



**Partners Board of Directors  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
October 15, 2020 - 6:00 PM**

Partners Board of Directors met by means of a virtual Zoom/conference call for its regular monthly meeting.

**Board Member Attendance**

Commissioner Susan Allen	P	Jane Hinson	P
Commissioner Kevin Austin	P	Mike Hoffman	P
Commissioner Kitty Barnes	P	Commissioner Anita McCall	A
Beth Brown (non-voting)	A	Linda McCrary	P
Commissioner Jeffrey Brittain	P	Henry Morphis - <i>Vice Chair</i>	P
Hope E. Bryant	P	Barry Nelson (non-voting)	P
Debra Cheek - <i>Treasurer</i>	P	Commissioner Marvin Norman	A
Daryl Cook	P	David O'Connor	A
Steve Garrison	P	Russ Perkins – <i>Chair</i>	P
Commissioner Bill Goins	A	Joseph Ramey	P

**Partners Staff Present**

Rhett Melton	Chief Executive Officer
Shireen Stone	Chief Operating Officer
Susan Lackey	Chief Financial Officer
Selenna Moss	Chief Performance and Compliance Officer
Libby McCraw	Director of Human Resources

**Others Present**

Yvonne French	DHHS Liaison
Rachel Webster	CLA Auditors
Liz Ferguson	CLA Auditors

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Russ Perkins called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Perkins stated for the record that Partners Board of Directors meeting is an open meeting and the line is open to the public. He noted that instructions to join the meeting are posted on the public website. He noted that Director of Human Resources, Libby McCaw was facilitating the meeting in the absence of Clerk to the Board, Tammy Pyles. A roll call was conducted to confirm attendance.

**II. Agenda Revisions**

A. There were no agenda revisions.

### III. Citizen Recognition

- A. There were no citizens present for public comment.

### IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

#### A. Approval of the September 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the September 17, 2020 meeting were included in the board meeting agenda packet for approval. Chair Russ Perkins asked for a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes. Joe Ramey entered a motion and Linda McCrary seconded. The floor was opened for discussion. There being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

### V. Reports

- A. Finance Committee Report – Debra Cheek presented the Finance Committee Report which was included in the board meeting agenda packet.

1. CliftonLarsonAllen – Partners 2020 Draft Audit Results Presentation – The presentation was emailed to the board in advance of the meeting. Debra Cheek introduced the auditors from CLA who were present on the Zoom call: Rachel Webster and Liz Ferguson. Ms. Webster stated that a detailed report was provided to the Finance Committee last week and that she would provide a high-level overview to the board this evening. The presentation included review of required auditor communications, draft financial statements, communication of internal control related matters, auditor independence, accounting trends and analysis, and Covid-19 resources. After the presentation Ms. Webster invited questions from the board. She explained that an SOC 2 audit is an information technology audit to assure that sufficient controls are in place for an organization's information security systems, which will be an annual requirement by the state going forward. Susan Lackey expressed her appreciation of the CLA team for their work through the audit. There being no further questions or discussion, Debra Cheek entered a motion from the Finance Committee to accept the audit presentation of the June 2020 financial statements from CLA. Coming from a committee of the board no second to the motion is required. Russ Perkins called for a vote. The motion carried unanimously.
2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – The September 8, 2020 Finance Committee meeting minutes were included in the board meeting agenda packet. At the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Debra Cheek set forth the September 8, 2020 meeting minutes for board approval. Russ Perkins called for vote. There being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously.
3. Budget Revision #3 FY21 – Susan Lackey reviewed budget revision #3 which was included in the finance section of the board agenda packet and received prior approval from the Finance Committee. Debra Cheek set forth a motion from the Finance Committee for board approval. Russ Perkins called for a vote. The motion carried unanimously.
4. August 2020 Financial Statements – Financial statements for August 2020, along with a detailed summary, were included as part of the board meeting agenda packet. Susan Lackey provided an overview of the Balance Sheet and Year-to-Date Income Statements, including Medicaid and non-Medicaid.
5. IT Equipment Upgrade – Susan Lackey discussed the need for upgrades to IT servers which was presented in detail to the Finance Committee. She reminded the board that they approved the Tailored Plan budget for FY21 and stated there is room in the budget to cover the total costs of \$807,000.00 for the equipment leases. Discussion ensued about necessity of the upgrades, the decision to lease versus purchase and how the costs are to be expensed, the unexpected use of Zoom for remote access initiated by the pandemic, and relevance to successful operations as a Tailored Plan. There being no further discussion, Russ Perkins stated this item was presented for the board's information and with the approved budget, no action is required by the board.

- B. CFAC Report – Linda McCrary provided the following report:

- Partners CFAC met via Zoom on Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. Selenna Moss provided a Compliance Program presentation and the use of DocuSign for completion of required paperwork. Allison

Crotty gave an update on Partners initiatives including changes to the website, the upcoming Member Coffee Café and the use of the Pyx Health application, and she reviewed Partners strategic goals for the year with emphasis on the Tailored Plan.

- A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Ad Hoc Committee met and laid out preliminary goals in the effort to add TBI to the state statute.
- Stacey Harward, from the Community Engagement and Empowerment Team provided an update on current events at DHHS, including upcoming Town Halls to be held via Zoom to gain input from members on improving outcomes and services. UNC-TV and the Governor's Institute are hosting the webinars to discuss changes to the Behavioral Health and I/DD System. Questions from CFAC will be addressed at the end of the webinar. Partners' webinar will be held on October 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Current vacancies on CFAC were discussed with recommendations to allow TBI individuals with dual diagnoses be considered for membership.
- The next meeting will be held on November 9<sup>th</sup> via Zoom.

C. Human Rights Committee Annual Report – Jane Hinson provided the following report:

1. The Human Rights Committee meets quarterly and oversees the protection of members through review of quality of programs, timely provision of services and makes recommendations in response to complaints by members. In closed session, the committee reviews cases when a member has died while receiving services. She reported the current, greatest challenge for the committee is achieving full committee membership and participation by representation from Partners catchment area counties. Russ Perkins encouraged members to refer potential candidates to Jane for consideration for HRC membership.

D. Provider Council President's Report – In the absence of Beth Brown, no report was provided.

E. CEO Report – Rhett Melton provided the following information:

1. Local Updates
  - a. National Committee of Quality Assurance Review – Mr. Melton reminded the board of Partners transition to accreditation by NCQA, that Partners achieved a score of ninety-six point seven (96.7) and that Partners is awaiting final documentation of certification from NCQA.
  - b. Annual External Quality (EQR) Review – Mr. Melton also reminded the board of the annual, required state-contracted onsite review. Partners has received the EQR report which confirmed a raw score of ninety-five point three (95.3). For comparison purposes of full accreditation, Partners achieved an overall score of ninety-seven point three (97.3). Focus continues on areas noted for improvement.
  - c. Mr. Melton discussed the i2i Center for Integrative Health organization that includes representation of provider organizations and advocacy groups in addition to state and LME/MCO organizations. The i2i Conference, aka as the "Pinehurst Conference" is scheduled for December 2-4, 2020 and will be virtual. Tammy Pyles will send the conference information out to the board and they can let her know of their interest in attending and to speak with any Partners Executive about the conference.
  - d. Covid-19 – Effective Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup> Partners will enter *Partners Stage 2*, with emphasis on safer at home. Most staff will continue to work remotely; however; there are provisions (limited number of people in work spaces and CDC guidelines) in place that will allow staff to safely return to the office. Visitors will be permitted to enter the building but be limited to lobby areas. The daily Symptom Tracker System, implemented by Partners HR Director, Libby McCraw was explained. This has proven to be a very effective tool in identifying risks and limiting the spread of the disease. Ten (10) staff members have tested positive; six (6) have fully recovered; four (4) are still symptomatic; and no staff members are currently hospitalized. Contact tracing is completed for all positive test results.

## VI. Discussion Agenda

A. County Commissioner Advisory Committee – Behavioral Health Focused Updates

1. **Burke County** – Commissioner Jeff Brittain stated that he had nothing specific to report. However, he asked about the IT equipment lease and Susan Lackey responded that at the end of the three-year fair market lease, Partners will decide to buy out the lease or return the equipment.
2. **Catawba County** – Commissioner Kitty Barnes provided the following report:
  - a. The county continues with the jail diversion project. Chief Superior Court Judge-Nathanial Poovey, Chief District Court Judge-Buford Cherry, and District Attorney-Scott Reilly have been working to establish a pre-trial release and jail policy. This relates to mental health programming as it will include a public safety assessment of individuals who are being brought into the jail. The program is slated for implementation in early 2021.
3. **Cleveland County** – Commissioner Susan Allen provided the following report:
  - a. The county is currently focused on providing information, education and reiterating safe practices in the community to control the spread of Covid-19.
  - b. Efforts to reduce the jail population through assessments and referrals to programs in the county have been successful and has reduced the jail population from 300 to 200 people. This work continues and will hopefully mean construction of a new jail facility will not be required.
4. **Gaston County** – Commissioner designee Joseph Ramey provided the following report:
  - a. Covid-19 positive case percentages are trending up over the last few weeks from 7.5% to 9.9%.
  - b. Early voting started today and turnout was high.
5. **Iredell County** – In the absence of Commissioner Marvin Norman no report was provided.
6. **Lincoln County** – In the absence of Commissioner Anita McCall no report was provided.
7. **Rutherford County** – County Manager Steve Garrison provided the following report:
  - a. Tara Conrad attended the last commissioner’s meeting to provide a presentation and explain the results and return on investment in the community over the last year since the county’s transition to Partners. The report justified the county’s decision to align with Partners. The county appreciates Partners efforts to keep counties informed of changes across the state related to behavioral health, IDD, SA services and the shift to Tailored Plans.
  - b. Covid-19 positive cases have increased similarly to other counties and the county has lost lives to the virus.
  - c. The county continues to explore avenues for grants and other funding for infrastructure buildout for broadband and assistance for families facing eviction.
8. **Surry County** – In the absence of Commissioner Bill Goins no report was provided.
9. **Yadkin County** – Commissioner Kevin Austin provided the following report:
  - a. Covid-19 cases have spiked over the last few weeks and there are currently 88 active cases which is significant for the county. There are currently three hospitalizations and there have been nine deaths due to Covid-19 in the county.
  - b. Schools are preparing to open for in-person classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays with virtual classes on Wednesdays to allow for cleaning of the buildings.
  - c. County Human Services Director, Kim Harrell is retiring effective November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- B. Executive Dashboard Report-July 2020 – The report was included as part of the board meeting agenda packet. Shireen Stone provided an overview of the dashboard, including annualized penetration rates by county which she explained have not changed much from year to year. She reviewed Super Measures data: Transitions to Community Living (TCLI) and increased focus on loss of housing issues including transitional housing; Access to Primary/Preventive Care for Members; Inpatient Ambulatory Follow Up; and Claims data. She noted issues that have impacted scores including the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, claim denials been elevated compared to pre-Covid months.
- C. Tailored Plan Update – Rhett Melton stated that the report is closely related to discussion reserved for closed session and he deferred his comments until the closed session.

## VII. Closed Session

At 7:15 p.m. Linda McCrary made a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to NC General Statute, Section 143-318.11, (a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is confidential or not considered a

public record; a(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served; and Section 122C-126.1 to preserve competitive healthcare information. Joe Ramey seconded and the motion carried unanimously. With the exception of Rhett Melton-CEO, Shireen Stone-COO, Rachel Porter-CCO, and Libby McCraw-HR Director, all remaining Partners staff and non-voting board members were excused from the meeting. During closed session a business matter was discussed and no action was taken by the board.

**VIII. Open Session**

At 7:51 p.m. Joe Ramey entered a motion to return to open session. Kitty Barnes seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**IX. Adjournment**

With there being no further discussion, Chair Russ Perkins asked for a motion to adjourn. At 7:52 p.m., Susan Allen entered a motion to adjourn and Joe Ramey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Libby McCraw  
Director of Human Resources