



Community Oversight Board of Directors

Public Meeting
February 10, 2021
10:00 AM

Webex
University Hospital
Newark, New Jersey

Present: Diane Hill, PhD, Chair; Nicole Butler; Shereef Elnahal, MD, MBA; Gary Huck; Mary O’Dowd, MPH; Jean Pierce

Absent: John Gerow; William Holubek, MD

MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Opening Statement

Chairwoman Hill welcomed all in attendance, called the meeting to order and asked Ms. Tammy Robinson to conduct a roll call. With a quorum of members present, the meeting convened at 10:00 a.m.

II. Report of the President and Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Elnahal reported that the hospital continues to take a leadership role with respect to Covid-19 testing, treatment and vaccination. Dr. Elnahal emphasized the need for the hospital to be responsive to the community, particularly in the face of skepticism about the vaccine, which in large measure is founded on the recent crisis of confidence and mistrust of federal government leadership, and, importantly, the historic abuses by the medical community based on race. Dr. Elnahal recognized the critical role that the Community Oversight Board plays in helping the hospital connect with the community to build trust, and he thanked the Board members and community advocates who continue to assist in working closely to achieve health equity and vocalize the hospital’s positive progress with its pandemic response.

Dr. Elnahal also acknowledged the effort of the Board members who served on the selection committee for the Community Advisory Council (CAC). He noted that the individuals nominated to the CAC have deep roots within the community and will provide meaningful interaction and robust feedback to the Board.

Dr. Hill thanked Dr. Elnahal for his efforts to communicate accurate information to the community about the vaccine. She stated that she initially was hesitant to receive the vaccine, but that after listening to the communication sessions that Dr. Elnahal hosted, in the summer, she has scheduled her appointment to receive the vaccine.

III. Public Comment

Chairwoman Hill opened the meeting for public comment and Ms. Mary Maples, Corporate Secretary, provided instructions for those wishing to comment.

Ms. Cherise Dawson, Co-Chair of the NAACP of Newark Health Committee, thanked hospital leadership for their efforts to garner interest in the vaccine among community members. Ms. Dawson expressed how important it was that Dr. Elnahal framed the loss of trust communities of color have in the medical community as a result of a history of abuses. She stated that placing the onus on the parties responsible for this mistrust validates those feelings. She underscored that University Hospital is at the forefront of restoring trust and that she, having received the Moderna vaccine, will continue to advocate alongside the hospital.

Ms. Ingrid Hill of the People's Organization for Progress expressed concern about the announced merger or affiliation of the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School with RWJ Barnabas Health, and the potential impact it may have on University Hospital. Ms. Hill also asked about the hospital's funding plan for the coming fiscal year and offered to provide a letter of support for the hospital.

Both Ms. Dawson and Ms. Hill asked to schedule a meeting with Dr. Elnahal to discuss how their respective organizations may assist the hospital's budgetary ask with the State.

Ms. Banita Herndon, RN a University Hospital employee, raised concerns about patients visiting the Emergency Department, who have socio-economic issues such as homelessness, food insecurity and lack of comfort items. She stated that current resources available to ED staff are limited and contribute to increased wait times and walk-outs.

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes

Chairwoman Hill accepted a motion to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020 meeting of the Community Oversight Board. Upon motion, duly seconded, the minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the members.

V. Discussion Items and Presentations

- A. Community Advisory Council Update – Review slate of candidates and potential amendments to the Charter

Chairwoman Hill thanked hospital leadership and Selection Committee members for their hard work in reviewing the 50+ applications for the seats on the CAC. She noted that the CAC Charter was amended to increase the membership from seven, to eight individuals. In addition, Ms. Jean Pierce commented that the process of selecting the members was difficult because there were so many strong candidates. She stated that she looks forward to working with the new Council. Mr. Gary Huck echoed Ms. Pierce's sentiments. Chairwoman Hill provided a brief overview of each of the nominees' background and experience.

The candidates for the CAC are Michael Bright of the Newark Downtown District; Margaret Cammarieri of the American Heart Association; Cherise Dawson of the Newark Branch NAACP; Bishop Jethro James of Paradise Baptist Church; Angela Killane-Sims of Lupe Fund; Reverend Jean Maurice of the

Haitian Pastor's Association; Reverend Louise Scott-Rountree of the City of Newark Clergy Affairs; and Dr. Denise Warren of the American Nurses Association and the NAACP.

B. Community Engagement Update

Ms. Tippens provided an update on recent community engagement activities and upcoming events. Ms. Tippens delineated several hospital and virtual events including a health fair with the African American Heritage Committee, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service and the Week of Remembrance in honor of University Hospital employees who succumbed to Covid-19.

Lastly, Ms. Tippens thanked organizations who partner with the hospital to achieve the successful events and activities. These organizations include the Newark Branch of the NAACP, the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, the Shani Baraka Women's Resource Center and the Beta Alpha Omega Chapter, among many others.

C. Review of proposed Amended and Restated Bylaws

Ms. Maples provided an overview of the proposed amendments to the Community Oversight Board Bylaws and requested that the members review the draft and provide any proposed comments or modifications, with the goal of discussing and possibly approving the amended and restated Bylaws at the next meeting.

VI. Action Items

Ms. Maples presented Resolution 2021-0210-09 appointing members of the Community Advisory Council. Chairwoman Hill accepted a motion to approve the resolution. Upon motion, duly seconded, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote of the members.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m. The next meeting of the Community Oversight Board is Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. in Newark, NJ.