

Local hospital board votes in opposition of Amendments 60, 61 and Proposition 101

Written by Chris Lee

East Phillips County Hospital District (EPCHD) board members voted to adopt a resolution opposing Amendments 60, 61 and Proposition 101 at their Tuesday, Aug. 24 regular meeting.

Hospital administrator John Ayoub presented board members with a resolution stating MMH opposes Amendment 60, Amendment 61 and Proposition 101 and urges voters residing within East Phillips County Hospital District to take similar action to actively oppose all three ballot measures.

In a report put together by MMH administration, Amendment 60 would eliminate property tax exemption for enterprises and authorities. This applies to nonprofit hospital districts. A conservative property tax estimate is \$116,015.

Based on the current understanding of Amendment 61's wording, this would not have an impact on outstanding debt but would restrict future debt capacity.

Proposition 101 eliminates a major funding source for road and bridge construction across the state. The annual vehicle registration fee would be cut to an arbitrary \$10—no longer based on vehicle size or weight.

Colorado Hospital Association said combined, the three would permanently remove \$4.2 billion of taxes from state and local government's annual budgets, with \$3.3 billion specifically cut from the state budget. Experts predict the measures will result in a self-inflicted and permanent recession in Colorado.

Special meeting held

EPCHD board members participated in a governance policy meeting Tuesday, Aug. 17. In 2005, MMH and the board members became the first organization in Colorado to utilize the governance policy provided by Bill Charney.

Charney attended last week's meeting and Ayoub said he made it fun and worthwhile.

The governance process allows governing boards to realize owner-accountable organizations. Ayoub said the process is a helpful one both for administration and board members.

"It feels good to know what I can and can't do," Ayoub said. He added, "It feels good for board members to know things are in place."

During the special meeting, board members acted on one piece of business. They voted to allow Ayoub to spend \$18,000 for recruitment purposes.

Administrator reports activity

Ayoub noted everyone at the hospital and clinic worked well together throughout the first couple weeks since going live with the Electronic Medical Records (EMR).

"I could not be more proud or pleased with the staff and the effort they have put into it (EMRs)," said Ayoub.

As with many new programs, there are still some kinks to work out. Ayoub also stated some people have voiced concerns about the new process and discomfort with the computers in exam rooms.

Dr. Ted Lin has begun taking over Dr. Kevin Cuccinelli's shifts. Ayoub noted Lin has two years

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of NextGen experience which will be beneficial to him as well as staff at the clinic and hospital.

Clinic Director Melissa Mayden added staff members learned a lot in the two weeks since going live.

Ayoub reported budget timeline material has been distributed to department directors. With plans to make the budget process smoother, Ayoub hopes they can jump on the budget a little earlier this year.

Ayoub said an agreement has been made to sign a contract with Alliance Imaging to offer mobile digital mammography. Plans are to hopefully offer the service later this year.

The search for a new physician is ongoing, according to Ayoub. He said they had a nice visit with a possible candidate but were not in a position to offer a contract as of yet.

Ayoub reported MMH received \$17,800 non-committed grant funds through preparedness efforts. The administrator explained it as, "If you do these things then you will get the money. We have completed those things, so we have actually gotten the check."

Ayoub noted MMH needed to do the preparedness efforts anyway and it was nice to get some cash for it.

The administrator noted a recent anhydrous ammonia spill provided a nice opportunity for MMH staff to work with emergency rescue teams.