

The MetroHealth System Board of Trustees

HUMAN RESOURCES & COMPENSATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Time: 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Virtual

Committee Members: John Corlett, John Moss, E. Harry Walker, M.D.

Other Trustees: Artis Arnold, Ronald Dziedzicki

Staff: Christine Alexander-Rager, M.D., Kelly Andolek, Robert (Doug) Bruce, M.D., Nabil Chehade, M.D., Corey Clay, Jennifer Esposito, David Fiser, Cindy Gallaspie, Carol Martz, Ashish Masih, Candy Mori, RN, Allison Poullos, Jeff Rooney, Tamiyka Rose, Brendan Sorg, Deborah Southerington, James Wellons, Patrick Woods

Invited Guests: Sal DiFonzo-R, Craig Strom-I

Guests: Guests not invited by the Human Resources & Compensation Committee are not listed as they are considered members of the audience, and some were not appropriately identified.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Corlett called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm, in accordance with Section 339.02(K) of the Ohio Revised Code.

The minutes are written in a format conforming to the printed meeting agenda for the convenience of correlation, recognizing that some of the items were discussed out of sequence.

I. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 8, 2025, Human Resources & Compensation Committee meeting were approved by unanimous vote as submitted.

II. Information Items

A. HR Team Spotlight: Volunteer Services – D. Southerington, J. Esposito

Mr. Corlett introduced Deborah Southerington, SVP, Human Resources, and Jennifer Esposito, VP, Human Resources, to present the HR team spotlight, highlighting the Volunteer Services team, which was incorporated in the Human Resources division in May of last year. Ms. Esposito emphasized that the primary function of the Volunteer Services department is to work with individuals and community organizations to enhance the patient experience across the health system. In carrying out this work, volunteers must complete a process similar to

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employee onboarding, including background checks, health screenings, and required orientation sessions both with Volunteer Services and specific departments where they serve. At the time of reporting, approximately 410 active volunteers were participating in the program, including 135 college and university students from the local region. In 2025, these volunteers collectively provided an estimated 10,000 service hours. Ms. Esposito presented an overview of the approximately 20 distinct volunteer opportunities offered, noting that time commitments varied by role. One example was the Patient Safety Rounders program, in which volunteers assist patients with understanding hospital resources, such as how to use call buttons, active bed alarms, and meal ordering systems, as well as verifying that necessary items remain within a patient's reach. Ms. Esposito also highlighted another popular volunteer area: the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Child Life and Infant Comforter roles. These programs often operate at volunteer capacity due to sustained interest, particularly because they involve holding and comforting infants in the NICU. Ms. Esposito also referenced MetroHealth's partnership with the County Library system on a literacy program designed to help new parents obtain first library cards for their children. Another volunteer program areas receiving special emphasis was the "Loving Paws" therapy dog initiative. Established in 2020, the program features trained therapy dogs who offer emotional and psychological support to patients, families, and staff. The program has grown significantly over four years and currently includes 35 therapy dogs. In 2025, the program averaged six to eight visits each month across the System's four primary locations and recorded nearly 1,000 hours of service. On average, each visit resulted in interactions with approximately 50 individuals. Ms. Esposito noted that the dogs also participate in community activities, including school visits, nursing home visits, and are involved in annual MetroHealth activities such as the pediatric Halloween parade and upcoming holiday visits from Santa.

B. Workforce Updates – D. Southerington, J. Esposito

Ms. Southerington then presented an update on workforce trends and labor-management initiatives. Ms. Southerington began by referencing the System's full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing trends, reporting that workforce cost-control efforts were producing positive results, noting a downward trend in FTEs throughout 2025. These efforts began in April of 2025, when the System implemented a temporary administrative hiring freeze to review open positions and identify priority needs. A further reduction occurred in July 2025, when the organization eliminated approximately 120 administrative FTEs. Since then, the system's total FTE count continued trending downward, reaching 8,078.5 FTEs as of the most recent pay period referenced (11/22/25). Ms. Southerington

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attributed progress to the work of the Position Control Committee, which evaluates each posted and filled position. The committee, previously meeting twice weekly, had reduced its meeting frequency to once per week due to the stabilization of staffing activity. Ms. Southerington noted that the organization remained significantly below its budgeted FTE target of 8,317 for 2026, placing it in a strong position entering the new year. Dr. Walker requested clarification about whether there are plans to increase the FTE count to the budgeted level. Ms. Southerington explained that although the budget permitted staffing up to 8,300, the goal was to maintain the lower range around 8,078 FTEs, consistent with the ongoing trend since September. Ms. Southerington summarized hiring and termination patterns for 2025, reporting a net decrease of 23.9 FTEs year-to-date. This represented a decline from the previous October 2025 update, which had shown an increase of approximately 51.2 FTEs. Ms. Southerington noted an observable spike in terminations in October, coupled with decreased hiring, and explained that analysis suggested the hiring slowdown resulted from internal consolidation efforts, where employees increasingly moved into vacant roles rather than the system relying on new external hires. Regarding the 103.6 resignations or terminations reported, Ms. Southerington stated that no meaningful hotspots emerged in departmental turnover data, and that HR would continue working with leaders on retention strategies. Pertaining to first-year turnover data, Ms. Esposito reported that, based on 2024 data, 44% of organizational turnover occurred within employees' first year of employment. The 2025 target sought to reduce this rate to 42%. Year-to-date, the system was performing better than anticipated, with first-year turnover at 35% through November 2025. Final results are anticipated in January 2026, with results to be reported at the next Human Resources committee meeting.

- C. 2025 Employee Engagement Survey Results – D. Southerington, J. Esposito
- Ms. Southerington presented the 2025 employee engagement survey results and next steps. The previous year's participation rate was 78.6% and for 2025, the participation goal was 81%, as set by leadership. The final participation rate reached for the 2025 employee engagement survey was 76%, falling about three percentage points below the prior year's rate. Ms. Southerington noted that Perceptyx administered the survey for the fifth consecutive year. The survey period ran from October 14, 2025, to November 7, 2025, and included the same 49 core questions used in past years, with one new question added in 2025. Ms. Southerington then described the next steps in the engagement survey process. Leaders whose departments achieved the 81% participation target would receive a "sweet treat" as recognition, a candy bar with a message of appreciation from Dr. Alexander. Survey results would continue to be

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reviewed by leadership, and a preview of the preliminary data was already shared with Dr. Alexander and members of the CORE team. Action planning will follow the results review. A timeline was presented indicating that in January 2026, results will be shared with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), followed by distribution to managers. Management-level action planning will be required by March 2026, supported by HR business partners. Ms. Southerington stated that leadership will ensure that action plans will address key opportunities identified in the survey findings.

III. Executive Session

Mr. Corlett asked for a motion to move into executive session to discuss hospital trade secrets as defined by ORC 1333.61 and to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public official, and to conference with the public body's attorney to discuss disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action as defined by ORC 121.22(G). Dr. Walker made a motion and Mr. Moss seconded. Upon unanimous roll call vote, the Committee went into executive session to discuss such matters at approximately 2:47 pm.

Following executive session, the meeting reconvened in open session at approximately 3:56 pm.

There being no further business to bring before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:57 pm.

THE METROHEALTH SYSTEM

John Corlett, Chairperson