



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 24, 2026

PRESENT FROM BOARD:

Tawny Espinoza, Randy Brown, Brandi Coleman, Justin Aubert, John Flanagan, Jeff Franklin, Krista Ubersox, David McKendry, Tamara Krizman

EXCUSED ABSENCE(S):

Dave Hayden

PRESENT FROM STRIVE:

Grant Jackson, Mary Anne Lawrie, Chris Bergquist

OVERVIEW OF MEETING
No conflicts of interest were identified.
Minutes from previous meeting were reviewed and approved.
Megan and Sierra presented on Residential Services
Financials were reviewed and approved.

A quorum was achieved at 12:01 p.m. and the meeting was called to order. No conflicts of interest were identified.

BOARD MINUTES FROM 1/27/2026

Minutes were presented.

It was M/S/P (Franklin/Espinoza) to approve the Board minutes from 1/27/26 meeting as written.

OLD BUSINESS

Solar Panels – Grant updated the board on the solar panel dispute with Clear Energy, noting that a formal letter was issued to terminate the relationship. All equipment has been removed from affected homes due to installation damages. No response has been received from Clear Energy or its legal counsel.

Donor Pledge – Chris reported that the donor has fulfilled his current \$33,333 donor pledge installment after initially paying a partial amount. Grant clarified for the board that this legally binding pledge was a condition of the old building's sale and is currently four years overdue, as the capital campaign commitment was originally slated for completion within three years of the real estate transaction. The donor is scheduled to pay an identical installment next year which will finalize the amount of the pledge.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES OVERVIEW

Megan Hale (Residential Director) and Sarah Higley (Residential Manager) presented an update on Residential Services, highlighting the recent internal hire of a fifth host home monitor to enhance workload distribution and regulatory compliance. The department currently supports 89 clients—including 19 family caregivers, 61 host homes, and 9 Personal Care Alternative (PCA) clients—with a new admission scheduled to bring the total to 90. Despite recent departures due to client deaths and matching challenges, the census is stabilizing; Grant Jackson provided historical context, noting that while external competition caused a decline 2-3 years ago, current caseloads have significantly recovered and remain well above past levels.

Megan detailed the diverse responsibilities of host home monitors, who serve as primary client advocates and oversee monthly or quarterly site visits to ensure safety and provider competency. Beyond regulatory compliance and environment checks, monitors coordinate comprehensive care by facilitating medical appointments, providing transportation, and navigating external support services like counseling and behavior supports. The addition of a fifth monitor is strategically designed to redistribute this heavy workload, ensuring stricter adherence to regulations, and elevating the overall quality of service delivery.

Sarah Higley provided an overview of the Personal Care Alternative (PCA) program, which currently supports nine individuals living independently through twice-weekly home visits focused on coaching and maintaining independence. Staff assist with essential daily tasks, including meal planning, grocery shopping, laundry, and transportation coordination. Grant noted that while these positions are vital, they remain historically difficult to recruit and retain due to lower pay scales and the challenging nature of the work, often requiring host home monitors to provide supplemental backup support.

Sarah Higley reported on the success of the monthly respite nights, which provide clients with community engagement and offer providers a two-hour break. Additionally, the Residential and Behavior departments launched a collaborative monthly training series led by Lisa, the new Behavior Director, focusing on topics such as professionalism and relationship coaching for providers and families. To further enhance operations, Megan Hale established a Provider Committee that meets monthly to gather direct feedback, improve engagement, and refine support strategies, all of which have been well-received by the community.

The board inquired what the most significant obstacles and difficult tasks currently facing Megan and Sarah in their respective leadership roles. Sarah identified provider compliance as her primary operational challenge, noting that a significant portion of her daily workload involves managing documentation requirements and mandatory trainings. She emphasized the ongoing difficulty of ensuring all contractual obligations are met while simultaneously maintaining positive provider relations and satisfaction. Megan described relationship management as a primary challenge, noting that she and Sarah often manage direct conflicts to ensure monitors can maintain positive rapport within client homes. She emphasized the difficulty of navigating diverse provider approaches to care while balancing interpersonal dynamics with the organization's operational standards.

The board inquired regarding the average length of service for providers and the overall tenure within the organization's network. The discussion highlighted exceptional provider retention, with several contractors remaining with Strive for over 20 years and new hires demonstrating strong loyalty to the organization. Megan Hale and Sarah Higley emphasized that managing these long-term relationships requires a delicate balance between fostering a supportive partnership and ensuring strict accountability to organizational and documentation standards. While this longevity is viewed as a significant success, the team maintains a rigorous approach to oversight, utilizing regular communication and clear expectations to ensure consistent compliance regardless of a provider's tenure.

The Board inquired regarding the organization's efforts in networking and statewide collaboration, specifically asking about partnerships with other service providers both locally and across the state. Grant and Megan acknowledged past collaborations with agencies like Aerial and ongoing participation in professional organizations such as PASA and Alliance. They noted that maintaining consistent documentation standards across contractors remains a significant challenge, managed through a multi-layered compliance structure. Grant highlighted that in addition to comprehensive state surveys conducted every three years, the organization performs regular internal spot checks to proactively identify issues and provide coaching, ensuring accountability within the contractor-based service model.

Megan and Sarah reported on the successful implementation of an accountability procedure introduced 1.5 years ago to address performance issues. Under this policy, providers are formally retrained on missed tasks; if performance does not improve, payment is withheld until the work is completed, often resulting in compliance within 24 hours. Grant commended their leadership and courage in adopting this measure—which the organization had historically avoided for fear of provider turnover—noting that despite initial resistance during contract signings, the process has provided monitors with a necessary enforcement tool and significantly improved operational consistency.

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Megan announced a transition for the annual contract signing event, replacing the traditional barbecue with a mandatory half-day educational training required for contract renewal and rate updates. The two-hour session will feature professional development tracks including medication management led by the staff nurse, contract updates, and a behavior support segment led by the Behavior Director. While the team is optimistic about this shift toward substantive engagement, they expressed flexibility to refine the format in future years based on provider feedback and the results of this replacement for the former "Host Home Day" concept.

Chris presented financial data for Residential Services, reporting that performance for the first seven months of FY26 significantly exceeded previous years. This growth was bolstered by \$450,000 in extraordinary items, including a property sale gain and one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding issued by the state in lieu of provider rate increases. Even without these one-time gains, Chris noted that operational performance remains stronger than FY25, signaling a successful recovery from a prior period of client attrition. The department's census has now stabilized as clients who previously moved to newer agencies have returned to Strive.

Board members expressed their appreciation and gratitude to Megan and Sarah for taking the time to provide them with an overview of the department.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Chris presented the January 2026 financials, explaining that the reported net loss of \$169,000 was expected due to several converging factors. The primary driver was a one-time bonus distribution of approximately \$212K, funded by a previously received estate inheritance; without this expenditure, the month would have yielded a surplus. Additional seasonal impacts included a holiday-related reduction in billable days and temporary gaps in revenue caused by the expiration of several annual service plans. Chris noted that while January often shows a marginal operational loss due to these seasonal trends, the adjusted performance remains consistent with historical patterns.

Through the first seven months of FY2026 (July 2025–January 2026), the organization generated over \$721K in operating income, signaling robust financial health across all service lines. Chris noted that this figure reflects sustainable performance from core day-to-day operations and effective expense management, independent of one-time gains or external funding. This strong operating margin serves as a key indicator of the organization's ability to maintain consistent service delivery and revenue generation while navigating seasonal fluctuations.

Looking ahead to the final five months of the fiscal year (February through June), Chris projected a modest operational loss, noting this as a typical seasonal pattern due to service plan renewals and fewer billable days. However, the organization's exceptionally strong performance in the first seven months has created a substantial financial cushion. Even accounting for these anticipated second-half losses, the organization is forecasted to end FY2026 with a robust net income exceeding \$1 million. This outlook reflects sound financial management and the strategic benefit of having diverse revenue streams to absorb routine seasonal fluctuations.

The Chair noted that the Executive Committee had reviewed the financial reports in detail prior to the meeting and recommended their approval to the full Board.

It was M/S/P (Coleman/Aubert) to approve the Financials as presented.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair initiated a discussion on Board governance and upcoming term expirations, noting that a new slate of officers must be introduced by April. Tawny is reaching her term limit and committed to identifying potential successors from Community Hospital, including a suggestion of potentially asking Karen M. Regarding current members, Randy will transition

to ex-officio status, Justin was asked to confirm his interest in a second term, and Brandi confirmed her commitment through 2028.

For Executive Committee succession, the Board is seeking a new Chair and leadership officers; while Tamara is a natural candidate for Chair, her availability remains unconfirmed. Randy encouraged all members interested in executive leadership to notify him, MaryAnne, or Grant within the next two months.

Sugar and Ice will host a St. Patrick's Day Beverage Tasting event on March 9th at 11:30 AM, featuring themed beverages. The Board engaged in lighthearted discussion regarding the menu, though Brandi Coleman noted she would be unable to attend due to a prior engagement.

Brandi provided an update on her business, Brandi's Blessings, highlighting a current buy-one-get-one-free promotion (\$12 for two dozen) and the launch of a new Facebook page for customer updates. While peanut butter cookies have been discontinued due to recipe challenges, chocolate chip Butterfinger cookies remain available.

It was M/S/P (Coleman/Ubersox) to adjourn the meeting at 12:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryAnne Lawrie
Senior Executive Assistant

Minutes were approved (Franklin/Espinoza) 3/31/2026