

MINUTES OF THE HARRIS HEALTH BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

9:00 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION/RECOMMENDATION
I. Call to Order and Record of Attendance	The meeting was called to order at 9:13 a.m. by Dr. Andrea Caracostis, Chair. It was noted that a quorum was present, and the attendance was recorded. Dr. Caracostis noted that while some Board members were present in person, others were participating via videoconference, in accordance with state law and the Harris Health Videoconferencing Policy. The meeting was accessible for public viewing online through the Harris Health website: http://harrishealthtx.swagit.com/live .	A copy of the attendance is appended to the archived minutes.
II. Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Meeting – February 27, 2025 	<u>Motion No. 25.03-25</u> Moved by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, seconded by Dr. Cody Pyke, and unanimously passed that the Board approve the minutes of February 27, 2025 Board meeting. Motion carried.
III. Announcements/ Special Presentations	<p>A. CEO Report Including Special Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measles Risk and Prevention in Houston <p>Dr. Esmaeil Porsa, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), provided an update on several key items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measles outbreak: Dr. Porsa reported on the current measles outbreak in Harris County. Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) Hospital Construction: He provided an update on the construction at LBJ Hospital and noted that the Texas Medical Center (TMC) police are providing security coverage at the site. Executive Retirements: Dr. Porsa announced the retirement upcoming retirements of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Jeffrey Baker, Executive Director, Harris County Hospital District Foundation Ms. Elizabeth Hanshaw Winn, Assistant County Attorney, Harris County Attorney's Office <p>Dr. Porsa also shared that the LBJ Hospital Expansion was honored with the 2025 Touchstone Award from the Center for Health Design. The award recognizes the use of an Evidence-Based Design process to enhance value, improve outcomes, and engage stakeholders. He concluded his report by reading a heartfelt poem from a patient, expressing gratitude for the care received at Ben Taub Hospital (BTH).</p>	As Presented.

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	<p>B. Board Member Announcements Regarding Board Member Advocacy and Community Engagements</p> <p>Ms. Carol Paret shared that she had the privilege of participating in the Magnet Site Reviews at both LBJ and BT Hospitals. She noted that the Board should be very proud of the outstanding work being done by the nursing leadership and staff.</p> <p>Dr. Cody Pyke informed the Board that due to her professional commitments during the legislative session in Austin, TX, she will be attending Board meetings virtually. She anticipates resuming in-person attendance in June.</p>	As Presented.
IV. Public Comment	<p>Ms. Cynthia Cole, Executive Director of Local #1550 – AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees), addressed the Board regarding employee concerns related to living wages and workplace safety.</p> <p>Ms. Audrey Nath, a Harris Health employee, addressed the Board regarding preventable deaths occurring in the Harris County jail.</p> <p>Ms. Citterece McGregor spoke to the Board about the death of her son, who was a patient while in the custody of the Harris County Jail and Ben Taub Hospital.</p>	As Presented.
V. Executive Session	<p>At 9:36 a.m., Dr. Caracostis stated that the Board would enter into Executive Session for Items V. ‘A through C’ as permitted by law under Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032, Tex. Occ. Code. Ann. §§ 151.002, 160.007 and Tex. Gov’t Code Ann. §551.071.</p>	
	<p>A. Report Regarding Quality of Medical and Healthcare, Pursuant to Tex. Occ. Code Ann. §§151.002, 160.007 and Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032 to Receive Peer Review and/or Medical Committee Report, Including Report of the Medical Executive Board in Connection with the Evaluation of the Quality of Medical and Healthcare Services, and also the Harris Health Quality, Safety Performance Measures, Good Catch Recipients, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Quality Reporting with Possible Action Regarding this Matter Upon Return to Open Session</p>	No Action Taken.
	<p>B. Medical Executive Board Report and Credentialing Discussion, Pursuant to Tex. Occ. Code Ann. §§151.002, 160.007 and Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032 to Receive Peer Review and/or Medical Committee Report, Including Consideration of Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of Harris Health Medical Staff Upon Return to Open Session</p>	No Action Taken.

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	<p>C. Report Regarding Harris Health Correctional Health Quality of Medical and Healthcare, Including Credentialing Discussion and Operational Updates, Pursuant to Tex. Occ. Code Ann. §§151.002, 160.007, Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032 and Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071 to Receive Peer Review and/or Medical Committee Report with Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session</p>	No Action Taken.
<p>VI. Reconvene to Open Meeting</p>	<p>At 9:56 a.m., Dr. Caracostis reconvened the meeting in open session; she noted that a quorum was present, and that no action was taken in Executive Session.</p>	
<p>VII. General Action Item(s)</p>		
	<p>A. General Action Item(s) Related to Quality: Medical Staff</p>	
	<p>1. Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of the Harris Health Medical Staff</p> <p>Dr. Kunal Sharma, Chair, Medical Executive Board, presented the credentialing changes for members of the Harris Health Medical Staff. In March 2025, there were seventeen (17) initial appointments, forty – four (44) reappointments, two (2) changes/additions of privileges, and five (5) resignations. A copy of the credentialing report is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p><u>Motion No. 25.03-26</u> Moved by Mr. Paul Puente, seconded by Mr. Jim Robinson, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.A.1. Motion carried.</p>
	<p>B. General Action Item(s) Related to Quality: Correctional Health Medical Staff</p>	
	<p>1. Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of the Harris Health Correctional Health Medical Staff</p> <p>Dr. Otis Ekins, Chief Medical Officer, Harris Health Correctional Health, presented the credentialing changes for members of the Harris Health Correctional Health Medical Staff. In March 2025, there was three (3) initial appointments, seven (7) reappointments, and one (1) resignation. A copy of the credentialing report is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p><u>Motion No. 25.03-27</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Dr. Cody Pyke, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.B.1. Motion carried.</p>
<p>VIII. Executive Session</p>	<p>At 9:58 a.m., Dr. Caracostis stated that the Board would enter into Executive Session for Items VIII. 'D through F' as permitted by law under Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §§551.071, 551.085 and 551.074.</p>	
	<p>D. Consultation with Attorney Regarding Expansion of Oncology Service Line on the LBJ Campus, to Include Radiation Therapy and Infusion Services, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §§551.071, 551.085, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session</p>	No Action Taken.
	<p>E. Consultation with Attorney Regarding Revisions to Committee Charters, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session</p>	No Action Taken.
	<p>F. Deliberation Regarding Evaluation and Duties of Harris Health Board Members, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.074</p>	No Action Taken.

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IX. Reconvene to Open Meeting	At 10:58 a.m., Dr. Andrea Caracostis reconvened the meeting in open session; and that no action was taken in Executive Session.	
X. New Items for Board Consideration		
	<p>A. Approval of a Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Harris County Hospital District Approving the Form of the Order of the Harris County Commissioners Court Authorizing the Issuance, Sale and Delivery of Harris County Hospital District, Limited Tax Bonds, Series 2025; Levying a Continuing Direct Annual Ad Valorem Tax for the Payment of Principal and Interest; Authorizing the Authorized Representative to Approve the Amounts, Interest Rates, Prices, Terms and Redemption Provisions Thereof; Approving the Preparation of Financing Documents and Prescribing the Terms and Form Thereof; Authorizing the Preparation and Distribution of an Official Statement in Connection with the Sale of the Bonds; and Making Other Provisions and Other Activities Supporting the Issuance and Administration of Such Bonds</p> <p>Ms. Victoria Nikitin, Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, explained that the proposed Resolution is necessary for the Harris Health Finance Working Group to finalize the issuance, sale and delivery of Harris County Hospital District, Limited Tax Bonds, Series 2025 (“Bonds”). In May 2025, Harris Health plans to proceed with the first issuance of voter – approved bonds, in an amount not to exceed \$850 million. As required by state statute, the Harris County Commissioners Court must approve the issuance of the Limited Tax Bonds, Series 2025. This approval is scheduled for April 10, 2025. A copy of the resolution is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p>Motion No. 25.03-28 Moved by Ms. Carol Paret, seconded by Dr. Cody Pyke, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item X.A. Motion carried.</p>
XI. Strategic Discussion		
	<p>A. Committee Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance Committee Dr. Cody Pyke shared that the Governance Committee met on February 27, 2025, and discussed the following topics: Ms. Taylor Carlson, Member Success Manager at the Governance Institute, presented an overview of the 2024 Board Self – Assessment. She presented BoardCompass® national themes, board duties and responsibilities, and Harris Health’s Board response rate. She also reviewed the question structure, overall rating, key strengths, opportunities and questions with the greatest response distribution. Additionally, Ms. Carlson outlined the next steps, including a sample development plan with action items, strategies, and a timeline for goal achievement. 	<p>As Presented.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Committee Ms. Sima Ladjevardian stated that the Quality Committee met on March 11, 2025, and discussed the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two Safety Videos, “Shared Decision Making” and “Call Don’t Fall” were viewed. ○ The 2024 Harris Health Quality Manual updates were presented. • Joint Conference Committee Ms. Ladjevardian shared that the Joint Conference Committee met on March 13, 2025, and discussed the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Kunal Sharma, Chair of the Medical Executive Board, and Dr. Asim Shah, Vice Chair of the Medical Executive Board, provided the Committee with an update on the activities of the MEB. ○ Dr. Tien Ko, Chief of Staff at LBJ, and Dr. Sandeep Markan, Chief of Staff at BT, shared updates on the system pavilions. ○ Dr. Fareed Khan, Assistant Chief of Staff at BCM, and Dr. Mohammad Zare, Assistant Chief of Staff at UT, provided updates on ambulatory care services. ○ The Committee recommended for approval revisions to the Harris Health Medical Staff Rules and Regulations. 	
XII. Consent Agenda Items		
	A. Consent Purchasing Recommendations	
	<p>1. Approval of Purchasing Recommendations (Items A1 through A17 of the Purchasing Matrix)</p> <p>Dr. Caracostis noted that Item A9 was pulled from the purchasing agenda and will not be considered at this time. A copy of the purchasing agenda is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p>Motion No. 25.03-29 Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item XII.A.1. of the purchasing recommendations (A1 through A8 and A10 through A17) Motion carried.</p>

	B. Consent Committee Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Revisions to the Harris Health Quality Manual	Motion No. 25.03-30 Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	2. Approval of Revisions to the Harris Health Medical Staff Rules and Regulations	Motion No. 25.03-30 Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	C. Consent Grant Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Grant Recommendations (Items C1 through C7 of the Grant Matrix)	Motion No. 25.03-30 Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	D. Consent Contract Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Contract Recommendations (Items D1 through D3 of the Contract Matrix)	Motion No. 25.03-30 Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.

	E. New Consent Items for Board Approval	
	1. Acceptance of the Harris Health February 2025 Financial Report Subject to Audit	<u>Motion No. 25.03-30</u> Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	2. Approval to Appoint Mr. Omar Reid and Mr. James Camp as Committee Members to the Harris Health 401K & 457(b) Administrative Committee and Pension Administrative Committee Effective as of May 1, 2025	<u>Motion No. 25.03-30</u> Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	3. Approval of Harris Health’s Donation of Salvage or Surplus Property Policy	<u>Motion No. 25.03-30</u> Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	4. Approval to Convey a Water Meter Easement and Right of Way to The City of Houston for the Lyndon B. Johnson Hospital Expansion Project, Houston, Harris County, Texas	<u>Motion No. 25.03-30</u> Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	5. Approval to Transfer Ownership via Warranty Deed of a Sanitary Sewer Across Kelly Street to the City of Houston	<u>Motion No. 25.03-30</u> Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.

	6. Approval of the Quality Committee and Budget & Finance Committee Members and Revised Committee Charters	<u>Motion No. 25.03-30</u> Moved by Dr. Cody Pyke, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.B – F. Motion carried.
	F. Consent Reports and Updates to the Board	
	1. Updates Regarding Pending State and Federal Legislative and Policy Issues Impacting Harris Health <i>{End of Consent Agenda}</i>	For Information Only
XIII. Item(s) Related to the Health Care for the Homeless Program		
	<p>A. Review and Acceptance of the Following Reports for the Health Care for the Homeless Program (HCHP) as Required by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, which Provides Funding to the Harris County Hospital District d/b/a/Harris Health to Provide Health Services to Persons Experiencing Homelessness under Section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCHP April 2025 Operational Update <p>Ms. Tracy Burdine, Director, Health Care for the Homeless Program (HCHP), presented the April 2025 Operational Update. Her report included the Productivity Report, Consumer Advisory Council Report, Risk Management Report and Service Area Analysis. She shared that HCHP has provided care to 1,887 unduplicated patients and completed 4,642 visits year-to-date. In February 2025 alone, HCHP served 1,280 unduplicated patients and 2,472 completed visits, reflecting an increase compared to the previous year. She noted that a concerted effort to boost productivity has been highly successful. Ms. Burdine also presented the Q4 Budget summary, highlighting that 63% of funds have been utilized. She noted that operating line items falling below 25% pertain to contractual and equipment expenses, which are allocated for the Open Door Mission (ODM) renovation project. Additionally, Ms. Burdine discussed the HCHP policy on waiving client fees, emphasizing that the policy ensures that an individual's inability to pay does not prevent access to services through the Health Care for the Homeless Program. A copy of the presentation is available in the permanent record.</p>	<u>Motion No. 25.03-31</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Mr. Paul Puente, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item XIII.A. Motion carried.

	B. Approval of the HCHP Budget Summary Report	<u>Motion No. 25.03-32</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Carol Paret, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item XIII.B. Motion carried.
	C. Approval of the HCHP Waiving of Client Fees Policy	<u>Motion No. 25.03-33</u> Moved by Mr. Paul Puente, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item XIII.C. Motion carried.
XIV. Executive Session	At 11:14 a.m., Dr. Andrea Caracostis stated that the Board would enter into Executive Session for Items XIV. 'G through K' as permitted by law under Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §§551.072, 551.085 and Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032.	
	G. Review of the Community Health Choice, Inc. and Community Health Choice Texas, Inc. Financial Performance for the Month Ending January 31, 2025, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.085	No Action Taken.
	H. Consultation with Attorney Regarding Litigation in Civil Action No. 4:24-CV-05109 in the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
	D. Consultation with Attorneys Regarding Harris Health's Medical School Affiliation and Support Agreements, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
	I. Consultation with Attorneys Regarding Harris Health's Medical School Affiliation and Support Agreements, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
	J. Report by the Executive Vice President, Chief Compliance and Risk Officer, Regarding Compliance with Medicare, Medicaid, HIPAA and Other Federal and State Health Care Program Requirements, Including Status of Fraud and Abuse Investigations, Pursuant to Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071 and Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032, and Possible Action Regarding this Matter Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.

XV. Reconvene	At 11:51 a.m. Dr. Andrea Caracostis, reconvened the meeting in open session; she noted that a quorum was present, and that no action was taken in Executive Session.	
XVI. Adjournment	There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.	

I certify that the foregoing are the Minutes of the Harris Health Board of Trustees Meeting held on March 27, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,



Andrea Caracostis, MD, MPH, Chair



Carol Paret, BS, Secretary

Minutes transcribed by Cherry A. Joseph, MBA