

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2025
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
ANN KLEIN FORENSIC CENTER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Ann Klein Forensic Center was held on Monday, September 15, 2025, pursuant to notice duly given. Notice of the meeting and the meeting minutes are provided to the Department of Health's Division of Behavioral Health Services, Commissioner's Office.

The following members were present:

Present:

Richard Higgins	Chairperson
Linda Elias	Board Member
Rafael Aviles	Board Member
Steve Vardakis	Board Member
Kenneth Bacorn	Board Member
Sajitha Sutton	AKFC CEO
Kesha Parkes-Williams	Deputy CEO, Clinical
Eileen Lonergan	Business Manager
Cheryl Thompson	Secretarial Assistant 3

Guest: Maryrose Mielczarek Rehab Director

Absent: Steve Vardakis Board Member

Mr. Higgins called the board meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. The board meeting was held at Ann Klein. Minutes were presented from the June 16, 2025 meeting and approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rehabilitation Department:

Rehabilitation Department Summary: June – September 2025

The Rehabilitation Department continued to provide full programming throughout the summer months, with sessions held each morning, afternoon, and evening. The department remains committed to offering therapeutic, recreational, and educational opportunities that support patient engagement and recovery.

June 2025

The department held its first patient picnic of the year on June 10, featuring a barbecue for all patients. The event promoted socialization, teamwork, and community participation.

A new audio-visual system was also installed in the gymnasium, allowing for a more integrated and interactive multimedia experience to enhance group programming and events.

COVID-19 activity increased during June, with 11 patients testing positive. One unit was placed on quarantine and another on isolation. In response, the hospital reinstated a temporary mask mandate requiring all staff and patients to wear masks until the Department of Health authorized their removal.

July 2025

Rehabilitation programming continued at full capacity throughout July. The annual summer picnic was held

on July 11, with support from several departments, including Dietary, Food Service, Maintenance, Housekeeping, Security, the Treatment Teams, and the Business Office. Their collaboration contributed to the success of this well-attended patient event.

On July 1, staff participated in RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) training, focused on supporting staff in responding appropriately to incidents of sexual contact among patients. More than 100 staff members from both AKFC and STU attended. Plans are underway to create small follow-up groups to continue education and provide ongoing support.

The Patient Council met on July 23, with each unit represented. Key concerns raised included limited availability of state clothing and towels/washcloths, low shower pressure, delayed meal tray delivery, and malfunctioning pay phones. Work orders were submitted to Maintenance and Housekeeping, and other concerns were referred to the Environment of Care Committee and appropriate departments for follow-up.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Eileen Lonergan, Business Manager presented the Welfare and Our Store reports for the months of May, June and July as follow:

May

Welfare

Beginning balance as of May 1, 2025, for the Welfare Fund = **\$78,956.90**. Additions to the fund totaled **\$556.68**.

Less expenses and adjustments of **\$570.22 leaving** a net decrease to the fund of **\$13.54**.

Ending Welfare balance as of May 31, 2025, totaled **\$78,943.36**.

Our Store

Beginning balance as of May 1, 2025, for the “**Our Store**” fund = **\$64,389.55**.

Additions to the fund totaled **\$10,701.28**

with less expenses and adjustments of **\$11,887.06**, leaving a net decrease to the fund of **\$1,185.78**.

Ending balance as May 31, 2025, totaled **\$63,203.77**.

June

Welfare

Beginning balance as of June 1, 2025, for the Welfare Fund = **\$79,943.36**. Additions to the fund totaled **\$222.95**.

Less expenses and adjustments of **zero leaving** a net increase to the fund of **\$222.95**.

Ending Welfare balance as of June 30, 2025, totaled **\$79,166.31**.

Our Store

Beginning balance as of June 1, 2025, for the "**Our Store**" fund = **\$64,506.03**.

Additions to the fund totaled **\$9389.86**

with less expenses and adjustments of **\$7528.65**, leaving a net increase to the fund of **\$1,861.21**.

Ending balance as June 30, 2025, totaled **\$66,367.24**.

July

Welfare

Beginning balance as of July 1, 2025, for the Welfare Fund = **\$79,166.31**. Additions to the fund totaled **\$231.48**.

Less expenses and adjustments of **zero leaving** a net increase to the fund of **\$231.48**.

Ending Welfare balance as of July 31, 2025, totaled **\$79,397.79**.

Our Store

Beginning balance as of July 1, 2025, for the "**Our Store**" fund = **\$66,367.24**.

Additions to the fund totaled **\$9,200.23**

with less expenses and adjustments of **\$11,866.09**, leaving a net decrease to the fund of **\$2,665.86**.

Ending balance as July 31, 2025, totaled **\$63,701.38**.

OLD BUSINESS

- Eileen and Maryrose met to discuss the welfare budget for the upcoming fiscal year. An Impromptu Teams meeting with members was held on June 30, 2025 to vote and pass on the new fiscal budget.
- The board members completed and submitted the NJ State Ethics Department's request to complete the online training by July 31, 2025.
- More discussion about patient clothing and the same type of clothing offered by state contracts. Discussed the release of allowing more colors that were previously prohibited to wear.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Business Manager agreed to stay on until October 24th to finalize her departure with the existing and provide a transition to the new Business Manager.

Rehabilitation Department Updates

- Equipment and Comfort Enhancements:

M. presented photos of the newly installed dishwasher in the Rehabilitation area, completed by the

Maintenance Department, as well as a beanbag chair currently located in the Oasis Room. The photos demonstrated how patients benefit from the chair's large, comfortable design, which provides a supportive, weighted, and hugging sensation that promotes relaxation. The Board of Trustees expressed interest in purchasing an additional beanbag chair for patient use in the Rehabilitation area. The estimated cost for the chair is \$4,000.

- **Safety and Technology Improvements:**

M. also presented a vendor quote for seven ligature-resistant TV enclosures to secure the smart TVs previously purchased and approved in the FY2026 budget. The Board approved a fund transfer of \$15,000 from the Our Store account to Welfare to cover the cost of the additional chair and the enclosures.

- **Library and Resource:**

The Board of Trustees expressed a desire to continue using existing funds to support patient enrichment and comfort. M. discussed plans to purchase new and updated books for the recently remodeled library in the Rehabilitation Department. Patients and staff recommended including graphic novels, picture-based materials, and non-English language books. The Board also suggested adding faith-based titles to the collection. The Rehabilitation Department will review these recommendations and submit a formal purchase request to the Board at a later date.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

**Mr. Richard Higgins, Chairperson
Ann Klein Forensic Center
Board of Trustees**

The next board meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2025, via Teams