

MINUTES OF THE HARRIS HEALTH BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 14, 2026
9:00 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION/RECOMMENDATION
<p>I. Call to Order and Record of Attendance</p>	<p>The meeting was called to order at 9:03 AM by Dr. Andrea Caracostis, Chair. A quorum was present, and the attendance was recorded. Some Board members attended in person, while others joined via video conference in accordance with state law and Harris Health’s videoconferencing policy. Only participants scheduled to speak were provided dial-in information. All others wishing to view the meeting were advised to access the meeting online through the Harris Health website: http://harrishealthtx.swagit.com/live.</p>	<p>A copy of the attendance is appended to the archived minutes.</p>
<p>II. Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Meeting – December 18, 2025 	<p><u>Motion No. 26.01-01</u> Moved by Ms. Carol Paret, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve the minutes of December 18, 2025, Board meeting. Motion carried.</p>
<p>III. Announcements/ Special Presentations</p>	<p>A. CEO Report Including Special Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Harris Health Leadership <p>Dr. Esmail Porsa, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), began by thanking Board members for their participation in community town halls, noting that several members attended multiple sessions. He introduced a five-minute video explaining the expansion proposal for Ben Taub Hospital, emphasizing the necessity of additional hospital capacity for public health.</p> <p>Board members expressed appreciation for Dr. Porsa’s presentations and the engagement of the public in town halls, noting the importance of transparency and effective communication. Members acknowledged the ongoing challenges related to hospital construction within existing facilities due to limited space and the necessity of maintaining Level 1 trauma status. Dr. Porsa and Board members discussed the importance of strategic planning and community support for expansion efforts.</p>	<p>As Presented.</p>

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION/RECOMMENDATION
	<p>B. Board Member Announcements Regarding Board Member Advocacy and Community Engagements</p> <p>There were no Board member announcements.</p>	
IV. Public Comment	There were no citizens present to address the Board.	
V. Executive Session	At 9:18 AM, Dr. Caracostis stated that the Board would enter 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>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> <p>Dr. Hooli was recused from discussion on this item related to Baylor College of Medicine.</p>	No action taken.
	<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.
VI. Reconvene to Open Meeting	At 9:27 AM, Dr. Caracostis reconvened the meeting in open session, noting that a quorum was present and no action was taken during Executive Session.	

VII. General Action Item(s)		
	A. General Action Item(s) Related to Quality: Medical Staff	
	<p>1. Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of the Harris Health Medical Staff</p> <p>Dr. Kunal Sharma, Chair of the Medical Executive Board, presented credentialing changes for members of the Harris Health Medical Staff for January 2026. He reported that there were 15 initial appointments, 0 reappointments, 2 changes or additions of privileges, and 25 resignations. Dr. Hooli was recused from this item related to Baylor College of Medicine. Copies of the credentialing report were available in the permanent record.</p>	<p><u>Motion No. 26.01-02</u> Moved by Ms. Sima Ladjvardian, seconded by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.A.1. Motion carried.</p>
	<p>2. Approval of the 2026-2027 Harris Health Utilization Review Plan</p> <p>Dr. Sharma also presented the 2026-2027 Harris Health Utilization Review Plan, noting minor grammatical, capitalization, and regulatory updates. A copy of the Utilization Review Plan is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p><u>Motion No. 26.01-03</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Marlen Trujillo, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.A.2. Motion carried.</p>
	B. General Action Item(s) Related to Quality: Correctional Health Medical Staff	
	<p>1. Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of the Harris Health Correctional Health Medical Staff</p> <p>Dr. Otis Ekins, Chief Medical Officer of Harris Health Correctional Health, presented the Correctional Health Medical Staff credentialing report detailing 6 initial appointments. Copies of the credentialing report were available in the permanent record.</p>	<p><u>Motion No. 26.01-04</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Dr. Shubhada Hooli, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.B.1. Motion carried.</p>
VIII. New Items for Board Consideration	<p>A. Approval of a Gift Agreement and Acceptance of the Donation for the Naming of the New Hospital on the LBJ Campus in Accordance with Harris Health Strategic Fund's Healthier Harris County Capital Campaign</p> <p>Ms. Taylor McMillan, Senior Vice President, Chief Development Officer, introduced a video highlighting construction progress, including a 12-story, 1.3 million square foot facility with 330 private patient rooms, a potential expansion to 450 rooms, 15 operating rooms, and a rooftop helipad. She emphasized safety measures, workforce diversity, local economic impact, and minority- and women-owned business participation. Ms. McMillan requested board approval to accept a \$30 million grant in support of Harris Health's strategic facilities plan, bringing the donor's total commitment to \$40 million. The board expressed gratitude for the donor's partnership and the strategic fund team's leadership. A copy of the gift agreement is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p><u>Motion No. 26.01-05</u> Moved by Ms. Sima Ladjvardian, seconded by Mr. Paul Puente, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VIII.A. Motion carried.</p>
IX. Strategic Discussion		

	A. Harris Health Strategic Plan Initiatives	As reported.
	<p>1. Presentation Regarding the New Ambulatory Care Services (ACS) Clinic Site Selection Recommendation, Including Consideration of Approval of a Lease Agreement Between Harris Health and Culinary Facilities of Georgia, LLC, for a Health Center within the Greater Alief Area</p> <p>Dr. Jennifer Small, CEO ACS, and Mr. Patrick Casey, Senior Vice President, Facilities Construction & Systems Engineering, presented recommendations for New Ambulatory Care Services (ACS) clinic site selection, including consideration of a lease agreement with Culinary Facilities of Georgia, LLC, for a health center in the Greater Alief area, aligning with Pillar 6: Access. A copy of the presentation is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p>Motion No. 26.01-06 Moved by Ms. Paul Puente, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item IX.A.1. Motion carried.</p>
X. Consent Agenda Items		
	A. Consent Purchasing Recommendations	
	<p>1. Approval of Purchasing Recommendations (Items A1 through A4 of the Purchasing Matrix)</p> <p>Mr. Jack Adger, Assistant Purchasing Agent, Harris County, presented the purchasing recommendations and the Fourth Quarter Fiscal Year 2025 Premier Spend Report for informational purposes. A copy of the purchasing agenda is available in the permanent record.</p>	<p>Motion No. 26.01-07 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Carol Paret, and unanimously passed that the Board approve the purchasing recommendations (Items A1 through A4 of the Purchasing Matrix). Motion carried.</p>
	2. Harris Health Fourth Quarter of Fiscal Year 2025 Premier Spend Report	For Information Only
	B. Consent Grant Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Grant Recommendation (Item B1 of the Grant Matrix)	<p>Motion No. 26.01-08 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Carol Paret, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B. through D. Motion carried.</p>
	C. Consent Contract Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Contract Recommendations (Items C1 through C3 of the Contract Matrix)	<p>Motion No. 26.01-08 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Carol Paret, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B. through D. Motion carried.</p>

	<p>D. New Consent Items for Board Approval</p>	
	<p>1. Acceptance of the Harris Health November 2025 Financial Report Subject to Audit</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>[End of Consent Agenda]</i></p>	<p>Motion No. 26.01-08 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Carol Paret, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B. through D. Motion carried.</p>
<p>XI. Item(s) Related to the Health Care for Homeless Program</p>		
	<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"> • January 2026 Operational Update <p>Ms. Tracey Burdine, Director of Ambulatory Care Services (ACS), presented the Health Care for the Homeless Program operational update, including patient volume, Consumer Advisory Council activities, the Sliding Fee Discount Program evaluation, and a change in scope for behavioral health services.</p> <p>During the month of November, the Health Care for the Homeless Program served 6,544 duplicated patients, resulting in a total of 27,474 completed visits. Ms. Burdine advised the Board that due to changes in Board presentation deadlines and reporting timelines, volume data will now be presented on a quarterly basis. This adjustment is necessary because complete data is not available prior to the submission deadline for Board materials, which results in reports being approximately two months behind the reporting period.</p> <p>Ms. Burdine provided an update on the Consumer Advisory Council (CAC), reporting continued growth with the addition of two new members. Activities conducted by the Council from August 2025 through October 2025 included updates on the Open Door Mission (ODM) Clinic renovation, which significantly expanded and improved the clinic space.</p> <p>Ms. Burdine invited Board members to visit the renovated clinic upon reopening. The Council also reviewed plans for a new dental satellite clinic at Star of Hope Cornerstone, which is intended to improve access for children residing at the shelter. Children represent a small percentage of the HCHP population, and locating services onsite is expected to reduce access barriers and create a</p>	<p>Motion No. 26.01-09 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XI.A. Motion carried.</p>

more welcoming environment. Additional CAC discussions included review of a new injectable epinephrine and insulin policy and acknowledgment of quality badges awarded to the program.

Ms. Burdine then presented highlights of the Sliding Fee Discount Program (SFDP) evaluation, which is conducted annually. She reported that the majority of HCHP patients are at or below 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, and most remain uninsured, reinforcing the importance of the discount program. There are no access barriers under the current SFDP, and fee waivers are available for patients unable to pay. While a decline in services was observed in 2024 due to operational challenges and provider vacancies, the program maintained its core mission of providing equitable access to care. Services across medical, dental, and mental health disciplines continue to increase.

In response to Board questions regarding insurance coverage, Ms. Burdine confirmed that eligibility specialists, citizenship workers, and social workers actively assist patients in applying for any available coverage. However, many patients do not qualify despite their homeless status.

Ms. Burdine reported a change in scope related to behavioral health services. While psychiatry services had previously been approved by the Board, preparation for the upcoming HRSA Operational Site Visit revealed that Form 5A incorrectly reflected behavioral health services as being provided through a contractual arrangement. This was accurate historically; however, approximately two years ago all behavioral health therapists and Licensed Drug Counselors were brought in-house as Harris Health employees. The change in scope updates Form 5A to accurately reflect direct service delivery for behavioral health, mental health, and psychiatry services and removes outdated contractual references.

Ms. Burdine also addressed prior Board questions related to dental sealants for children served by the HCHP. Children represent approximately 3.5 percent of the total HCHP patient population, with 41 children ages 6–12 falling within the dental sealant reporting category. Many of these children had already received sealants. Medical exam rooms are not equipped to safely apply sealants due to equipment requirements; therefore, services are appropriately delivered in dental facilities. The planned dental satellite clinic at Star of Hope Cornerstone is expected to further improve access for pediatric patients. Ms. Burdine confirmed that future presentations will clearly document follow-up responses to Board questions. A copy of the presentation is available in the permanent record.

Note: Items A – D were presented together.

	B. Approval of the HCHP Consumer Advisory Council Report	<u>Motion No. 26.01-10</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Dr. Shubhada Hooli, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XI.B. Motion carried.
	C. Approval of the HCHP Sliding Fee Discount Program Evaluation	<u>Motion No. 26.01-11</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XI.C. Motion carried.
	D. Approval of the HCHP Change in Scope	<u>Motion No. 26.01-12</u> Moved by Ms. Carol Paret, seconded by Dr. Shubhada Hooli, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XI.D. Motion carried.
XII. Executive Session	At 10:10 AM., Dr. Andrea Caracostis stated that the Board would enter Executive Session for Items XII. 'D through H' as permitted by law under Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032, and Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §§551.074 and 551.085.	
	D. Review of the Health Care for the Homeless Program Director's Performance Evaluation, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.085, Including Consideration of Approval of the Performance Evaluation Upon Return to Open Session <u>Motion:</u> Approval of the Performance Evaluation as Presented	<u>Motion No. 26.01-13</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.D. Motion carried.
	E. Review of the Community Health Choice, Inc. and Community Health Choice Texas, Inc. Financial Performance for the Eleven Months Ending November 30, 2025, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.085	No action taken.

	<p>F. Consultation with Attorney Regarding Settlement of Claims, Pursuant to Tex. Gov. Code §551.071 and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session</p> <p>Motion: Approval of the Settlement of claims with Marthe Voltaire in the amount of \$75,000.00. President/CEO of Harris Health or his designee is authorized to execute any agreement, release, or any other necessary documents to effect this settlement</p>	<p>Motion No. 26.01-14 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera - Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.F. Motion carried.</p>
	<p>G. 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 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</p>	<p>No action taken.</p>
	<p>H. Discussion with Attorney Regarding Litigation and Real Property Matters, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071</p>	<p>No action taken.</p>
XIII. Reconvene	<p>At 10:49 AM Dr. Andrea Caracostis, reconvened the meeting in open session and confirmed that a quorum remained present. She noted that no action was taken in Executive Session. The Board took action on items XII. "D and F" of the Executive Session Agenda.</p>	
XIV. Adjournment	<p>There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.</p>	

I certify that the foregoing are the Minutes of the Harris Health Board of Trustees Meeting held on January 14, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carol Paret, BS, Presiding Officer
on behalf of Andrea Caracostis, MD, MPH, Chair



Libby Viera – Bland, AICP, Secretary