

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

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION/RECOMMENDATION
I. Call to Order and Record of Attendance	The meeting was called to order at 9:08 AM by Dr. Andrea Caracostis, Presiding Officer. A quorum was present. She noted that while some board members were present in the boardroom, others were participating remotely by video conference in accordance with the Harris Health Video Conferencing Policy and applicable state law. All others wishing to view the meeting were advised to access the meeting online through the Harris Health website: http://harrishealthtx.swagit.com/live. Attendance was recorded and is appended to the archived minutes.	A copy of the attendance is appended to the archived minutes.
II. Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting Board Meeting – August 12, 2026	Dr. Caracostis presented the minutes of the Board meeting held on August 12, 2026 for approval. A copy of the minutes is available in the permanent record.	<u>Motion No. 26.09-113</u> Moved by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, seconded by Ms. Libby Viera Bland, and unanimously passed that the Board approve the minutes of August 12, 2026, Board meeting. Motion carried.
III. Announcements/ Special Presentations		
	A. CEO Report Including Special Announcements - Health and Wellness Fair at Gulfgate Health Center on Saturday, September 19, 2026, from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM - METRO Pop-ups at Ben Taub and LBJ Hospitals - Harris Health has been Re-designated as a Comprehensive Stroke Center by DNV - Ben Taub Hospital has been Re-designated as Baby-Friendly® - Meeting with Chairman James Frank and the Office of House Speaker Dustin Burrows Regarding Healthcare Affordability Dr. Esmaeil Porsa, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), provided the CEO report and highlighted several organizational and community developments. Dr. Porsa reported that Harris Health’s proposed tax rate had received favorable consideration by Harris County Commissioners Court and was proceeding toward adoption. He encouraged Trustees to participate in the upcoming Health and Wellness Fair scheduled for September 19, 2026, at Gulfgate Health Center, emphasizing the importance of the events as opportunities for community engagement, health screenings, access to resources, and collaboration with community partners.	As Presented.

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	Dr. Porsa also reported on METRO pop-up events conducted at LBJ and Ben Taub Hospitals, during which transportation resources and services were shared with employees, patients, families, social workers, and community health workers. Dr. Porsa announced that Harris Health had received re-designation as a Comprehensive Stroke Center by Det Norske Veritas (DNV) and that Ben Taub Hospital (BTH) had been re-designated as Baby-Friendly®. He also reported on his recent meeting in Austin with Chairman James Frank and representatives from the Office of the Speaker of the Texas House concerning the healthcare affordability report. Dr. Porsa stated that the discussions were productive and that Harris Health's role as an essential health system and its importance to the healthcare infrastructure of Texas were emphasized.	
	B. Board Member Announcements Regarding Board Member Advocacy and Community Engagements Board members did not provide any announcements or advocacy updates.	
IV. Public Comment	There were no members of the public present to address the Board.	As Presented.
V. Executive Session	At 9:14 AM, Dr. Caracostis stated that the Board would enter Executive Session for Items V. 'A through D' 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.	
	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, the Harris Health Quality and Safety Performance Measures, Good Catch Recipients, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Quality Reporting, and Possible Action Regarding this Matter Upon Return to Open Session <i>Dr. Hooli was recused from discussion on this item related to Baylor College of Medicine.</i>	No Action Taken.
	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 the Harris Health Medical Staff Upon Return to Open Session <i>Dr. Hooli was recused from discussion on this item related to Baylor College of Medicine.</i>	No Action Taken.

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	C. Report Regarding Harris Health Correctional Health Quality of Medical and Healthcare, with 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, Including Consideration of Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of the Correctional Health Medical Staff Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
	D. Consultation with Attorney Regarding Interlocal Agreement between Harris County and Harris Health, Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §551.071, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
VI. Reconvene to Open Meeting	At 9:29 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	
	1. Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of the Harris Health Medical Staff Dr. Kunal Sharma, Chair of the Medical Executive Board, presented the Medical Staff credentialing report. Dr. Sharma reported 50 initial appointments, no reappointments, 20 changes in clinical privileges, and 30 resignations, with one file discussed during Executive Session. Copies of the credentialing report were available in the permanent record. <i>Dr. Hooli was recused from discussion on this item related to Baylor College of Medicine.</i>	<u>Motion No. 26.09-114</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Mr. Paul Puente, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.A.1. Motion carried.
	2. Approval of Changes to the Pediatric Clinical Privileges Dr. Sharma presented proposed changes to Pediatric Clinical Privileges to formally recognize specific training and competencies related to lactation advisement. Dr. Sharma explained that several pediatric providers have specific training in lactation advisement and that the proposed change would formally delineate the privilege necessary for qualified pediatric providers to advise patients. A copy of the Pediatric Clinical Privileges is available in the permanent record.	<u>Motion No. 26.09-115</u> Moved by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, seconded by Mr. Libby Viera – Bland, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.A.2. Motion carried.

	3. Approval of the Revised 2026 Harris Health Medical Staff Bylaws Dr. Asim Shah, Vice Chair of the MEB, presented proposed revisions to the 2026 Harris Health Medical Staff Bylaws. Dr. Shah summarized revisions addressing definitions of “health matter” and “inappropriate conduct,” exemptions from DEA licensing requirements for practitioners who do not require such licenses, limitations on prescribing controlled substances through Epic for exempt practitioners, self-disclosure requirements, reporting timeframes for professional license actions and criminal matters, and a change in the Utilization Review Committee meeting frequency to quarterly. A copy of the 2026 Harris Health Medical Staff Bylaws is available in the permanent record.	<u>Motion No. 26.09-116</u> Moved by Mr. Paul Puente, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.A.3. Motion carried.
	B. General Action Item(s) Related to Quality: Correctional Health Medical Staff	
	1. Approval of Credentialing Changes for Members of the Harris Health Correctional Health Medical Staff Dr. Otis Ekins, Chief Medical Officer of Harris Health Correctional Health, presented Correctional Health Medical Staff credentialing report. Dr. Ekins reported 10 initial appointments, no reappointments, no changes in clinical privileges, and no resignations. Copies of the credentialing report were available in the permanent record.	<u>Motion No. 26.09-117</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VII.B.1. Motion carried.
VIII. New Items for Board Consideration	A. Approval of the Proposed Harris Health Fiscal Year 2027 Operating and Capital Budget Ms. Victoria Nikitin, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, presented the proposed Harris Health Fiscal Year 2027 Operating and Capital Budget. Ms. Nikitin reported that the proposed budget had been the subject of extensive discussions with Harris County Commissioners’ Court and its staff and reflected a projected 3.3% margin and net bottom line of approximately \$98.5 million. She described Fiscal Year 2027 as a transitional year as Harris Health prepares for significant facility openings and related operating expenses anticipated in Fiscal Year 2028. Ms. Nikitin reviewed the proposed tax rates, including a Management and Operations rate of 0.18086, a debt service rate of 0.01442, and a combined total rate of 0.19528. Dr. Porsa thanked Harris County Commissioners, Harris County residents, and the Harris Health team for their support of Harris Health’s financial and infrastructure needs. A copy of the presentation was available in the permanent record. <i>Motion: Approval of Harris Health Fiscal Year 2027 Operating and Capital Budget to be presented to the Harris County Commissioners Court for final approval in conjunction with its adoption of a 2026 Tax Rate that will result in a net ad valorem tax revenue not to exceed the amount shown in the proposed budget.</i>	<u>Motion No. 26.09-118</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Mr. Paul Puente, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda item VIII.A. Motion carried with Mr. Philip Sun abstaining from the vote.

IX. Strategic Discussion		
	A. Harris Health Strategic Plan Initiatives	
	1. Presentation Regarding the Harris Health Third Quarter Capital Projects Update Mr. Louis Smith, Senior Executive Vice President, presented the third-quarter Capital Projects Update under Strategic Pillar 5: System Optimization. Mr. Smith reviewed the status of the strategic facility plan, including project schedules, projected budgets, funding sources, bond expenditures, skilled trades participation, prevailing wage coordination, and construction safety. Ms. Nikitin reported that Harris Health voters had approved \$2.5 billion in bond funding in November 2023 and that more than \$1 billion had been expended, with approximately \$1.5 billion remaining. She further reported that the first bond issuance had been fully expended and that an additional approximately \$830 million had been issued, with more than \$200 million spent on construction. The overall project portfolio remained on schedule and within Board-approved budgets. Mr. Patrick Casey, Senior Vice President, Facilities, Construction and Systems Engineering, provided an update on construction safety, including the LBJ expansion project, which had approximately 1,700 trade workers and more than 3.5 million work hours reported. The Board discussed construction safety and the importance of protecting workers. The Board also discussed prevailing wage requirements and Harris Health’s continued coordination with Harris County. Administration reported that an updated interlocal agreement remained under discussion and would return to the Board for action when finalized. A copy of the presentation is included in the permanent record.	As Presented.
	2. Presentation Regarding Harris Health’s Pharmacy Update Dr. Michael Nnadi, Senior Vice President, Pharmacy and Lab Officer, presented an update regarding Harris Health’s pharmacy operations, including the Pharmacy Operations Center at Holly Hall and developments related to the federal 340B program. Dr. Nnadi described the pharmacy automation project as a significant strategic initiative designed to increase Harris Health’s capacity to process and distribute medications. The anticipated operational date for the new facility is May 17, 2027. The Board discussed future opportunities for Trustees to tour the facility, staff training, and anticipated increases in prescription-processing and mail-order capacity.	As Presented.

	Dr. Nnadi also provided an overview of changes to the 340B program and the revised rebate-model pilot announced by the Health Resources and Services Administration. He discussed the potential requirement for eligible entities to purchase medications at full price and subsequently submit claims-level information for manufacturer adjudication and rebate reimbursement. Administration identified potential working-capital exposure and additional administrative and technology requirements associated with the revised model. Trustees questioned Harris Health’s participation in the pilot, the anticipated financial and administrative impact, and the mechanisms that would be used to monitor the program. Dr. Nnadi reported that Harris Health was developing an impact dashboard, rapid-response work group, governance process, and technology enhancements to monitor claims, denials, delays, disputes, and financial exposure. Administration emphasized the importance of data integrity, compliance, financial discipline, and verification of eligibility requirements. The Board requested continued monitoring and reporting as additional information becomes available. A copy of the presentation is available in the permanent record.	
	B. Committee Reports • August 25, 2026 – Governance Committee • August 25, 2026 – Quality Committee • August 27, 2026 – Joint Conference Committee • August 27, 2026 – Compliance & Audit Committee Ms. Sima Ladjevardian presented the Governance Committee report from the August 25, 2026 meeting. She reported that the Committee reviewed proposed revisions to Policy 2.02 regarding participation in Board and committee meetings by videoconference and received education concerning Board Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance and emerging legal and regulatory considerations. The Committee identified key governance questions and areas for further inquiry in advance of the planned AI overview at the October Board meeting. The Committee agreed that AI oversight, governance, and risk management should remain ongoing Board responsibilities. Ms. Ladjevardian also reported that the Governance Committee reviewed proposed revisions to Harris Health Standard Operating Procedures concerning Board fiduciary responsibilities, governance versus management roles, attendance expectations, documentation of participation and voting, and governance education. Additional review was scheduled for a future Governance Committee meeting. The Committee also discussed the Texas Healthcare Trustees certification program and opportunities for Trustees to continue working toward certification.	As Reported.

	Dr. Caracostis reported on the August 25, 2026 Quality Committee meeting, including evidence-based patient safety education regarding catheter-associated urinary tract infections and reports concerning outpatient clinical services and patient-related quality matters. A more detailed presentation was scheduled for a subsequent Board meeting. Additionally, Dr. Caracostis noted that the Joint Conference Committee report from August 27, 2026 included updates concerning medical staff leadership, learner onboarding, high-reliability practices, patient safety and quality performance, hospital operations, the LBJ Level III Trauma Center survey, interventional radiology renovations and training support, throughput and length-of-stay initiatives, Ben Taub stroke designation activities, maternal levels of care, future planning, and ambulatory quality and patient experience initiatives. Dr. Caracostis reported on behalf of Ms. Paret, Committee Chair, and stated that the Compliance and Audit Committee report from August 27, 2026 included updates regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 internal audit plan, audit engagement status, outstanding procurement recommendations, management action plans, annual risk assessment activities, remaining Fiscal Year 2026 audit engagements, and preparation for the year-end report.	
X. Consent Agenda Items		
	A. Consent Purchasing Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Purchasing Recommendations (Items A1 through A9 of the Purchasing Matrix) Mr. Jack Adger, Assistant Purchasing Agent, Harris County Purchasing Department, presented the purchasing recommendations, Items A1 through A9, for Board consideration. Administration reported that Items A1 through A9 had no changes or additions and were recommended for approval. Item B1 of the purchasing matrix (related to law enforcement) was withdrawn for submission at a later time. A copy of the purchasing agenda is available in the permanent record.	<u>Motion No. 26.09-119</u> Moved by Dr. Shubhada Hooli, seconded by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, and unanimously passed that the Board approve the purchasing recommendations (Items A1 through A9 of the Purchasing Matrix). Motion carried.
	The Board continued to consider the consent agenda items. Item B1 of the purchasing matrix was clarified as distinct from the applicable consent agenda item B1 related to grant recommendations and did not require removal from the consent agenda. An intellectual property license agreement was pulled for discussion at the request of a Trustee. Clarification was requested on consent agenda item E5, concerning an intellectual property license agreement, including the negotiated license fee of \$605,242. The Board also discussed Harris Health's policy governing the naming of buildings and facilities. Administration explained the statutory and policy requirements for Board approval of gifts, donations, and naming opportunities and clarified that the current policy revision consisted primarily of administrative cleanup without material changes. A Trustee requested that the applicable naming recommendation matrix and policy information be recirculated to the Board.	

	B. Consent Grant Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Grant Recommendations (Item B1 of the Grant Matrix)	<u>Motion No. 26.09-120</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.
	C. Consent Contract Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Contract Recommendations (Item C1 of the Contract Matrix)	<u>Motion No. 26.09-120</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.
	D. Consent Committee Recommendations	
	1. Approval of Revisions to Policy 2.02, Participation in Board Meetings and Board Committee Meetings via Videoconference Call	<u>Motion No. 26.09-120</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.
	E. New Consent Items for Board Approval	
	1. Acceptance of the Harris Health July 2026 Financial Report Subject to Audit	<u>Motion No. 26.09-120</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.
	2. Acceptance of the Harris Health Third Quarter Fiscal Year 2026 Investment Report	<u>Motion No. 26.09-120</u> Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.

	3. Acceptance of the Harris Health Second Quarter Calendar Year 2026 Pension Plan Report	Motion No. 26.09-120 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.
	4. Approval of the Harris Health Policy 2.01 - Naming of Harris Health Buildings, Facilities, and Entities	Motion No. 26.09-120 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.
	5. Approval of Intellectual Property License Agreement between Harris Health and Hermann Park Conservancy	Motion No. 26.09-120 Moved by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, seconded by Ms. Sima Ladjevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items X.B through E. Motion carried.
XI. Item(s) Related to the Health Care for Homeless Program		
	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 HCHP September 2026 Operational Update Ms. Binta Baudy, Vice President, Operations, Ambulatory Care Services (ACS) and Dr. Nelson Gonzalez, Grants Project Manager, HCHP, presented the Healthcare for the Homeless Program operational update. Dr. Nelson reported year-to-date service activity of approximately 4,280 patients, against a goal of 7,250 and approximately 15,884 completed visits, against a target of 30,496 through July. He also reviewed operational plans associated with additional clinic capacity and staffing.	Motion No. 26.09-121 Moved by Mr. Paul Puente, seconded by Ms. Libby Viera – Bland, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XI.A. Motion carried.

	The Board considered a requested change to the Healthcare for the Homeless Program site information for Harmony House. Administration explained that the change was an administrative address update following reconstruction and did not represent a change in services or hours of operation. Administration presented revisions to Policy 5.12, Healthcare for the Homeless Program Credentialing and Privileging. The revisions align the program's credentialing and recredentialing cycle with Harris Health Medical Staff Services' three-year cycle and standardize credentialing, privileging, competency verification, review, and oversight responsibilities. The patient satisfaction report was not presented because the available data reflected first-quarter information rather than the expected second-quarter data. Administration indicated that the appropriate report would be presented at the following month's meeting. Copies of the presentations and supporting documentation were included in the permanent record. Note: Items X. A through D were presented together and considered separately for Board action.	
	B. Approval of a Change in Scope to Revise the HRSA Form 5B: Site Details by Updating the Harmony House Address from 602 Girard Street to 702 Girard Street, Houston, Texas 77007	<u>Motion No. 26.09-122</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 Revised Policy 5.12 – Credentialing and Privileging for the Health Care for the Homeless Program	<u>Motion No. 26.09-123</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 Patient Satisfaction Report	Agenda Item Pulled
XII. Executive Session	At 10:38 AM, Dr. Caracostis stated that the Board would enter Executive Session for Items XII. 'E through L' as permitted by law under Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032 and Tex. Gov't Code Ann. §§551.071, 551.072 and 551.085.	

	E. Review of the Health Care for the Homeless Program Director’s Performance Evaluation, Pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code Ann. §551.074, Including Consideration of Approval of the Performance Evaluation Upon Return to Open Session Motion: <i>Approval of Homeless Program Director’s Performance Evaluation as presented in Executive Session.</i>	Motion No. 26.09-124 Moved by Mr. Paul Puente, seconded by Ms. Sima Lajevardian, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.E. Motion carried.
	F. Review of the Community Health Choice, Inc. and Community Health Choice Texas, Inc. Unaudited Financial Performance for the Seven Months Ending July 31, 2026, Pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code Ann. §551.085	No Action Taken.
	G. Review of the Community Health Choice, Inc. and Community Health Choice Texas, Inc. Investment Report for the Seven Months Ending July 31, 2026, Pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code Ann. §551.085	No Action Taken.
	H. Consultation with Attorney Regarding Settlement of Claims, Pursuant to Tex. Gov. Code §551.071, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session Motion: <i>Approval of the Settlement of EEOC Charge Number 460-2025-10723 in the amount of \$35,000. President/CEO of Harris Health or his designee is authorized to execute any agreement, release, or any other necessary documents to effectuate this settlement.</i>	Motion No. 26.09-125 Moved by Mr. Philip Sun, seconded by Mr. Paul Puente, and unanimously passed that the Board approve agenda items XII.H. Motion carried.
	I. Consultation with Attorney Regarding Harris Health Policy, Pursuant to Tex. Gov. Code §551.071, and Possible Action Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
	J. Deliberation Regarding the Purchase, Exchange, Lease or Value of Real Property, Pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code §§551.071, 551.072, and Possible Action Regarding this Matter Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
	K. 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. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032 and Tex. Gov’t Code Ann. §551.071, and Possible Action Regarding this Matter Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.
	L. Presentation Regarding Harris Health’s Enterprise Risk Management, Pursuant to Tex. Health & Safety Code Ann. §161.032 and Tex. Gov’t Code Ann. §551.071, and Possible Action Regarding this Matter Upon Return to Open Session	No Action Taken.

XII. Reconvene	At 11:55 A.M., Dr. 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. 'E and H' of the Executive Session Agenda.	
XIV. Adjournment	There being no further business to come before the Board; without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:56 A.M.	

I certify that the foregoing are the Minutes of the Harris Health Board of Trustees Meeting held on September 9, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,



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



Libby Viera-Bland, AICP, Secretary

Minutes transcribed by Cherry A. Joseph, MBA