

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Meeting Minutes  
March 10, 2025**

*Recording of this meeting can be found linked [here](#). These meeting minutes show the time of specific agenda items. Fast forward the recording to the item of interest to hear detailed discussion.*

The Board of Directors of Grossmont Healthcare District held a special meeting on Monday, March 10, 2025, at 8:30 a.m., via teleconference and in person. Members of the public were able to participate by telephone, Zoom, or in-person at the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Center, located at 9001 Wakarusa Street, La Mesa, California 91942. For the purpose of these minutes, the listed items are reflected in the order set forth on the posted Agenda. In some cases, discussion of items may have taken place out of sequence during the meeting. Any mis-labeled items on the agenda have been corrected in these minutes.

Directors Present:        Robert “Bob” Ayres, Board President  
                                      Randy Lenac, Board Vice President  
                                      Virginia Hall, RN, Board Secretary  
                                      Gloria A. Chadwick, RN, Board Treasurer  
                                      Nadia Farjood, Board Member

Staff Present:             Aaron Byzak, Interim Chief Executive Officer  
                                      Tom Scaglione, Chief Administrative Officer  
                                      Amy Abrams, Chief Community Health Officer  
                                      Jeffrey Scott, General Counsel  
                                      Barry Jantz (former District Chief Executive Officer)  
                                      K. Michael Peddecord, DrPH, San Diego State University (via Zoom)

**A. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Ayres.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

The pledge of allegiance was led by Director Hall.

C. Approval of Agenda *(0:09:35)*

Director Farjood advocated for evening Board meeting times and briefly summarized her March 7, 2025 request of President Ayres to conduct this Board meeting at 5:00 p.m. in order to have greater public access. Director Farjood expressed her disappointment that this meeting was set during the workday, which she believes excludes the public from important decision making.

**Motion was made by Director Chadwick, seconded by Director Lenac, and unanimously carried (5-0), to adopt the agenda.**

D. Public Comment *(0:10:55)*

Dr. Michael Peddecord, Emeritus Professor of Public Health at San Diego State University, shared his thoughts and experiences regarding District former Chief Executive Officer, Christian Wallis. This included the significant impact Mr. Wallis had on East County through his leadership and initiatives, particularly with workforce development and the planning and implementation of the Sharp Grossmont Hospital's Family Medicine Residency Program. Dr. Peddecord discussed Mr. Wallis' profound impact he had while serving on the Community Health Advisory Council Task Force and suggested that the same systematic approaches used in the Task Force, help support the District's strategic objectives in the future. Dr. Peddecord also suggested that the Board involve community members and stakeholders in the search for a new Chief Executive Officer. Lastly, he commended Director Farjood's efforts to improve public access to District Board meetings and encouraged open communication between the District and the community in order to foster trust and collaboration.

E. Report After Closed Session of the March 4, 2025 Regular Meeting *(0:15:25)*

Counsel Scott summarized the March 4, 2025 report after closed session, due to the Zoom recording containing no audio. The report included the following votes:

- 1) **The Board voted 4-1 (Director Farjood was the nay vote) to not extend the Chief Executive Officer's Employment Agreement beyond the current term, which expires May 17, 2025.**
- 2) **The Board voted 4-0-1 (Director Farjood abstained) to relieve the Chief Executive Officer of his duties effective March 4, 2025.**
- 3) **The Board voted 5-0 to offer the Chief Executive Officer a severance agreement.**

Director Farjood summarized her March 4, 2025 comments relative to the above votes. She stated the following:

- 1) She believes that the March 4, 2025 closed session agenda item was improperly noticed and a Brown Act violation, as it referred to the “CEO Evaluation,” rather than “CEO Contract Renewal.” Director Farjood shared that this unexpected and unnoticed agenda item caused herself and the public to be ill-prepared. Additionally, she was not provided with any information or documents regarding the CEO’s performance.
- 2) She expressed her disappointment and disheartenment regarding the Board’s decision to not renew the CEO’s contract. Director Farjood shared her positive opinion regarding Mr. Wallis, citing his great leadership and how he was loved by many. She shared some of Mr. Wallis’ achievements during his tenure with the District, including the CalPERS “Spotlight on Excellence” Award, and his leadership and outstanding contributions to the Rural Health Discharge Program, the Healthcare Workforce Pipeline Project, Sharp Grossmont Hospital’s Family Medicine Residency Program, and the Nurse Navigation Program.
- 3) She believes that the process in which the decision was made to not extend Mr. Wallis’ contract violated California law. Director Farjood quoted Government Code Section 54957(b)(2) regarding the closed session requirement of providing “written notice” to the employee on their right to have any complaints or charges heard in an open session, rather than a closed session. The written notice is required to be delivered to the employee personally or by mail at least 24-hours prior to the scheduled closed session. If written notice is not given, any legislative body action taken against the employee shall be null and void. Director Farjood asked Counsel Scott if Mr. Wallis was given this written notice, to which Counsel Scott replied “there were no complaints, there were no charges.” Counsel Scott mentioned that 1) Director Farjood is referring to the incorrect Brown Act section and misunderstanding what the section provides, 2) the March 4, 2025 closed session was properly noticed in accordance with the Brown Act, and 3) the decision to extend a CEO contract had nothing to do with complaints and charges, as it was part of the ongoing evaluation of the CEO. When prompted whether or not complaints or charges were discussed during the March 4, 2025 closed session, Counsel Scott stated he is unable to comment as it is an ethical and a legal violation to discuss.

**Motion was made by Director Farjood that the Board waive privilege over the closed session of March 4, 2025 that resulted in the decision by four of her colleagues to not extend the CEO contract. She believes the public has the right to know why the contract of an accomplished and high performing CEO was not extended, and that without this waiver, the public's right to learn about the details of the March 4, 2025 closed session, will not take place. Counsel Scott expressed his legal concerns over this and with the absence of a second, this motion failed.**

**Motion was made by Director Hall, seconded by Director Chadwick, and unanimously carried (5-0), to move to closed session.**

F. Closed Session

1. Convene to Closed Session: Public Employee Appointment: Interim Chief Executive Officer Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)

G. Report After Closed Session *(0:28:45)*

Counsel Scott stated that the Board discussed the personnel matter and that no action was taken.

H. Consideration of Interim Chief Executive Officer Consulting Agreement

**Motion was made by Director Ayres, seconded by Director Chadwick, and unanimously carried (5-0), to approve the Interim Chief Executive Officer Consulting Agreement.**

The Board congratulated Aaron Byzak, the new Interim CEO, and Director Ayres thanked the Board for their insight and comments while they worked through this matter.

I. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting(s):

1. Thursday, March 20, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
2. Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

J. Adjournment

There being no further business on **motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at approximately 9:53 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert "Bob" Ayres, President, Board of Directors

ATTEST:

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Virginia Hall, RN, Secretary, Board of Directors