



MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN NYE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

101 Radar Road, Tonopah, NV 89049

March 21, 2019

6:00 PM

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Chairwoman Roni Link called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Chairwoman Roni Link
Vice Chair Karmin Greber
Secretary/Treasurer Justin Zimmerman
Trustee Don Kaminski

Item #1, Pledge of Allegiance.

Led by Trustee Kaminski.

Item #2, Approval of the Agenda for March 21, 2019. (Non-action Item)

Secretary / Treasurer suggested the removal of item 5. Chairwoman Link accepted his suggestion.

Item #3, GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT (Three-minute time limit per person.) Action will not be taken on the matters considered during this period until specifically included on an agenda as an action item (first).

None.

Item #4, Announcements (first)

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman shared two announcements on Assistant County Manager Dellinger's behalf. He said that though she is on vacation, should anyone need access to the hospital building, she has left the keys with Melissa.

Jessica Thompson shared that Steve from Affiliated Therapy and Melissa had accessed the building and several pieces of equipment had been removed. She also noted that the County had not noticed Renown that they would be accessing the property.

Vice Chair Greber said that she was aware as Assistant County Manager Dellinger had been keeping her in the loop on this project.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman also said that the Board needed to set a date for a special meeting to

recommend the replacement for Trustee Clifford since she has resigned. He said he has already made arrangements for the applications to be forwarded to him and would like the meeting to be set for the first of April.

Chairwoman Link called the special meeting for April 1, 2018 at 6:00PM in the BoCC Chambers in Tonopah.

Item #5, For Possible Action – Emergency Items

Removed from the agenda.

Item #6, Trustees'/Liaison Comments (This item limited to topics/issues proposed for future workshops/agendas)

Vice Chair Greber shared that she has been investigating housing and other incentives. She said that there is a list of properties on the Treasurer's Trust list headed for auction due to delinquent taxes. Karmin said that she would be bringing an item to the special meeting on the first to request that ownership of several pieces of land be transferred to the District by the County Commissioners. There are five pieces she is interested in, three residential and two undeveloped.

Chairwoman Link said she liked this idea, in her research she had found that a commonly requested incentive among healthcare providers is housing.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Item #7, No Action – 1) Presentation by Renown Health and Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority of their January 2019 reconciliation packages; and 2) update on the progress made regarding the implementation of services pursuant to the professional services agreements entered into on December 20th, 2017.

Jessica Thompson, on behalf of Renown, took the Board through Renown's utilization report. She reported that their numbers were down a small amount from the prior month but said they stayed fairly steady. Jessica also reported that Renown has secured an apartment for Lisa Logan, their physician's assistant. Lisa had previously been living with the REMSA paramedics at the County house, she now had her own space.

Jessica also announced that AETNA is now in network, as of March first, for all of Renown. She said that she called and shared the news with Round Mountain Gold as that is their insurance provider, and they were going to be running the news in their company newsletter.

Jessica shared that the questionnaire regarding patient satisfaction is in progress. She stated that she had spoken with Gary Beck and he reported that it was absolutely going to happen.

Finally, Jessica announced that the local Renown clinic was going to be losing one staff member. The local MA/PAR was moving to Las Vegas. She said that once the job posting for her replacement was released online she would share that with the Board to promote.

Vice-Chair Greber said that she had been a primary care patient and never received the questionnaire of course, but via telehealth specialty care, she had.

Jessica Thompson said that she had been a patient of Renown's in Reno and received the questionnaire as well. So, she believed that it was just a matter of finding the right people within Renown to get that function pushed out to the Tonopah clinic as well.

Vice Chair Greber then asked if Jessica had been able to confirm if engaging with her specialist via her “my chart” with Renown constituted an additional visit and would result in another consultation charge. Jessica responded that it would not result in an additional charge. The interaction would become part of the patient record, but there would be no additional billing.

Kevin Romero, on behalf of REMSA, took the Board through their monthly presentation. He said there was a small increase in Nurse Healthline calls, other than that things were pretty standard.

Chairwoman Link asked if there was an update on establishing living quarters for the paramedics in the ambulance barn on the hospital campus.

Kevin responded that he has heard that the Nye County EMT’s had been asked to clear out the items they had been storing in that building. But no other update.

Chairwoman Link confirmed that all EMS property had been removed. Kevin said that once Assistant County Manager Dellinger returns, he would touch base with her and learn the official timeline.

Item #8, No Action – Update on USDA Grant, presented by Project Manager Dr. Russell Pillers and report on progress made regarding the professional services agreement entered into on October 25th, 2018.

Russell provided his monthly update. He said that Margo Teague is in the phase of performing the qualitative analysis right now. He said that she had had the chance already to meet with several people from Renown.

He also said that she had been very successful in collecting some qualitative data that will fill out the needs analysis quite well. With this progress, he shared that while she had quoted needing six months to complete the task, she was feeling confident that she could finish the job in four months.

Chairwoman Link asked if any trend had appeared.

Russell said yes there were some, but they will be contained in the final report. Russell shared that the two of them have a weekly call, and it sounds like her work is going very well.

Russell then provided an update on the return to home issue with Inyo County. He said that it is in progress and not on the back burner in any way. He and the Inyo County manager are looking for options.

The land options for the potential urgent care plus that JML Holdings of Las Vegas is researching opening, have been limited down to one parcel north of the Tonopah Motel along Highway 95. Russell and JML Holdings have been in touch with the land owners. The key issue with this land is that there is a roadway through the middle of the parcel. Russell said that the owner told him there was once an agreement with the Town of Tonopah whereby the owner would donate a portion of the northern end of this parcel to the town to create road access between St. Patrick Street and Highway 95, in order to allow the roadway bisecting the parcel to be removed. Russell suggested that it would be worth it to rehash that idea, but it wasn’t a deal breaker if it couldn’t be done.

Chairwoman Link expressed her support of this parcel and asked if there was anything that the Assessor’s Office could do to assist.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that the Assessor’s Office could not, but that he had already been in talks with Assistant County Manager Dellinger about this and she was reaching out to the Public Works Director to see what options were available. He said today there is road access from St. Patrick Street and Highway 95, but it is a sharp angle and it’s an issue of whether or not the emergency response vehicles exiting the fire department would be able to make that angle in an emergency.

Russell also said that there is the possibility of a helipad at this location as it is open enough.

There was no update to be provided regarding Northern Nevada Medical Center. He said this isn't on the back burner either. The relationship between north and south potentially helping our area strategically still remains.

Russell also said that there was no update about DOE/DOD funding either. He said the funding is available, but the facility assessment needs to be completed before that funding can be accessed.

Vice Chair Greber asked for Russell to expound on Northern Nevada Medical Center and Valley Health System.

Russell said that JML Holdings has a very good relationship with Valley Hospital in Las Vegas. So, when we look down the road at JML coming to Tonopah we can see some potential support coming from Valley Hospital as well. Valley Hospital is part of Universal Health Services which is also part of Northern Nevada Medical Center. He said they both sit under the same corporate structure. As such, the idea came up under Chairman Eason that there could be some collaborative effort helping the District's constituents from both North and South. This is important because Tonopah is very divided, about half of the people prefer the North and the other half prefer the South. It is very early in these discussions, and no path is established yet. Russell said there is an avenue to talk to the CEO of Universal Health Services if we need to.

Chairwoman Link asked what exactly that meant.

Russell explained that this is the person that would approve these two entities working together in the way we are imagining, as this position oversees both entities. Though we may very well not need to go that high.

As far as the facility condition assessment goes, Russell said that deciding what happens with the hospital building is fundamental to the ultimate disposition of how we plan to bring steady services in, in the future. He explained that this assessment will determine what work needs to be done and what that work will cost so that we can make a decision what direction to go in.

Russell said that his original strategy was to find out what that assessment would cost. He confirmed that the grandfathered status of the facility prior to its closure, was indeed out of the question. The facility would have to start from scratch and meet current standards. Russell was looking for an entity that could do this assessment, so he could get a quote on what the assessment might cost because there was the potential for a private outside party to gift the cost of the assessment to the County. This would allow the county to accept a high-end amount of money from the party, issue an RFP and select a group to perform the assessment, use the party's donation to pay for the assessment and then refund the difference back to the party that made the donation.

Russell said he was having a difficult time finding someone that could do the assessment and provide a quote. He finally did find the company Korte, a design build company with a healthcare division that performs this type of assessment as well. They have offices all over the Country and one in Las Vegas. He said he was careful, and so was the company, not to disqualify themselves from being able to submit a proposal, should an RFP be issued, but they had been very helpful. Russell said they had altered his original strategy. He now suggested that we begin working with the County to issue the RFP, and once the proposals are received, we'll have the numbers we need in order for the County accept the donation for the cost of the assessment.

Russell also said that Korte was very familiar with working with the USDA, and our ultimate goal is, after all, to seek USDA funding for that facility's renovation, so this all fits together well.

Vice Chair Greber expressed her appreciation for these comprehensive updates Russell provides.

Russell then announced that the issue last month with matching funds regarding the USDA Community Facility Technical Assistance and Training Grant has been resolved. He said that he believed the entire commitment was \$20,000.00 and the balance the District pays for the Healthcare Needs Analysis will be subtracted from that number and the County will pay the difference.

Russell then said that the overall strategy currently isn't changing. He said that Renown is doing very well with the model they are using to deliver care. He also said that REMSA is doing great and looking for new ways to help. He said that he had a meeting with them earlier this week that was extremely exciting. He touched on the fact that the Center for Medicare Medicaid Services (CMS) has put REMSA in the position to be a leader in the Country in a healthcare revolution. As REMSA works on improving their model, they will use Tonopah as a development area. Part of this advancement would lead to REMSA being able to bill patients directly for their services thereby reducing their need for District subsidy.

Dr. Pillers then said that JML Holdings is targeting the middle or end of the coming summer to open the doors on their local urgent care plus. He also said that Affiliated Therapy just opened their doors and that Multicultural Wellness West is also allegedly opening a facility in town. He contributed these recent advancements to a CBS segment that aired recently.

Chairwoman Link said that there would be another news segment that she had been interviewed for coming soon from NBC.

Russell then said that Scott Jones from Nevada Division of Health and Human Services had recently gotten him some data and he was preparing to go back to him with another request about a Certificate of Need.

Dr. Pillers then said that JML Holdings was requesting an unfunded service agreement with the District before they order their 6,000 square foot building. Russell said that he had been working to get this agreement together. JML Holdings is looking for reassurance that if they move forward with spending their money to open a facility here, that they will be embraced upon their arrival. JML Holdings asked Dr. Pillers to hold their feet to the fire, as it were, with this agreement; include everything we want in this agreement and they will see if they can meet our requirements.

Russell said that he was hesitant to call what he had been working on a draft, but it was certainly a collection of clauses. He said that he had spoken with the District's attorney and had been quoted between four and eight hours as what it would take for the attorney to take Russell's work and turn it into an agreement that could be sent to JML Holdings for review. The attorney had said eight hours was more than enough, four was pretty standard, but Russell felt that he had created a lot of work for the attorney, so he was hoping to get six hours of access to the District's attorney approved by the Board. Once the agreement is drafted, it can be sent to JML Holdings, and returned to the Board for approval or further negotiation.

He'd also been in touch with the Nye County Planning Department to learn about building codes in our area. He said that he was told that they don't enforce anything in Tonopah and that we can do whatever we want. Russell said that we will have to meet State and Federal codes still.

Chairwoman Link said that she had recently spoken to a local provider who said that they would like for JML Holdings to come to Tonopah so long as they did not offer Family Practices so everyone could work together collaboratively.

Russell said that the idea of finding a perfect fit where there is no overlap between services offered by providers in the area is unrealistic. He went on to say that JML Holdings has said that they are willing to work as much as they can in the way that Tonopah wants them to work. He also said that JML Holdings is offering to be completely transparent, right up the point of wanting a member from this Board to sit on their Board and keep an eye on operations and their books, but this person would not have a say in business decisions.

Chairwoman Link expressed her awe at that level of transparency.

Trustee Kaminski asked how soon the Board would be able to review Russell's collection of clauses.

Dr. Pillers said that he could send it to the members right away.

Chairwoman Link said that she could call a special workshop right away if necessary.

Dr. Pillers stressed again that JML Holdings hasn't reviewed anything so nothing is written in stone yet.

Chairwoman Link then expressed how impressed she was at the idea of a service agreement being unfunded.

Dr. Pillers responded that JML Holdings was looking to come in and operate the urgent care plus on their own dime, but down the road they may find that they need assistance. If they do ask for subsidy at some point, he said it would be hard to deny them since we have already established the precedence with providing subsidy to our current medical service contractors.

Chairwoman Link said that the Board is also looking at other incentives aside from offering financial support.

Russell said that he would send his draft to the members individually and asked that the members supply their feedback directly to him. He asked if one board member requested a change, if he could work directly with that member to facilitate the request.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman responded that he could. But he could not share one members opinions with another.

Chairwoman Link asked Kevin Romero if REMSA could conduct a transport in their QRV. He responded that they could not in the course of a standard 911 call, but if they happened upon a patient in need while in the QRV they could rendezvous with an ambulance.

Vice Chair Greber asked Kevin to weigh in on what he had heard tonight with regard to JML Holdings.

Kevin said that REMSA is approved to transport to any receiving facility, so he sees no problems. Kevin then said that Brenda Staffan went to Washington DC last month where the director of CMS announced a new program called ET3 that they would be updating the Board on in the future, which will result in a lot of funding for alternative destination transport services. This will allow the ambulance service to bill for transports taken to a clinic or an urgent care facility as well as telehealth services.

Vice Chair Greber then asked Kevin and Russell to tell her in a nutshell how ET3, in the context of true cardiac patients, MIs and stroke patients, would benefit them from the urgent care plus model as far as the critical meds that are difficult and costly to maintain at a location.

Dr. Pillers responded that he has included this service in the draft agreement with JML Holdings. Russell also said that there may be some harsh realities that we find along the way, some specific services that just cannot be offered outside of a complete hospital.

Trustee Greber then asked if JML Holdings was planning on staffing the facility fully, regardless of what local talent is available; they will ship staff here from Las Vegas if necessary.

Russell responded that that is in the agreement. JML Holdings will preferentially hire local people, but where there are none available, they will hire non-locals. Further along the lines of JML Holding's apparent commitment, Russell said that they had recently bought an entire company to make sure they could offer the services that they need to come to Tonopah with.

Trustee Kaminski said that he isn't a medical professional, but that there were medical professionals in the room, and their input on this agreement could be very valuable. He asked if they could weigh in as well.

Russell said that it was a dream of his to get everyone offering medical services in Tonopah around a table to sort out logistics.

Chairwoman Link directed Russell to send the draft to Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman and for Justin to forward it to the other members. She then asked how to get the information to the other healthcare providers in the community.

Dr. Pillers suggested keeping it private for now as it wasn't yet public and allow the providers to submit a wish list to him directly.

Chairwoman Link asked Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman what his thoughts were on a timeframe. Justin responded that the Chairwoman had just called a special meeting on the first, so it could be placed on that agenda, but anything at a meeting or at a workshop was 100% public.

Vice Chair Greber said that all Russell was asking for today was time to run it by the lawyer and that all Russell was asking the Board to do was provide feedback to him.

Dr. Pillers asked if the Board members could provide feedback to him without holding another session.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said yes, individually, as long as there is zero communication between board members.

Russell then asked if the Board could approve his access to the lawyer tonight.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman stated that this item was non-action and there would be nothing decided tonight. But, it could be agendized for the meeting on the first.

Russell then presented the idea of a public education initiative to keep them abreast of the goings on of the District and the services provided locally as his conversations with Margo of Impact Evaluation and Assessment have revealed some enormous misconceptions. This will also be brought to the agenda on the first.

Russell also asked for access to the District's attorney for some clarification of the Open Meeting Law. He suggested this item be considered on the first as well.

Item #9, For Possible Action – Discussion and deliberation to approve, amend and approve or deny an amendment to the professional services agreement in place between the Northern Nye County Hospital District and Pillers Consulting, LLC DBA: Biowerx Consulting.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that Vice Chair Greber and himself had spoken to the District's attorney and been advised that he saw no issue with Russell's request for reduced coverage as in the event that the coverage was insufficient it would be Russell's problem and not the District's.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman then motioned to support Russell's request. Chairwoman Link seconded his motion.

Vice Chair Greber then said that the item is to amend, and the Board is not amending the contract. She questioned if the Board could accept the letter to file as the item was not worded that way. She stressed that the item was a carry over from last meeting and we spoke to the lawyer in the interim where we received advice that we didn't need an amendment and the wording of the item simply hadn't been changed.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman agreed with her. He said thanked her for pointing that out and said that he felt the item needed to be reworded if the letter was to be accepted. He suggested the item return on the meeting of April first as well. He then withdrew his motion and Chairwoman Link withdrew her second.

Item #10, For Possible Action – Discussion and deliberation to approve, amend and approve or deny the recommendation of amendments to the professional service agreements in place between the Northern Nye County Hospital District and Renown Health and Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority respectively, made by the subcommittee assigned to handle the annual review.

Vice Chair Greber said that she was officially lead on this project but that so much of the minutia she encountered came down to technical and invoicing issues that she happily deferred to Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that he initially received redlined versions of the contracts from the District's lawyer that he then had to do a lot of adjustments on. He said that he believed that the Renown contract was ready to go, but the REMSA contract needed further adjusting as for instance he just noticed the annual cap had not been changed. He said this was no big deal, the board could approve the change in the motion and then he could adjust the written contracts before signing.

He went on to state that there were several material changes made to that contracts that were mutual between the two of them. One of those mutual material changes was the requirement to CC the county manager on notices sent to the contractors. He said this was something he planned to still do; but removing it from the contracts also removes the risk of breach if it doesn't happen. Another mutual material change is the allowance for unilateral termination of the agreements upon one hundred twenty days written notice from either party. He said they also included section four on both contracts, selection of services, whereby the District may at its own discretion conduct a cost benefit analysis of a specific service being offered and unilaterally decide if the service will continue to be offered.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman went on to state that they had added language to section fourteen of both agreements to include contractual allowances, patient discounts and out of network write offs as prohibited uses of District funds as he doesn't perceive them to be true expenses.

Justin then said that they added new language specifically to the REMSA agreement. He said that in last night's workshop it was noted that the District has a service agreement with REMSA that is very vague with regard to how they will provide the services. As a result, he had added language in exhibit A section 1 that specified the service provided was to be uninterrupted and with staff numbers sufficient enough as not to incur overtime pay.

Vice Chair Greber said that that was Justin's own language and the lawyer still needed to weigh in on that.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that upon initially taking on this annual review, he contacted both contractors to schedule meetings to go over wants and needs for the coming contract year. He said that ultimately, he and Vice Chair Greber did meet with both contractors, REMSA very readily and several times, Renown was incredibly difficult, but they had managed to meet once.

He shared that in the meetings with REMSA they had requested two increases to the annual cap. One increase for \$22,000.00 to allow for annual step increases to the paramedics. Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman noted the zero percent turnover they had experienced in the first year and said that he supported this increase. The second increase they had requested was for \$60,000.00 for administrative oversight from Reno, he said that he did not support the \$60,000.00 increase.

Vice Chair Greber said that she agreed with Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman, especially considering the initial contract term included one time start up costs that they would not incur in their second year.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman also stated that with the work REMSA is doing to generate revenue, they will be able to offset a portion of their expense as well.

Chairwoman Link referenced the workshop the Board had held last night and said that she thinks everyone is on the same page. That being the case, she asked Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman what they needed to do next.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that being that he had added some of his own language to the REMSA document, he would like one final round of legal review. He said he would like the Board to approve the agreements as stated, pending legal review. He then will submit them to Tom and if Tom makes no material changes he will submit them to Roni for signature before sending them to the contractors for their review.

Chairwoman Link asked if REMSA had known about these changes prior to tonight.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that both contractors were hearing about them for the first time tonight.

Vice Chair Greber asked Kevin Romero how many times they had met during this review.

Kevin responded that there had been three total meetings.

Chairwoman Link commended Vice Chair Greber and Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman for their work on this review.

Trustee Kaminski motioned to approve the recommendation of amendments to the professional service agreements in place between the Northern Nye County Hospital District and Renown Health and Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority respectively, as made by the subcommittee assigned to handle the annual review; approving the \$22,000.00 increase to the REMSA contract and denying the request for an additional \$60,000.00 increase, pending legal review.

Chairwoman Link offered her second. Motion passed 4-0.

Item #11, For Possible Action – Discussion and deliberation of the minutes from the February 12th, 2019 regular meeting.

Chairwoman Link said she read them over and saw no corrections.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman motioned to approve.

Vice Chair Greber offered her second.

Motion passed 4-0.

Item #12, No Action – Update on the current status of the fiscal year 2018-2019 budget.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that the only irregularity here was an adjusting audit entry that resulted in a six thousand dollar plus credit to the Board's general ledger. He said that he had reached out to Finance for more information as there was no backup attached to the transaction in the County's financial software.

Vice Chair Greber asked Justin to describe the transaction.

Justin said that it was an adjustment of sweep accounts for expenditures and revenues for last fiscal year.

He said that when monies are expended from an expenditure account they go into a sweep account before they're debited from the cash in bank account, and revenue funds work exactly the opposite way. This was an adjustment of those sweep accounts.

Item #13, For Possible Action – Approval of invoices for payment.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that the Renown invoice required some discussion. He said that in the meeting he and Vice Chair Greber had with Renown regarding their professional services agreement it had been noted that bad debt was already a prohibited use of District funds and that Renown had been including bad debt on their invoices since day one. He said that while they have not been officially noticed, during that conversation Renown agreed to credit the District for all of the bad debt they had been charged plus six percent, as that additional percentage was added due to the terms of the contract as well.

He said that he hadn't received any update from Renown since that day. He said that the Board could approve to pay the invoice and continue to work with Renown before the next meeting, or the Board could approve to pay the invoice less the bad debt amount plus six percent and request an updated invoice before the invoice is actually processed for payment.

Vice Chair Greber said that the challenge was that Renown didn't receive a written notice, it was a verbal agreement as they were driving down the road on that teleconference. She said that since the District has a hard figure she was tempted to short pay the invoice. She asked Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman what he thought.

He responded that he was comfortable approving the invoice less all bad debt previously charged plus an additional six percent, and then he said he would get in touch with everyone again next week and try to dredge up a corrected invoice from Renown.

Vice Chair Greber motioned to approve the invoices for payment with the exception of the Renown invoice, from which all bad debt previously erroneously charged to the District was to be deducted.

Chairwoman Link seconded her motion.

Vice Chair Greber then asked if the additional six percent needed to be contained in her motion.

Chairwoman Link said that she wanted it to be contained in the motion and withdrew her second.

Vice Chair Greber then amended her motion to approve the invoices as stated with the exception of Renown Health Invoice number 10388 to include a credit of the bad debt paid over the life of the contract plus six percent.

Chairwoman Link seconded her motion.

Motion passed 4-0.

Item #14, For Possible Action – Discussion and deliberation to set the next meeting location, time and date.

Secretary / Treasurer Zimmerman said that their next regular meeting date was April 18th. Hearing general support, he motioned to set the next meeting location, time and date as the BoCC Chambers at 101 Radar Road in Tonopah at 6:00PM on April 18th, 2019.

Trustee Kaminski offered his second.

Motion passed 4-0.

Item #15, General Public Comment (second)

None.

Item #16, Announcement (second)

Chairwoman Link asked that a standing item regarding Open Meeting Law review be returned to the agenda for future meetings.

Item #17, Adjourn.

Approved this 18th day of April 2019.


Chair

