

Minnesota Rural Health Association

Board of Directors Retreat Minutes

October 15, 2007

Morton Minnesota

Attending: Barbara Muesing, President; Maddy Forsberg, Jack Geller, Duane Nelson, Mark Schoenbaum, Robin Weis, Nancy Franke-Wilson, Liz Quam.

Ex Officio: Judy Neppel

Excused: Jenni Beech, David Borgert, Ray Christensen, Greg Thorson, Tim Stratton, Tiffany Yen

1. Convene, Check-In, Review Agenda: Each of the attending Board members discussed issues of relevance to MRHA:

Mark Schoenbaum – Health reform the state and national agenda

Liz Quam – Rural Health Advisory Committee Report and implications for rural in the report recommendations

Duane Nelson- NRHA Critical Access Conference – from now into the next couple years, 150 new building projects will be built. Currently there are approximately 1300 CAH's many old and from the Hill Burton era. Think about the number of facilities and consider what has been done with rural school and church mergers and the implications for CAH's.

Maddy Forsberg – The numbers of parish nurses is growing in SW MN and their impact is meaningful for the aging in rural communities. Issues of concern in rural continues to be transportation for the aging. Maddy discussed the Bone Builder program.

Robin Weis – She has completed the Rhonda Montgomery Care Giver Assessment training. The site of the first assessment is the Redwood Falls Clinic where Weis will be working with the Alternative Care Daily Waiver (ACEW). This is a beta test. More to come.

Nancy Franke-Wilson – Ended her official work on the primary seat belt project last summer. She's currently working on 2 rural health projects and with HCMC to develop a trauma system tool kit. Franke-Wilson continues to have interest in the red light running project and the primary seat belt law.

Jack Geller – Concern for long term care staff shortages which is results in patients being turned away. Long term care facilities are hurting so that access to facilities will soon become a serious issue. Something must be done to improve reimbursement and improve the regulatory requirements. There must be a more intentional approach taken to resolve these critical issues.

Judy Neppel – Discussed the work of the Interpreter Services Work Group reporting that the work to date has been primarily educational but the work plan is aggressive to insure that report is complete on time. More on that later.

2. Goals for 2008: Barbara Muesing reviewed the draft goals:

- Raise awareness and build understanding about critical rural issues in MN and beyond
- Develop and advocate for a rural health policy agenda for MN and beyond
- Develop a plan to implement the Rural Health Opportunity (ROA) resolution
- Ensure long term sustainability of the MN Rural Health Association

3. Director's Report: Judy Neppel reported

- Upper Midwest Rural Health Policy Summit
Attendance: 129 individuals
Great program evaluations (distributed)
- Current Membership is 105 including 14 lifetime members
- Blog
UMC Health Management students will develop blog and post. More when it's established soon.
- Cyber conferences
Topics to be discussed later this meeting – Nancy Franke-Wilson
Free cyber conference call services will be used to deliver
- MRHA website
Up-to-date
Suggestions for improvement – track the traffic
- NRHA grant due November 30, 2007

4. Finance Report – Duane Nelson reported

Profit and Loss – Nine Months Ending September 20, 2007

Income total - \$38,022.10
Expense total - \$29,771.94
Net Gain - \$8,250.16

Balance Sheet

Total Assets - \$47,114
Total Liabilities and Equity - \$47,114

5. Membership Development – Liz Quam reported

Membership Workgroup Recommendations Liz Quam, Nancy Franke-Wilson, Judy Neppel

Membership Benefits –

- Institute an effort to thank each new or renewed member 3 ways: electronically from MRHA office, phone call from Board member who will complete follow-up call form and return to MRHA office, and perhaps a written note
- Corporate sponsors for cyber conferences to improve revenue source. Board Members will be asked to find sponsors.

- Membership Recruitment – Letter to rural hospital CEO's planned. Other target groups could include: county commissioners, public health officers, clinics, EMS and ambulance services,

Much discussion followed regarding MRHA's visibility to membership. Ideas shared to improve visibility included: cyber conference announcements, surveying educational interest, MRHA policy agenda announced and membership interest sought to assist in advancing, rural health organizational collaboration with ND and other contiguous states, institute more conversations with the membership (newsletter or briefs – a couple paragraphs written bi monthly to keep members apprised of current issues).

6. Resource Development – Jack Geller and Mark Schoenbaum

Geller and D Nelson will attend a Otto Bremer Foundation meeting in Grand Forks on October 25, 2007. Geller will report to MRHA on the outcomes of the meeting. Geller and Schoenbaum will work to develop and advance an aggressive resource development strategy to ensure MRHA's long term sustainability. They will report to the Board at the November 16th meeting or sooner if appropriate.

7. Policy Agenda – Mark Schoenbaum and Liz Quam distributed and reviewed the

Health Care Reform: Addressing the Needs of Rural Minnesotans completed by the Rural Health Advisory Committee Work Group on Health Reform published in October 2007. Quam, Schoenbaum, Thorson, Christensen from the MRHA Board served on the advisory committee work group and Christensen served as Chair. Recommendations and options include reduce health care expenditures and limit the rate of growth, increase affordable coverage options and ensure all have coverage, improve quality, safety, and the health status of Minnesotans. Change state health care purchasing to promote higher quality with lower cost, promote appropriate and cost-effective investments in new facilities, drugs, and technologies, support options for serving small employers and employees and self-employed and reduce administrative costs. Quam encourage all to read the describers under each recommendation for clarification. The MRHA Board discussed the recommendations and will take a position of support for the RHAC report. MRHA 2008 Policies (green sheet) will reflect the recommendations of the report.

There was considerable discussion regarding the long term care facilities dilemmas and the need for support for a different funding mechanism and release from the regulatory burden (federal level).

The discussion of policy priorities yielded the following list for consideration.

- **MRHA promotes a Rural Opportunity Assessment (ROA), and supports initiatives that foster a new rural economy.**
- **MRHA encourages health care reform that will improve the health and well being of rural people and communities across Minnesota.**
- **MRHA supports preventive health and safety initiatives, especially those that address rural health issues.**
- **MRHA encourages more attention to the crisis in long term care in many rural communities.**

- 8. Education Agenda** – Nancy Franke-Wilson discussed the free cyber conference service she is familiar with and will send the MRHA office the link. She again discussed the concept of soliciting sponsors for the cyber conferences. The sponsors sought would be a “fit” with the topic planned for the cyber conference and the fee charged would be \$500. The sponsor would get in return their logo on our website and an announcement of their sponsorship during the conference. Perhaps there needs to be more discussion on sponsor benefits?

Cyber conference topics discussed and thought to be of interest to the membership include:

Chemical Dependency	NW MN expert
Workforce Shortage	Gwen Haalas
Medicare Part D 2008	Robin Weis
Rural EMS	Gary Windrow
Rural Dentistry/access and disparity	Pat Lloyd & Dick Dirk
Interpreter Services	
Fall Prevention – Bone Builders	Maddy Forsberg
Obesity Prevention	
Wellness in the Workplace	Sarah Reese

Franke Wilson will compile a complete list and forward to the MRHA office soon.

- 9. By-law Revision Recommendations** – Maddy Forsberg and Jenni Beech reviewed the by-laws and have several recommendations to make. They will forward a red lined copy to the Board and it will be discussed at the meeting on November

- 10. NRHA Dues** – MRHA will pay the NRHA annual dues for 2008

Adjourn @ 2:15PM

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Neppel