

Health Center Advisory Board

Minutes of March 16, 2026

REGULAR MEETING

Town Office Meeting Room

Time of Meeting: 10:30 AM

VOTING Members Present:

Christine Robb – Chair

Derreth Roberts

Linda Gillies

Myra Rolerson

Harriet Bering (Via Zoom)

Members Excused:

Ken Smith

Sharon Ashley

Jane Wherren

Ex Officio's Present:

Chris Bates-Withers, PA-C – Co-director, Islesboro Health Center

Brendan Prast, M.D. (Via Zoom)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Melissa Burns

Ted Pendleton

Peter Anderson (Via Zoom)

Carrie Reed

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

There are four voting members present in person and one voting member present via zoom, thus a quorum was established. The meeting was set up with a Zoom link and there were several people as noted above who participated through Zoom. HCAB had previously adopted the policy regarding remote meetings and because of this the meeting could legally be held via Zoom.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 4, 2025

MOTION by M. Rolerson to approve the minutes of December 4, 2025 as written. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion – none. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

WELCOME TO DR. BRENDAN PRAST

This is the first meeting that IHC's new supervising physician, Dr. Brendan Prast, was able to physically be in attendance, but because of inclement weather had to attend via Zoom. He apologized for not being in attendance in person.

POLICY MANUAL

NEW OR REPLACEMENT POLICIES:

1. **PA/NP Per Diem Job Description**

MOTION by M. Rolerson to approve the PA/NP Per Diem Job Description as written. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion: H. Bering mentioned her concern with 2 years experience in clinical practice as not being enough experience for the job. C. Robb said that perhaps the candidate would have other skill sets to bring to this position making them qualified for the position, i.e. emergency response training, etc. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

2. **Registered Nurse Job Description**

MOTION BY M. Rolerson to approve the Registered Nurse Job Description as written. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion – None. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

3. **Medical Assistant Job Description**

MOTION BY M. Rolerson to approve the Medical Assistant Job Description as written. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion – None. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

4. **Substitute Coverage Policy**

MOTION BY M. Rolerson to approve the Substitute Coverage Policy as written. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion – none. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

EXISTING POLICIES WITH AMENDMENTS

1. **Medical Records Policy**

MOTION BY M. Rolerson to approve the Medical Records Policy as amended. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion – none. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

2. Mission and Organization

MOTION BY M. Rolerson to approve Mission and Organization as amended. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion - none. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

3. Hours of Operation

MOTION BY M. Rolerson to approve Hours of Operation as amended. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion - none. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

4. HCAB By-Laws

MOTION BY M. Rolerson to approve HCAB By-Laws as amended. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion – none. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

FEE SCHEDULE

The proposed fee schedule for 2026 was reviewed. Along with the 2026 fee schedule, the HCAB members were given the 2025 fee schedule as reference.

Discussion: H. Bering stated that she would advise that legal counsel review this fee schedule as it could possibly be illegal with charging different amounts for insurance patients versus prompt pay patients. Dr. Prast also stated that he would recommend legal consultation as well. For now, it was decided to use only the 2025 insurance fee schedule until legal can review this.

MOTION by M. Rolerson to continue using the 2025 Insurance Fee Schedule, not the prompt pay schedule, until legal review and then meet again to review the 2026 Fee Schedule. D. Roberts seconded the motion. Discussion – the HCAB may set up an interim HCAB meeting to review fee schedule as soon as legal has reviewed. C. Bates-Withers will discuss with Janet and move forward on legal counsel review. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

HEALTH CENTER DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chris Bates-Withers, PA-C , Health Center Co-Director – Comments:

- . Kathleen Philbrick, FNP, has moved from per diem to full time. She will not be on call.
- . Beth O'Mara, FNP, will be stepping down from her position later this spring.
- . There will be a restructuring of personnel due to the move to EHR. There is no longer a need for the file clerk type position as those skill sets are no longer needed. What is needed is more of a clinical skill set and the person hired will be an MA. This person could triage calls and decide if the patient needed to be seen immediately or at another time. They could also fill in for

Odesser Schoppe (MA) or Lisa Hilt (Phlebotomist/Lab Director) when needed. The one MA will replace two file clerks. There will be a slight increase in cost because the MA will get benefits.

Discussion:

Melissa Burns said that she understands the two positions being eliminated are currently held by islanders who have served for five years. She asked C. Bates-Withers if they had looked at other areas within the town where they might be able to fit in or if they are just “kicking them out”. C. Bates-Withers said that if there were other places in the town still requiring paper filing, he would have put in a recommendation for them. He further stated that the two file clerks have been informed they are being eliminated and said that the new MA position is being offered to an islander.

Dr. Prast said that after spending time with the providers at the Health Center, he believes that the new MA position would help to prevent provider burnout.

Ted Pendleton expressed his concern with the elimination of two positions by stating “It’s an island, we take care of each other”. He said that he doesn’t understand the burnout factor as sometimes when he is in the Health Center there are no patients there but there are many providers and he said it just doesn’t look good. He asked how many patients on average are seen and C. Bates-Withers said the average is 10 per day with a great increase in patient numbers during the summer. Ted said that for years the island only had one doctor and it worked out. He also stated his concern that many of the summer or part time residents are expecting too much of our Health Center - “everyone is expecting everything” and it is driving up the cost. He said they can’t expect an urban or suburban experience as on the mainland, and stated that “we have to think about serving everyone”.

C. Robb and H. Bering both elaborated on the fact that you cannot look at history or go back in the medical field and make comparisons because of reasons such as the increase in regulations, complexity of medical issues, increase in the number of medications, etc. C. Robb, said that although it may not seem busy in the clinic with patient numbers there is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes that the public is not aware of.

C. Bates-Withers was asked by M. Burns if the new MA would be required to be on the ambulance service. C. Bates-Withers explained that it is not a requirement – the ambulance service is a separate entity from the health center.

C. Bates-Withers was asked by T. Pendleton about AI services or applications that may be available to help streamline work for the providers. C. Bates-Withers said that they have not budgeted for AI in the next fiscal year but it is something to look at in the future. It would be another expense and would mean contracting with another entity. He said that some of the providers are still getting familiar with the current Azaela system.

The next regular HCAB meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2026 at 10:30, but there may be an interim meeting needed to resolve the fee schedule.

MOTION by Myra Rolerson, seconded by Derreth Roberts, to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 PM. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy L. Pike