

GRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HOSPITAL DISTRICT NO. 2
dba QUINCY VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING
July 31, 2014 – 1:00 p.m.
QUINCY VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER BUSINESS OFFICE

Present: Anthony Gonzalez, Randy Zolman, Don Condit, Robert Poindexter

Also in attendance: Mehdi Merred, CEO; Alicia Shields, Dean Taplett, Alene Walker, Glenda Bishop, Colleen Canfield, Michele Wurl, Justin Brimer (Columbia Basin Herald), Jill Fitzsimmons (QVPR), Tom Richardson, Sheryl Wood, Rhonda Ramm, Dr. Jaime Dominguez, Collette Lancaster, Kelly Robison, Sandy Longley, Violet Pearl, Verna Teeter, Newton Moats, Sherry Brenner, Larry Aliment, Nicolette Laliberte.

CALL TO ORDER – Anthony Gonzalez, Chairman of the Commissioners, called the meeting to order at 1:04p.m.

Anthony thanked the audience for their attendance at today's meeting. Anthony introduced himself and the three other members of the Board of Commissioners, also recognizing the employees of QVMC.

Anthony read from a segment of **Resolution 14-03**, a one year maintenance and operations levy for an estimated \$1.01 per \$1,000 assessed value. "We haven't asked for an M & O levy in ten plus years, a means of asking our tax payers to help us with our finances." Anthony added that this resolution is needed to bring the warrant line with the County down to the required 2.5 million dollars. "We have worked for many months to get to this point today." Other efforts to address our finances are also underway, which include seeking compensation from Live Nation, refinement of the Business Office processes (some of which have taken place), and review of long term debt. Now, the Board of Commissioners, if approved today, will ask for 2.2 million dollars through a one year levy. State law does not allow hospital districts to ask for multi-year levies.

Anthony read the ballot statement of **Resolution 14-03**. Following this reading, **a motion was made by Don Condit with a second from Robert Poindexter to approve Resolution 14-03. Motion carried unanimously.**

Anthony stated that he had no intention of commenting on the articles in the news over the last few weeks. He is more interested in the life-saving measures being performed by the members of the staff. There are folks who clean, cook, mop, change patients, and hand-feed patients in the North Wing. The building was built in the 1950s; we have a service area of over 12,000 people. Annual visits for last year indicated in excess of 12,000 patient encounters. We experience the highest number of traumas for facilities our size in the state of Washington. That's what QVMC is all about. Anthony introduced staff members in the audience. He introduced Dr. Dominguez – stating "these are the people who should be on the front page of the paper, not me." Rhonda Ramm, ARNP, Newton Moats, Alene Walker, Glenda Bishop, Kelly Robison, Violet Pearl, Colleen Canfield, and Mehdi Merred, who "deals with all of it."

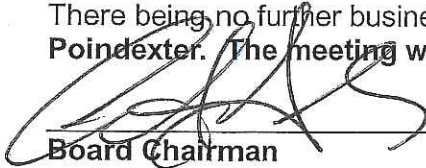
Anthony stated that he cannot picture this community without a hospital. "It is extremely important that we as a Board and employees get the message out in the right way." Anthony also talked about laws which prohibit staff from participating in campaigning while they are at work performing the functions of their role.

In closing, Anthony stated, this is the "true story of QVMC. These folks are here, they are dedicated to saving lives and healing those who need to be healed. We are not a clinic. We have a clinic, but we have an Emergency Room and a hospital, and we serve you 24-7, unconditionally -- whether you can pay us or not."

Mehdi added his appreciation for the employees and the good turnout today. Mehdi noted last years' increase of 8+% in patient revenue. "We maintained expenses, but the Bad Debt/Charity Care component led to an \$800,000 loss for 2013. If our bad debt was only half of what it was, we would have shown a profit for the year. Just because there are individuals who cannot afford their care doesn't mean we are not here to serve them. Almost 1.3 million dollars of bad debt was generated through the hospital. We hear criticism -- we should cut down services that are not profitable. We cannot cut down the services which are largely responsible for the bad debt. We are in this situation not because we over-spent or did not spend within our budget -- we were also within budget for revenue, but not for reimbursement. We are doing more with less money, less reimbursement. We meet compliance in a 1959 building. It is more costly to remain compliant in an aging facility. We try to be as efficient as possible. We are constantly working to improve our processes. We will continue to look at opportunities to add services that have a better payer mix, or expand those which have a huge potential for increased growth and revenue. Reducing expenses does not address the problem -- it is not a long term viable option when our bad debt will not change."

Mehdi added, "We will ensure that tax payers know where the 2.2 million dollars will go."

There being no further business, **Don Condit moved to adjourn, with a second from Robert Poindexter. The meeting was adjourned at 1:23 p.m.**



Board Chairman



Board Secretary

(Minutes recorded by and submitted by Glenda Bishop)