

MMH reaches out to community

Written by Chris Lee

A community linkage committee has been busy meeting with members of the public to find out what exactly people would like to see from the hospital. They had another good meeting with members of the Hispanic community as well as other community officials, reported Sheryl Farnsworth at the Jan. 26 East Phillips County Hospital District board meeting.

Farnsworth said there was a great turnout and people are stepping up to see things move forward.

The idea of holding a Hispanic health fair generated a lot of interest, according to Farnsworth. Dates are still being looked at but will probably be held sometime in May.

The meeting was also attended by school administrators. The committee is excited to see interest from all areas of town.

Farnsworth said they are eager to actually get something off the ground to show the town they are trying to reach out to the community.

Board member Ray Malleck announced he will turn in his resignation as he will be moving out of the area. Board members must live in or own land within the district. The February board meeting will likely be Malleck's last. Board members addressed the issue and discussed ways to fill the seat once vacant.

Board members will advertise for the two-year appointment to see who is interested. Steve Deaver said advertising would be a better way to go about things because they will find those who are interested and not those who board members think are interested. Malleck was elected in 2008 and his term will end in 2012.

Three of the five board member terms will end this year. Farnsworth, Deaver and Steve Young's seats will all be up for election May 4.

CFO Greg Was presented the board with his financial condition and activities reports. He reported compliance in all areas. He said there was a small loss in operations for the month of

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December due to rising costs. Administrator John Ayoub said they had budgeted for a larger loss. "We blew our budget out of the water," he added responding to the 2009 budget.

Was reported 2009 saw a big improvement from 2008. He said there were 1,726 patient days in 2009 compared to 1,384 in 2008. Clinic visits rose by 626 from the previous year. "Activity wise, we are doing very well," Was said.

On the balance sheet side of things, Was said things are looking really good. "We finished the year in very good shape," he said. "The balance sheet is excellent."

Deaver said changes in medical staff bylaws are ready for a lawyer's review. Bylaws are looked at every other year by members of the medical staff. The board will approve the changes after everything has been looked at.

Administrator reports activity

Ayoub reported issues with First Party Receivables are believed to be resolved. "I'm pretty confident we're moving in the right direction," Ayoub said. MMH sent out the January statements after they were hand checked by staff to alleviate any further issues.

It was reported in December patients were having issues with billing. The issue came during the transition between MMH and First Party Receivables.

A hand washing campaign was started within the hospital and all employees are wearing buttons to help promote the campaign.

The number of January H1N1 cases has been relatively lower than expected. Ayoub said they are always ready for another outbreak like the one towards the end of 2009. There are also plenty of vaccinations available, according to Ayoub.

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Ayoub stated the sale of the modular building was finalized with Prairie Winds Art Center. With the first payment received last year, payments will be received in \$7,000 installments over the next four years for a total of \$35,000.

Ayoub and Terry Barth went to the High Plains Rural Health Network to discern the strategic direction of the organization with regards to the state's fiber network. MMH is scheduled for an April 1 completion date. Ayoub said things are running about a month behind.

A letter from the Colorado Colorectal Screening Program was passed around to board members. A survey was conducted and only one error was found. According to Ayoub, the results were outstanding.

MMH has been in contact with Computers Etc. about purchasing office supplies. The hospital awards bids to local businesses when they come within 10 percent of other lower bids. A bid was awarded to Computers Etc. for the supplies.

Ayoub met with a city council member about a siren the council is looking to add on the south part of town. Ayoub said he is in favor of having one installed closer to the hospital to alleviate the issue of not being able to hear the sirens from within the hospital.

A mobile X-Ray unit was purchased in December to save some money since it was at a reduced price. The unit it replaced has already been sold, according to Ayoub.

Another piece of equipment purchased by the hospital was a sit to stand lift. The device has been appreciated by staff, according to Ayoub. He mentioned the lift is better for both the patient and staff members as it relieves stress on the back.

The third of a four-part prenatal care class was held and again, was very well attended, according to Ayoub. He mentioned Dr. Danielle McClellan is doing a great job with those classes.

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Judy Sudmeier held a presentation for Delta Kappa Gamma on women's heart health. Ayuob said the evaluations were "off the chart" and is pleased with the response.

Credentialing was approved for Douglas Carter, William Ketcham, Marshall Mallory, David Reed, Brian Twedt, John Wright, Scott Hayden, Mary Loury, Thomas Neveline, Wendy Stiles, James Wolach and Brenda Hinze.

Young presented the MMHF report and said Paul Wickencamp was named president, Gary Krumm vice-president, Brenda Adams secretary and Nancy Colglazier treasurer of the foundation.

Once the weather becomes a little nicer, work will begin on the installation of the new clock tower in the southwest corner of the parking lot.

Board members entered into a 30-minute executive session for personnel purposes for the administrator's annual evaluation.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 23 at 5:30 p.m.

Other business

In other business Jan. 26, the hospital board:

—approved the Executive Compensation Committee's recommendation for the administrator's incentive compensation plan for 2010 and for a five percent raise.