

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Pullman Regional Hospital Date: 11-04-2020

Observer Reporting: Judy Stone Length of Meeting: 2 hours Zoom

Members Present: All Commissioners present

Members Absent: _____

Others Present (e.g., media, public): _____

Business pertaining to League Positions or topics of interest

Public Hearing on the **proposed Budget for 2021** - No public input given.

Board Education Discussion: **Health Equity issues** in Whitman County

The hospital has been providing 1:1 nursing care for a 16-year-old patient with autism since September 7th because there has been **no appropriate residential facility** that will accept her/him and his payor's contract.

Hospital's **Influenza Campaign**: All staff must receive the flu vaccine by October 31 or be approved for a medical

or religious exemption. "Anyone who has not participated by that date will be taken off the schedule.

They then have until November 5th to receive a vaccine or their employment will be terminated."

Palouse Psychiatry and Behavioral Health has added 2 new providers. So, the practice now has 2 FT clinical psychologists and 2 PT nurse practitioners for medication management.

Expense management Planning for 2021:

Establishing financial metrics

Restructuring of hiring decision activities.

Understanding of leadership expectations.

Possible voluntary early retirement plan.

Reducing costs related to leased space.

Strategic Planning Committee will present a recommendation to the Board in the early part of 2021 regarding the opportunities for **expanding the boundaries of the Hospital District**.

Pandemic Management Plan Update: October saw the admission of 15 Covid-19 positive patients, many of whom required advanced ICU care, and some have had Covid-related dementia and behavioral issues or other complex medical issues. Averaged 3 Covid patients/day in Isolation. There is now a limited capacity to transfer patients in WA state, even if PRH doesn't have the capacity. Capacity includes isolation beds, ventilators, staff....

Surge plan not adequate: 4 patients on ventilators = capacity

There are usually NO beds in the state available for transfers.

ICU-trained RN staff shortage (2 have tested positive, 2 went on leave before October surge...)

Having daily "huddles" on the status of patient-care resources and options.

Hospital is actually having discussions with nursing home patients regarding end-of-life decisions if they become Covid +.

Your additional comments/opinions:

These front-line healthcare workers are experiencing unimaginable physical and emotional exhaustion. PRH does have a few Covid-experienced RNs who traveled to NY and NJ to help there before our surge happened.