has needed emergency assistance Mr. Hornak has been able to rely on the TOG Emergency Response Team. He feels their help is invaluable to our facility. The police department has come to our facility to perform a Security Analysis at no cost to our facility. Copies of the written report will be distributed to all Board members.

TNW has recently contracted with Health Care Services Group to evaluate current systems in place with Housekeeping and Laundry. They will be evaluating such things as equipment requirements, purchasing, staffing requirements, scheduling and cleaning effectiveness.

Dr. Arturi questions what will be needed of a new generator system within the footprint of Project Renew? Mr. Hornak would think that Project Renew would incorporate a system that would give us more than the 30% capability that we have currently – incorporating not only emergency lights and outlets but a lot of our heating/cooling systems so that we would not have a problem upon power outages.

Ms. Lavery asks if there are any other town departments that could assist TNW proactively, ie energy consumption audit. Mr. Hornak states that the town had actually asked for the expertise of our facility with regard to energy purchasing and concerns. Mr. Hornak works closely with TOG Purchasing Department with regard to fuel and electricity costs and how we should purchase utilities and oil. Mr. Kowalewski also mentions the support we have received from DPW (will be discussed during the Building Committee report).

Mr. Ormsby asks if the facility is building code compliant. The answer is yes, all aspects: Town, fire code and State. Mr. Kowalewski does make the distinction of some of the building codes having been 'grandfathered' due to the age of the buildings. These are not the same as "life and safety" codes.

Mr. Ormsby asks who takes care of the outside of the facility (grass, flowers, etc). Town supplies us with manpower, at a cost, to cut the large lawns. We employed Rich Green Landscaping to maintain the other outdoor landscaping. He has also worked with Ms. Thurlow on designs for the outdoor garden.

Mr. Bankson questions the 'glitch' in the fire safety system experienced during last years survey, and asked what has been done to make sure it does not reoccur. Mr. Hornak responds that that system is monitored daily, both by Maintenance and by Mr. Hornak throughout the day. Facilities has worked with our fire monitoring station for us to be notified with any issues that arise that we speak directly to them. The system is monitored constantly. Mr. Kowalewski also states that we have since instituted a Fire Watch Policy – whenever our system is down for routine maintenance, or emergency breakage, this policy is put into effect.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF THE 7/29/08 BOARD MEETING:

The motion to approve these minutes was made, seconded and adopted unanimously.

Mr. Ormsby states he has no special Chairman's Leadership Report this evening.

Executive Director's Report – presented by William Kowalewski

CQI meetings (Continuous Quality Improvement Committee, Chairman Lynn Bausch) have increased in number from 4 to 8. Each department was asked to choose a Quality Improvement project for the year – something new and measureable so as to measure current and future performance and success rates.

In addition to the routine Medicare quality care indicators, and the state Medicaid quality care indicators, we now have a 3rd level of quality improvement measureable indicators. Mr. Kowalewski believes these should be one of the Board's top priorities, as they will tell us periodically as TNW goes through changes (building, program, Person-Centered Care, culture changes) that our quality targets are still being hit.

Mr. Kowalewski refers to a series of charts (Tables I – III) in his report, which track several different variables – one of which is the Quality Care Scores that Medicare supplies. He has tried to logically correlate these scores to staffing and to comparisons of our “brother and sister” nursing homes across the state. Mr. Kowalewski expresses his satisfaction with how the TNW team has embraced the added meetings for CQI; and, he is especially happy with the large amount of Board participation with this committee.

Next CQI meeting on Thursday, Oct. 16, 2008 at 8:30 am

Ms. Thurlow commends the staff on the job they do by making note of the figures on the staffing chart and the fact that TNW is ahead of the state in every category.

Mr. Bankson questions the depression figures on Mr. Kowalewski's charts, in terms of how the numbers have improved so significantly. It is explained as being several things: a new depression screening tool has been implemented administered by the Social Work Department, in coordination with floor nursing leadership; earlier intervention and being able to spot indicators sooner.

Mr. Ormsby asks that Mr. Kowalewski give an update on the status of Person-Centered Dining. Mr. Kowalewski informs the Board that the dinner meal roll-out took place on September 10th with a few challenges. The date of the breakfast meal roll-out is undetermined. Some additional reinforcement training has begun. Mr. Kowalewski asks all to keep in mind that the dinner meal is the most challenging because the dietary staff are mostly part-time and per diem staff that work at that meal – they may require more education or additional education due in fact that they are not our full-time staff employees. Also, this is the time of day where the ratio of CNA's to residents shift to lower numbers than daytimestaff. Mr. Enchura and Ms. Bausch continue to monitor its roll-out. Some additional areas of opportunity were discussed at a meeting of the Board of the Family Council.

Ms. Thurlow asks Mr. Kowalewski to give an update on the site visits, taken and scheduled. Mr. Kowalewski will give a full report to the Board when all visits are complete.

Mr. Saccardi comments on the Rochester site visit – very impressed with the Person-Centered homelike settings, and small residential groups at these facilities – residents were engaged in activity, not standing idle or without purpose. The small group life style, home-like setting was extremely impressive, even in the larger facilities.

Mr. Kowalewski stresses how these visits have proved to be so important in showing how care is delivered, the model of care, and how an entire team is responsible for the person-centered style. There are 6-9 different Person-Centered Care models in place around the country: Pioneer Network, Greenhouse, Wellspring, etc. (full list in Executive Director's report). Most of these locations have gravitated toward a model called the Pioneer Network. This reaffirms the feelings of Mr. Kowalewski and Ms. Bausch that it is the programming, the care model, how care is delivered and how things have changed to make it Person-Centered - much more than the building itself.

Dr. Scarpa asks how these sites were chosen. Two lists were accessed: the first from the Connecticut Quality Assurance Initiative and the second from the New York State Association for Homes and Services for the Aging. Both groups were asked who had gone through culture changes and building changes in the last 10 years. Then we looked for facilities that were similar to TNW in size and/or program. Livingston County was an invaluable visit because it is a municipal facility in NY State.

Ms. Lin Lavery asks if the TOG TNW Building Committee should be receiving site visit memos. Mr. Kowalewski states we will forward all emails and memos regarding the site visits.

Building Committee Report – presented by Paul Toretta

TOG Building Committee:

- Since last Board meeting, Dik Glass has resigned as the Committee Chair, due to other commitments and the size and commitment of this project. Chairmanship has now been split between Paul Toretta (Design) and Andy Fox, Construction. There are 2 openings on the Committee.
- Mr. Toretta states that they negotiated with BL Companies on price to get it within budget, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

- Mr. Toretta suggests the Board submit a motion to rescind their approval of BL Companies as the selected architect made on August 8th. A second RFP has now gone out to the 3 finalist architectural firms, with much more detail, providing the budget and telling them they must remain within the budget.
- Mr. Ormsby does not want to rescind this approval; he suggests the Board wait and follow the lead of the Town Building Committee. The Building Committee has not officially pulled their approval of BL, they have only approved going out with a supplement RFP to the 3 finalists.
- Much time was spent re-writing the architects contract – it went out on September 19th and it's due back on October 10th.
- CM Contract and CM RFP (Construction Manager) are both ready for production. The committee may choose to not deal with the CM contract with the same scoring process as with the architect. Looking to possibly utilize the DPW/BOE process – where a short list is compiled by the committee and a selection made (rather than a scoring process). Mr. Ormsby asks if the Town Charter requires the TNW Board to approve the Construction Manager – Mr. Toretta states that the Charter is silent on this issue, and states his concern with regard to choosing a CM since there is not process in place. DPW has used this process successfully and the Charter states that we have the same authority as the Chairman of the DPW.

TNW Building Committee:

Front Entrance – 4 inch curb drop has presented a safety issue. The committee did not like the fencing solution presented by the architect. The suggestion has been made to slope (ramp) the asphalt up to the curb height, or to use large planters that would block the edge of the curb. There are town approved vendors that can easily do the asphalt job. Mr. Toretta asks that Ms. Thurlow develop suggestions at the next TNW Building Committee Meeting as to what should be done (Oct. 23rd at 7:30 AM) and report back to the Board of Directors on Oct. 27th.

The Building Committee will also be reviewing the draft list of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) at their next committee meeting. These items should be approved by this Board on October 27th and need to go to the BET by November 1st. Mr. Toretta asks that the list of proposed CIP items be distributed to the entire Board of Directors.

Finance Committee Report – presented by Lloyd Bankson

Mr. Bankson reports:

- Operating Profit for August 2008 Actual was \$18,446; YTD Actual a Loss of \$140,890 – due mostly to salary and expenses, not admissions. Expenses will be further discussed and researched departmentally and in the next Finance Committee meeting.
- Total Occupancy YTD Actual 95.2%, and YTD Budget 96.1%
- Payor Mix has been very favorable with YTD Actual Revenues for Private pay at 32.8%; YTD Budget Revenues for Private pay at 28.2%
- Net TNW Revenue YTD Actual 2008 \$3.6M exceeding Budget by \$52,488
- Admissions YTD 2008 of 61; YTD 2007 of 45. Average length of stay for Short-term last year was 41 days; current year average length of stay for short-term is 28 days. Many costs are associated with the high rate of turn-over in admissions. This will be a very important factor in the development of the Long Range Plan, along with the costs associated with admissions that are medically complex.

Mr. Bankson notes that Revenues are in good standing, while we need to concentrate on minimizing expenses.

Mr. Toretta states the cost for the carpeting on the 4th floor was put under Building Materials. The cost of this item should be shown as a capital item.

Ms. Lavery asks what the GADC income was - \$2,901 monthly. Mr. Bankson notes how valuable that space will be to TNW now during construction (“swing space”).

Mr. Ormsby asks which other facilities we receive admissions from other than Greenwich Hospital. Ms. Welsh states that the Greenwich community has become aware of the very good rehab available here – so that Greenwich residents are bringing family members from outside of Town to rehab here at TNW. They are coming from facilities such as Stamford and Norwalk hospitals, other nursing facilities, and other rehab facilities ie. Burke. Mr. Saccardi makes mention how the work of mouth of our excellent rehab facility proves to be our greatest marketing tool.

Ms. Lavery asks if we receive admissions from the Hospital for Special Surgery; Ms. Welsh answers that we do not currently have a real relationship with them. She suggests developing that relationship.

Ms. Lavery also suggests a marketing piece using the 'out of state family member' scenario. Ms. Welsh states that we do have a marketing plan in place – that is a possible addition.

Ms. Lavery asks if TNW has Hospice. Ms. Welsh explains that we do end of life care and work with Visiting Nurse Association of Stamford. We have nearly tripled TNW Hospice census in the last 60 days.

Resident Life Committee Report – presented by Christopher Ann Thurlow

Ms. Thurlow speaks about our Volunteer Coordinator Sally Van Leeuwen and her efforts to reach out to the community to gain volunteers (schools, churches, garden clubs). Volunteer hours from the youth volunteers totaled 633 hours for the summer. There will be a Volunteer Open House in October.

Resident's Council met in September to discuss routine business.

Family Council will sponsor a Luncheon Meeting on Sunday, October 26, 2008

Ombudsmen Award went to Therapeutic Recreation Departments in the State of Connecticut. October 6, 2008 will be the awards ceremony.

Many events have taken place: Bill's Tuesday Barbeques; Tag Sale; the Luau, the traveling art show and the Pet Show have all been great successes.

Ms. Thurlow reviews the suggested plans for the Memory Garden (a final name for the garden has still not been established):

- All of the garden pieces will be mobile
- 6 Raised beds for ease of use by those in wheelchairs
- a long and a short wander paths
- Bird and butterfly garden, will include bird and butterfly houses
- Stone river, with water pumped from one end to the other and recycled
- Seating areas with benches (and wisteria)
- We are waiting on the final approval from CDBG of \$50K. The Woman's Club of Greenwich will be donating their proceeds from their House Tour event; and we have received \$3,700 from the Woman's Golf Tournament
- All nurseries and garden clubs in the area will be asked for donations

- Ms. Thurlow has been in touch with the Greenwich Tree Conservancy in the hopes of receiving some flowering fruit trees from them.
- Mr. Jack Hornak and Ms. Mary Bruce have been tremendously helpful on this project.

Friends of Nathaniel Witherell – presented by David Ormsby

The FNW has been tying up the loose ends from the Golf Invitational, preparing thank you's and updating the Razor's Edge database.

There is a tentative date of July 13, 2009 for the next Witherell Invitational at the Greenwich Country Club.

FNW hopes to have the Annual Appeal mailed during the October/November timeframe.

December 6 and 7, 2008 FNW will hold its "Holly Days Boutique" in the TNW Auditorium from 10 am until 4 pm. There will be many vendors selling their items: craft, jewelry, knitting. This event is open to the public. For those interested in participating as a vendor, the cost is \$100 per table and 17% of sales.

FNW is aggressively interviewing for a new Development Director.

Mr. Ormsby asked if there needed to be any further discussion on old or new business – none noted.

Mr. Ormsby adjourned the meeting at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Saccardi
Secretary
October 15, 2008