

MINUTES OF MEETING OF NORTH LAKE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT OF MAY 19, 2022

A meeting of the North Lake County Hospital District (NLCHD) was held on May 19, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Lake County Commission Chambers, Administration Building, 315 W. Main Street, Tavares, Florida.

Mrs. Barbara Price, Chairperson, called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Meredith Kirste, attorney for the NLCHD, called the roll to ascertain the trustees present for the meeting with the following members in attendance: Ms. Susan Hooper, Ms. Joyce Richey Huey, Ms. Barbara Price, and Mr. Tim Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. Hooper, and carried unanimously by a vote of 4-0 the NLCHD approved the minutes of January 20, 2022.

QUARTERLY AUDIT

Mr. Terrance Wilson with Moore Stephens Lovelace reported on the quarter ended December 31, 2021. He said UF Health Leesburg Hospital and AdventHealth Waterman Hospital are both are over and the clinics and Lifestream Behavioral Center are still under. He stated the submissions went as expected and he presented a schedule in draft form of a fairly good estimate of what the submissions may look like going forward. Community Health Center appears they will certainly meet their budget. There is still a lag overall since the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Ms. Price requested an explanation of how they select a sample to review. Mr. Wilson explained the method of calculating what number of sample sizes they need to have over the course of the year to have a 95% confidence level over the number of submissions. The submissions are put into a program along with the number of samples required; the program selects the sample. Based on the sample, then they have the supporting documents from the facilities, review them and confirm the criteria has been met.

Ms. Hooper made a motion to accept the audit for December 31, 2021, seconded by Ms. Huey, and carried unanimously by a vote of 4-0.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR ACCOUNTING AND OPERATIONAL SERVICES

Mr. Matt White, partner with Crippen and Company presented Crippen's proposal for the outsourced accounting services. Mr. White would be the responsible partner for the services being performed for NLCHD along with Donna Catterson, who works in Crippen's Leesburg office. Ms. Catterson would be the main point of contact with the Leesburg office and that address would be listed with the phone number for NLCHD.

Ms. Price inquired about the hourly fee of \$200.00 to \$350.00 an hour. Mr. White stated he hoped that Crippen can build some efficiencies in to keep their hours and commitment down.

Mr. Sullivan made a motion to approve Crippen and Company as the accounting services for NLCHD, seconded by Ms. Hooper, and carried unanimously by a vote of 4-0.

LAKE COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER

Carey Baker, Lake County Property Appraiser, was present to discuss how the Property Appraiser's Office fees are calculated for the district. Since the mileage for this year is zero, there are no fees due the Property Appraiser.

Ms. Pat Sykes-Amos stated that the Lake County Tax Collector takes two (2%) percent of what is collected. However, should a mileage rate be assessed in the coming year, the Property Appraiser looks to the next year for its fees.

Mr. Baker explained that the tax authorities have to submit their proposed millage rate as of August 1st for the Trim Notice that is sent to all property owners in Lake Count. Mr. Rob Brown, Assistant to Mr. Baker, also explained that the number used in the calculations is based on the prior year's taxes levied.

DISCUSSION ON TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE

Mrs. Price discussed her reasons for requesting the Board to consider a tentative millage rate of .04 percent to be submitted to the Property Appraiser stating that would give the District enough funds to keep the District going until the legislatures are approached about turning this Board over to the County Commission with an appointed Board by the Governor. Mrs. Price further discussed about reaching out to the private sector to get the clinics going.

Mrs. Hooper stated she supported two clinics and she had visited them commending them for their work and volunteers.

Mr. Sullivan stated he believed the millage rate should be set higher than .04 but not 1 mill and recommended the millage rate be set at .75 percent.

Mrs. Price discussed the increase in property values and .04 percent would be funding more than what was funded last year. She would be willing to vote for .05 this year as a maximum tentative millage rate.

Ms. Huey stated the millage rate should be higher as the Board can always decrease the rate but not raise it. She discussed her personal assessment on her ad valorem tax bill and the need to provide funds for the indigent care.

Mrs. Price mentioned that it would be helpful if there was a clinic staffed 24 hours a day.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair opened the floor for public comment.

Mr. Phil Braun, Central Florida Health Counsel, expressed his concern of not setting a tentative mill at the highest rate and asked Mrs. Price if she was aware how much a mileage rate of .05 would generate?

Mrs. Price stated approximately \$8.5 million

Mr. Braun discussed that figure could not be assessed until the properties are assessed and the numbers are determined by the Property Appraiser and Tax Collector. Mr. Braun requested the millage rate be set at the highest rate possible, have your presentations and then be able to make an informed decision. Mr. Braun stated no elected official should make decisions without all of the information.

Mr. Braun further stated why this Tax District makes a difference and is better than the others Mrs. Price has referenced because it has accountability, transparency and the officials are elected. The South Lake District was appointed by the Governor and could spend the funds wherever it wanted. He believed that this District should be a model of how special districts should function. Mr. Braun further elaborated on the costs of nurses because they are competing with every other system in the country for nurses which affects every single person not just the indigent.

Mr. Braun also talked about the support the clinics receive from the Hospitals including placing staff in the clinics. However, clinics cannot assist you when you have a heart attack or gunshot wound. The clinics do an amazing job of preventative kind of maintenance so the patient doesn't end up in the emergency rooms. Further you need to understand the clinics have rules to stay at a volunteer clinic and to maintain the sovereign immunity so they can't be sued for the care they are providing. It would be difficult to provide 24-hour care without paying people more which could jeopardize its status.

Mrs. Price questioned the Funds that were received by the Hospitals for patients with COVID.

Mr. Falen Halikman with MSL, CPA firm, addressed the fact that when the Hospital gets reimbursed by the District that they are being reimbursed at the lower costs or Medicare and Medicare is always lower than costs. The Hospitals lose money on Medicaid patients. Further Mr. Halikman discussed that 75% of the costs is labor.

He elaborated that pre-COVID, certified nurse's assistants were making \$10.00 to \$12.00 an hour. However, since COVID, the agencies are hiring the CNAs away from hospitals, nursing homes and clinics and then selling them back at approximately \$35.00 an hour. At this rate, Mr. Halikman fully expects ten to fifteen percent of all of the nursing homes are going to go out of business. Mr. Halikman also addressed the relief funds received. Those funds paid for extraordinary costs of all the gowns, gloves, sanitizing and things required for infectious control.

Next, Ken Bragg, a community volunteer, addressed the Board about the clinics ability to perform basic care and so many of their clients have to be referred for more advanced care beyond the clinic's capacity. He also opined that the voters of this county stated they wanted this tax in place and provide for these needy people and this vote stands for four more years. Mr. Bragg said Volusia County has set their mill at 1.89.

Mr. Ricky Harper, candidate for the Hospital District spoke about holding the millage rate at the higher level so it can be adjusted down as needed upon obtaining the necessary information.

Ms. Belinda Rinck expressed her disappointment in not supporting the Hospitals and Clinics to the highest level to help out the indigent care.

Mr. Josh Gonzalez, 20 plus year Lake County resident and volunteer, asked Mr. Bragg if the Hospitals contribute to the Christian Care Center. Mr. Bragg replied absolutely and they are great partners with the clinics. Most of the volunteers come from the Hospital. Mr. Gonzalez stated it was irresponsible to try to cap the millage rate at this particular time because you have more people in need.

Ms. Velma Dawson, resident of Lake County since 1962 and a candidate for the Hospital District, stated it was a mistake or injustice made in taking the millage down to zero and wanted to know what the alternative plan was for replacing these funds.

Mrs. Price stated there were no alternative plan and thought the funds were sufficient so not to assessed people hurting in our community.

Ms. Dawson discussed the need in our community and how she was blessed with the support of Mr. Bragg in helping her turn her life around so she wants to give back to the community by keeping the assessed mill higher to support the indigent.

Floor was closed to public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

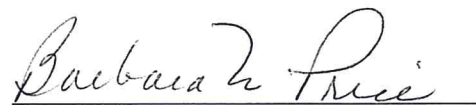
Ms. Pat Sykes Amos stated she would be staying for a few months to assist in the transition to Crippen and Associates.

Mr. Tim Sullivan made a motion to set the tentative millage rate at 0.75, seconded by Ms. Hooper.

Ms. Price called for a vote, Sullivan (yes), Huey (no), Hooper (yes) and Price (yes). Three yes, one no.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.



Barbara Price, Chairperson