

**Oklahoma Physician Manpower Training Commission
Commission Meeting
April 8, 2021**

MINUTES

The Board of Oklahoma Physician Manpower Training Commission met for a regular commission meeting at 10:00 a.m., on Thursday, April 8, 2021, at the OU College of Medicine, 800 Stanton L. Young Boulevard, AAT 1st Floor Conference Rooms A & B, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73104, with Dr. Steven Crawford and The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine hosting. Members of the public joined virtually via Zoom. Notice of the meeting had been properly filed with the Secretary of State, and a copy of the notice and agenda was posted by Tuesday, April 6, 10:00 a.m., in prominent public view at PMTC, and on the Commission website, www.pmtc.ok.gov, in compliance with the Open Meeting Act.

Commission Members Present

Pam Spanbauer, RN, Chair
Joe Leverett, MD, Vice-Chair
Dr. Kevin Khoury
Jeff Lester, MD

Commission Members Absent

Zane DeLaughter, DO
Tim Newton, DO
Shane Stidham, MD

PMTC Staff Present

Janie Thompson, Executive Director
Michelle Cecil
Aneesa Sharp
Diane Mickelson
Dana Morphew
Benita Jose-Mathew
LeaAnn Williams

Guests Present

Joe Ashbaker, Assistant Attorney General – legal
Gary Slick, DO, OSU Medical Center
Richard M. Bryant, Jr, PhD, OU College of Medicine-Tulsa

Ms. Spanbauer opened the meeting at 10:04 a.m. by welcoming everyone to The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine campus. Attendees wore masks and social distancing was observed. Guests were invited to join via Zoom.

Ms. Mickelson gave proof of meeting notice, took roll call, and declared a quorum.

Ms. Spanbauer read the Mission Statement of Oklahoma Physician Manpower Training Commission.

1. **Consideration and Vote to Approve/Disapprove Minutes of the February 25th, 2021, Commission Meeting**

Ms. Spanbauer asked for any revisions or discussion of the February meeting minutes then called for a vote.

Dr. Leverett made the motion to approve the February 25, 2021, minutes as presented with Dr. Khoury seconding the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

2. **Director's Report**

• **HB2121**

Representative McIntyre ran the bill for PMTC to add General Surgery to loan repayment. The Hospital Association did a survey for us and it resoundingly identified general surgery as a need for rural residents for two reasons. Rural residents prefer not to travel great distances for routine procedures such as a colonoscopy. Routine procedures would also create revenue to keep those hospitals open.

The second part of the bill changes the make up of our commission adding a nurse practitioner.

The bill passed on April 5.

• **TSET**

Ms. Thompson and Ms. Williams had a conference call with Julie Bisbee of TSET. Ms. Bisbee was curious about the FY22 budget and wondered why the FY23 budget tripled. Ms. Thompson stated both the PMTC and TSET boards asked PMTC staff to fill the available spots. Ms. Thompson also stated over the next three years only four to six physicians will be rolling off which does not open very many positions for us to fill. She requested an additional five spots that could be filled the next fiscal year and another five the following fiscal year. In four years, we will have about 20 to 23, that will go off leaving a lot more positions available. The five spots would be requested in the new TSET contract. Ms. Thompson said FY21 was the first year TSET offered administrative costs. PMTC's contribution was the administrative costs when the 1115 Waiver was in place. Ten percent of \$500,000 is the administrative cost which will allow us to purchase a backdrop for conferences as well as pay for registrations and help in marketing the program.

• **Commission Members and Applicants**

Ms. Thompson stated two commissioners will rotate off of the commission this June: Ms. Pam Spanbauer and Dr. Zane DeLaughter, which makes her feel sad as she had become attached to them. Per Senator Thompson's bill last year, the

next position is to be filled with a D.O. We will have three M.D. physicians and three D.O. physicians on the board. Dr. Hill had an interest in returning to the board. Both Rebecca Lewis, D.O., and former loan repayment participant, Aaron Sizelove in Buffalo, has shown an interest in serving on our board. Dr. Lester inquired as to the new makeup of the commission. Ms. Thompson stated if the bill passes, she will turn to the AVG's office for incorporating the new set up. She confirmed the bill will eliminate the layperson positions.

- **Blue Cross Blue Shield**

Ms. Thompson stated she will talk to Blue Cross Blue Shield regarding adding an addendum to the contract. When it was originally written they provided \$160,000, 40% each year, \$25K, \$35K, \$45K and \$55K. She stated she did not feel comfortable putting any more physicians on until an addendum is in place.

- **Budget**

Dr. Leverett asked if the budget cycle is in sync with when Ms. Thompson presents the budget to the commission. Ms. Thompson confirmed that around December is when the Senate and House Budget Committees receive them. The budget is under Education for the House and Senate, the rest is under Health and Human Services. She stated she asked for the 4% be reinstated.

Dr. Lester made the motion to approve the Director's Report as presented. Dr. Khoury seconded the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

3. **Consideration and Possible Action to change date of June 10 to June 3, and December Retreat/Commission Meeting from December 9, 2021, to December 2, 2021**

Ms. Thompson explained that some commissioner's terms end on the 6th of June. Since she would like to have the opportunity to meet with the new commission members, provide them a book with information about the programs, orient them about how the commission meetings run, and make sure they know which staff member works with which program. They will know who to contact if they have questions and so they are ready to actually make decisions when they hit the table. Asking them to come to the June meeting without having an opportunity to have an orientation with them does not seem fair. Ms. Thompson asked to change the June meeting to June 3. August is the first meeting they will participate in where many things are approved for the next fiscal year.

The December meeting is the same time as the Governor's Healthcare Workforce Subcommittee. Since December is a busy month it was proposed to move it to the first Thursday, December 2. In August we may reevaluate after we see who joins the commission and see if we can keep the second Thursday of the month for meetings aside from June and December which will be the first Thursday.

Dr. Leverett made the motion to approve the PMTC Commission meeting date changes to June 3 and December 2, 2021. Dr. Khoury seconded the motion. Voting

in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

4. Discussion and Possible Action on funding and recruiting avenues presented at the February Retreat

Ms. Spanbauer reminded everyone there was a very extensive presentation shown at the Retreat in February. She wanted to make sure that the commission did not lose or forget the things that were talked about, since there were a lot of different possibilities presented. Pam asked for the commission to whittle the ideas down to see which things, as a commission, they want to work on. Ms. Spanbauer passed the floor to Dr. Kevin Khoury.

Dr. Khoury first presented a funding solution if PMTC needs to raise money. He stated there is a lot of money in the state. The second that he stated he totally forgot to discuss is an annual gala. He stated he has been on the Saint's Gala committee and they have raised over \$700,000, the year before \$650,000. He continued: "Whenever I've done a gala, for nonprofits, the minimum we usually raised is \$150,000 the very first year. So, my question is, I know I am probably not going to be on here in two years, I would love to see about doing a gala as a possibility every year to raise money. Each year it grows. There is a lot of funding right there each year. Janie and I talked about that when I met with her just the other day, entertaining the idea of having a yearly gala. It takes work, it takes a whole team. I would like to look at that as part of our funding source each year. It would not surprise me in two or three years from now, we could be doing \$200,000 or \$300,000. Wouldn't it be nice to have that extra money come in every year and have it come to the PMTC? Now the question is, Joe (Ashbaker), how would that work? Would we have to set up a special account to use those proceeds?"

Assistant Attorney General Joe Ashbaker stated there may be some ethical concerns: where the money goes, making sure the money given does not benefit a friend or family, we cannot use state money to fund it. He also noted another concern is where the money goes--into a general fund or a separate trust. There are a lot of things to consider, there cannot be even a hint of impropriety.

Dr. Leverett added he thought Kevin's idea was great. He stated how TSET gave PMTC a set amount and they have a goal for us to place 42 physicians in rural Oklahoma. It is easy for their board to buy and it makes sense. He stated if we ask for money, we have to have a specific goal in mind. Dr. Leverett stated he thinks partnering with a nonprofit, or TSET makes sense, because they already have a track record or a pathway. He continued: OSMA definitely has the ability to have galas. It is cleaner because the money goes to OSMA and funds PMTC in a pathway that is already established.

Mr. Ashbaker stated that non-profits can do things state agencies cannot do. He mentioned food as an example. PMTC could not buy food, whereas a nonprofit can

donate food. There are advantages to having associates help with those sorts of things. He suggested coming up with a plan and adjust it until it works.

Dr. Leverett stated he feels the timing is right since people have been stuck at home for so long, they are interested in these events again and are hungry to get out and socialize again. He posed the question: what other nonprofits might like to partner with PMTC for an event like this?

Ms. Thompson stated she did not know if the OU and OSU Foundations might be willing to partner with us. She suggested the possibility of the Rural Health Association might be interested. She stated OSMA makes perfect sense since they have donated \$1.5 million to PMTC.

Dr. Leverett asked Dr. Khoury to confirm that he is talking about two different ideas. One is about funding from organizations that give money directly to us the other is to hold a gala.

Dr. Khoury stated there are individuals like the English-Speaking Foundation. Many people want to give, so let them give at a gala. He discouraged against doing one gala and walking away, because the ones he has been associated with, they first year they made around \$100,000 in five years they are bringing in \$500,000 to \$600,000. He asked: Why can't that money go to PMTC? He stated he does not want to rely on TSET anymore. He stated it would be a good backup.

Ms. Spanbauer agreed it is a great idea but stated she knows by being involved with these types of things, how much work it takes--the planning, execution and follow up is very labor intensive. She continued, "with a staff of less than 10, my first thought is: who is going to do this once we find out if we can even hold a gala. As a state agency, you have to be very, very careful. What I would recommend is that you do a little more work on trying to find out the legal ramifications of doing something like this. Also talk to some organizations that do this and not just heads or their board but talk to the people that actually do it. Most places that I have been involved with that have had a gala and other activities, actually have a foundation or a marketing department that do these kinds of things--plan and execute activities and fundraising. She stated one nonprofit organization she has been involved with for quite a while, amazed her by the number of things they had to do just to be able to set up a foundation. It was a five-year process. She said she did not want to squash it or be discouraging but there needs to be some serious looking at: do we have the resources? Or do we partner with someone who already has that in place and maybe has the resources to do that? Because it is a lot of work."

Dr. Khoury addressed Ms. Spanbauer's concern agreeing that these events are a lot of work. He stated six years ago "PLICO" did their first one and had a firm come in and ran it, then passed it off to them.

Ms. Spanbauer asked who could pay the firm to run the first one since the state cannot pay for it. Dr. Khoury stated he believes it was a 10% fee.

Dr. Lester suggested to submit a proposal to the Kaiser Foundation to fund five slots at \$250,000 the first year and add five more the next year. Dr. Khoury agreed there are many foundations in the state of Oklahoma that have very deep pockets. He stated that if we do a gala, we need to do it every year as it will continue to grow to which Ms. Spanbauer agreed.

Dr. Rick Bryant added he loves the idea but, what if, on Year Two, covid rears up again and the funds are already committed? He stated different parts of the states have different foundations that support regional and local areas. He added where the gala is held can be very important. Dr. Khoury stated he has three virtual galas this week due to the covid situation. Dr. Bryant asked how it came out financially. Dr. Khoury stated the one non-profit made close to \$100,000 online in addition to silent and online auctions. He stated they sold seven 30 minutes sessions at \$15,000 each to fly with a fighter pilot. He believes this is an excellent way to get the name of PMTC out there since there are many, many people around the state that have no idea what PMTC is or does.

Ms. Spanbauer stated the amount of work involved--PMTTC staff does not have extra time to undertake a project of this magnitude. Dr. Leverett agreed and stressed the importance of who PMTC partners with to put on a gala is critical. He stated he believes it is a win-win to work with OSMA or whomever.

Ms. Thompson stated when a large check is presented to a physician in the field, the sponsor has a PR team those goes with and films the videos and contacts the media. PMTC already depends on OSMA and TSET who have the resources to do those things.

Dr. Leverett stated that the goal is to augment the funds from TSET and state funds to provide extra physician loan repayments opportunities.

Ms. Thompson stated whether it is OSMA or Blue Cross Blue Shield, we are committed to every one of those physicians, of \$50,000, \$14,000 are PMTC funds. If the Kaiser Foundation is willing to fund physicians, we will have to have provide a portion of the matching funds.

Mr. Ashbaker stated he will ask some of his colleagues to see if any of them know of any of their agencies who do similar events such as galas. He also gave an example of the dome at the Capitol was redone with donated funds.

Ms. Spanbauer stated she does not donate to general things anymore. She prefers her donation to go to a specific cause, for example, a physician in Idabel.

Ms. Thompson wrapped up with action items: investigate the possibility of making a presentation to Kaiser Foundation or another foundation, examine whom we might partner, or who might do a gala on our behalf. She stated the board can authorize staff to investigate, those two directions, and to work with commission members that may have some experience in these areas.

Dr. Lester added that if we are going to request funds from the Kaiser Foundation, it needs to be a large amount. He said if you have ever done fundraising, you never insult somebody by asking for too much money but you always insult people by asking for too little. He stated we would be looking at five physicians the first year and adding another five next year. It would not add much to our administrative costs, really. The money would go straight to the mission of PMTC. He requested a packet/package/ folder for a presentation to the Kaiser Foundation

Dr. Leverett thinks it is important when presenting to rural groups to mention how many are in which age bracket and retiring, etc. He believes it adds ammunition of why it is so important to get doctors in rural Oklahoma. He stated Oklahoma is approaching a crisis situation and it adds to the story. Ms. Thompson said the Health Workforce Subcommittee has the data.

Dr. Khoury discussed recruiting physicians through the missionaries coming back to the United States. He also discussed recruiting physicians from three different areas of the world: Australia, the UK, and Canada. He believes they do not have to come back and do residencies. He suggested we do a marketing search to bring those physicians to rural areas.

Dr. Leverett stated he likes the idea of working the two funding ideas: foundations and galas and see what legally can be done. If we have a funding source we can go after some of the other ideas like physician missionaries who are returning to the U.S. We can gather information about which countries Kevin referred to and see what the rules are and next time bring that data so we will have a more specific number of physicians we are looking at as we are working on a funding source.

5. Consideration and Possible Action from Scholarship Loan Repayment Committee

a. Kristen Shay Stehling, D.O.

Information was reported to PMTC staff that a current participant, Kristen Stehling, DO, was allegedly residing in Houston, commuting to her shifts in McAlester. This situation was reported as a result of applications not moved forward when the applicants planned to reside in the metropolitan areas and one out-of-state, commuting for shifts. Dr. Stehling provided information concerning the report and her address maintained in McAlester. The Committee will not take any action concerning the residency report at this time. However, with further review of the file, the Committee does make a motion that staff request a detailed review of Dr. Stehling's file by Assistant Attorney General Joe Ashbaker's office.

The Committee made the motion to request a detailed review of Dr. Stehling's file by Assistant Attorney General Joe Ashbaker's office. Dr. Leverett seconded the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

b. Discussion and possible vote regarding Loan Repayment criteria

The Committee provided direction concerning a physician establishing a primary rural residence as a participant on the PMTC loan repayment program. It is believed that the intent of the program is to provide a physician to the community as an established member of the rural practice community. This requirement, found in other PMTC program contracts, is not currently included in loan repayment.

The Committee made the motion to direct staff to revise the current loan repayment contract to include the requirement to establish a rural primary domicile in the participant's practice community or surrounding rural area and to insure that all program contracts include the same clause. Dr. Leverett seconded the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

6. Consideration and Possible Action regarding the Physician Assistant Scholarship Program

Ms. Sharp presented Katie Mathis to the commission. As there were no questions, she was brought for a vote.

Dr. Leverett made the motion to approve the Physician Assistant Katie Mathis for a PA Scholarship. Dr. Lester seconded the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

7. Consideration and Possible Action regarding the Resident Rural Scholarship Program

Ms. Sharp presented Resident Rural Scholarship applicant Athena Chatzigiannidis, D.O. to the commission.

Dr. Lester made the motion to approve Athena Chatzigiannidis, D.O. with Dr. Khoury seconding the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

8. Consideration and Possible Action regarding Physician Loan Repayment Program

Ms. Williams presented information for three Physician Loan Repayment Program applicants:

- Scott Russell, D.O.
- Derek Pourtorkan, D.O.
- Miranda Beeman, D.O.

Dr. Khoury made the motion to approve the three applicants for Physician Loan Repayment with Dr. Leverett seconding the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.

9. Physician Placement Report

Ms. Sharp and Ms. Williams presented the Physician Placement Report and distributed charts and graphs detailing placed physicians and physician assistants in rural Oklahoma. The spreadsheet that is typically distributed will be emailed to the commissioners later.

Dr. Lester asked what the criteria is regarding knowing if the loans are truly educational loans and not just bank loans. Ms. Thompson stated true education loans usually are serviced by specific lenders, like Nelnet. The loan will show when they took the draw--during undergrad and during medical school. If they have consolidated their loans, and they did not consolidate them within the educational financial system, they have to show us a paper trail. It has to show Arvest Bank, for example, paid off their Nelnet loan. Most of the time they consolidate within the educational lending institution. We had a situation once where a participant tried to state her trust fund was an educational loan. Those do not qualify. It would be like paying back an inheritance. Both PMTC and the participant had an attorney and had to agree this was not a legitimate loan. We were able to help her but not for \$160,000. She qualified for Physician Community Match and received \$50,000 and she is very happy.

Dr. Leverett asked Ms. Williams, who came from TSET, if TSET still loves or likes us (PMTC). He also asked if there was any wisdom she could share with the group. Ms. Williams replied that they really like the programs, and like us spending all of the money allotted to PMTC. They like seeing the physicians are a part of their community and the statistics they must provide before receiving payments. TSET uses the information when they talk to legislators and say, "we have two physician's in your county and they see X number of patients."

Ms. Thompson agreed when she speaks with legislators, they like to hear the counties have retained the physicians beyond their eligible years. The way to keep physicians is for them to become invested in their rural practice communities. The numbers we receive are how many face-to-face visits are Medicaid and Medicare patients—two areas that are not well served. The TSET portion, the tobacco cessation numbers, prove how we are trying to help the health outcomes for the State of Oklahoma. The data measures this and we can present it to the legislatures.

Ms. Williams stated she and Ms. Thompson have been to Tulsa and Ms. Thompson presented a video TSET had made for PMTC. One of the students stated that that particular physician had saved her mother's life. TSET is planning to do a follow up story on this physician.

Dr. Lester asked if PMTC has a relationship the State Health Department. Ms. Thompson answered that it does but it is a loose relationship, it is more through the Office of Primary Care.

Ms. Thompson stated PMTC has a strong affiliation with the Hospital Association.

Dr. Lester stated seven years ago the State Health Department went around and, without notice, shut down operating rooms. One was because of a door that was installed that had already passed 35 inspections. It took three years for that O.R. to reopen. Dr. Lester stated that General Surgery is what keeps some of the little hospitals open. They went from eight million in the bank to in the red.

Ms. Spanbauer stated she believes covid has forced a spotlight to be shown on the rural healthcare system and we cannot rely on hospitals only in metropolitan areas. There has to be a strong healthcare system through the whole state. She hopes the awareness continues.

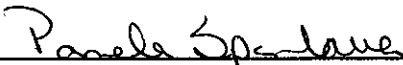
10. **New Business**

Ms. Thompson stated she has received a notice of an audit in FY22. Much of it will be procedural. They have access to all of our financial information through OMES. With a full finance office, we feel we are in better shape. She answered Dr. Leverett's question as to the cost which is between \$6,000 to \$10,000. The last audit was in 2014.

Ms. Spanbauer took the opportunity to thank the OU College of Medicine and Dr. Crawford for hosting the commission meeting. Ms. Thompson stated Dr. Crawford's wife had ankle replacement surgery the day prior and was unable to attend the meeting. Both mentioned appreciation to the facility team and Dr. Crawford's assistant in getting everything taken care of for our meeting.

11. **Discussion and vote to Adjourn**

Dr. Khoury made the motion to adjourn the meeting with Dr. Leverett seconding the motion. Voting in favor were: Ms. Spanbauer, Dr. Leverett, Dr. Khoury, and Dr. Lester. None were opposed.


Pamela G. Spanbauer, Board Chair 6/3/2021