

## **Hospital board passes 2014 budget, mill levy resolution**

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

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East Phillips County Hospital District board members unanimously passed the operational and capital budgets for 2014 Tuesday night, Nov. 26.

The 2014 mill levy resolution was also approved for certification. As has been the case for the past 13 years, there is no increase in the mill levy. Melissa Memorial Hospital administrator John Ayoub noted that he does not expect an increase anytime in the near or distant future and that taxes are not going to go up.

A positive bottom line of \$242,479 has been budgeted. Total expenses are budgeted for \$12,094,480 and total expenses are expected to be \$11,852,001.

Ayoub estimates that 45-46 percent of the budget is made up of salaries and that the building mortgage also takes up a large chunk. Having refinanced the building this year, payments have dropped considerably but are still at \$110,000 a month.

### **Dr. Lorin Brandon returns; Prante ditches interim tag**

Outside of a recent three-month window, podiatrist Dr. Lorin Brandon has served Holyoke since 2008.

As he has recently sold his practice and joined Banner Health, Ayoub announced that Brandon will be returning to Holyoke on a recurring basis. Brandon will be in Holyoke Thursday-Friday Dec. 5-6 and then will return at least once every six weeks.

“He’s an excellent podiatrist, and patients love him,” Ayoub stated.

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Ayoub said while the scheduling is being worked out, patients can refer to the calendar of specialists' services published in the Holyoke Enterprise for dates he will be in town.

Melissa Prante has been acting as the interim chief financial officer at MMH since late summer and recently did away with the interim title as she settles in to the permanent position.

"I have been pleased with the work she has been doing," Ayoub said. "I think she has a great team that has been supporting her that she has put together and mentored and we are ready to take the next step."

### **MMH receives positive feedback**

MMH was recently presented an award from the Colorado Hospital Association for its commitment to clinical excellence.

"I think we have made a lot of positive changes and done a lot of good work here and we are being recognized for our efforts," Ayoub said.

MMH received more positive comments from a group recently brought out for a survey.

After completing state surveys in past months regarding conditions of participation and licensure, MMH is taking a proactive approach for the expected rural health clinic survey on the horizon.

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A team contracted from the Colorado Rural Health Center was recently brought in for a mock survey of the rural health clinic. Ayoub noted that the team had some very complimentary comments but a formal written report has yet to be completed.

A worker's compensation safety assessment was also recently completed. Ayoub explained that the public is hurt if the staff is unable to perform their tasks in a safe environment.

"We spend a lot of time focusing on patient and visitor safety, but we also want to make sure we do everything we can to ensure our staff is safe," Ayoub said.

### Other business

In other business Nov. 26, board members:

—noted that the annual Legacy Event date has been changed from February to Saturday, April 5.

—reappointed Steve Young and Linda Alberts to the Melissa Memorial Hospital Foundation Board for two-year terms.

—held two 10-minute executive sessions for personnel matters and for matters that are required to be kept confidential by federal or state laws, rules or regulations.

—approved credentialing of Alvin Armstrong, M.D., pathology; Robert Kahn, M.D., radiology; Jeffrey Wagner, M.D., teleneurology; Lin Wang-Dong, M.D., cardiology; William Ketcham, M.D., radiology; and Doreen Pecar, CRNA, anesthesiology.

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—announced the next board meeting has been moved up from Tuesday, Dec. 24 to Thursday, Dec. 19.

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