

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
FRANKLIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX
JANUARY 10, 2006
9:00 A.M.**

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Cheryl Sanders - Chairman, Russell Crofton – Vice Chairman, Noah Lockley Jr., Jimmy Mosconis, Bevin Putnal

Staff: Marcia Johnson – Clerk of Court, Alan Pierce – Director of Administrative Services, Michael Shuler – County Attorney, Michael Moron – Board Secretary

Call to Order

Chairman Sanders called the Special Meeting to order at 9:00 AM

County Health Issues

Mr. Pierce: Updated on Dana Holton's, owner of Bayline Medical Center, situation. Medical Center is closed due to inability to obtain malpractice insurance; medical supervisor is needed; County has no staff to assist Mr. Holt.

Wesley Tice - Health Department Director: Discussed possibility of new graduates to assist with Bayline issue; stated Health Department role in the County is to actually open practice providing staff and services in Carrabelle. Discussed sovereign immunity and the estimated cost, of \$110,000, for the County to manage the Hospital for 4 months, health services provided in Carrabelle, and forming a Committee of health care professionals. Stated it would take at least 4 months before patients, for billing purposes, can be transferred from Bayline Center to the County's Health Department.

Board: Discussed level of health services offered on the east side of the County

Dana Holton – BayLine Medical Center: Discussed possibility of a Doctor (Sam) to supervise, but wants large sum of money for the service; Dr. Pierce is a candidate for a more permanent resolution. Discussed cause of inability to obtain malpractice insurance and percentage of indigent care provided.

Board: Discussed activating professional doctors committee. Asked Mr. Tice to get with FSU medical school and seek candidates from the pool of graduates.

Weems Memorial Hospital

Mr. Pierce: Update on Weems Memorial Hospital. Stated Critical Access Designation is very important to Franklin County and should keep hospital open for that reason. Discussed GE Financial, Mike Lake creditors, claims of possibly 2.7 million against Hospital License. Recommended County apply for license to keep hospital open.

Michael Shuler: Stated that Mike Lake claims no other creditors besides GE; County will verify. Also stated that the 2.7 million owed to GE is from all 3 counties where Mike Lake managed hospitals as different entities. Recommended County obtains license temporarily and form non-profit board to manage Hospital. Discussed Critical Access Designation. Informed Board that Blackhawk kept constant communication with the County on the hospital issue. Stated if County applies for License, account receivables will go to Hospital not GE and after 3 months County will get provider numbers for Medicare and Medicaid and can submit a lump sum billing to generate funds. Stated that Blackhawk will provide management staff and County will only pay for CEO, Ron Wolfe, services which can be billed to Medicare; Blackhawk will purchase license from County once GE issue is resolved. Suggested selling the license to Blackhawk and placing a 30 year lien on the license and which will give the County control of the license. Stated that it is possible to transfer the license to a new hospital in the county. Requested that the Board authorize staff to proceed with transferring the license to the County, appointing a non-profit Board until the GE situation is resolved, and after GE situation is resolved enter into 2 year lease with Blackhawk. Stated that it will cost between \$300,000 – \$500,000 per month for the County to manage the Hospital.

Board: Discussed GE correctly applying account receivables to debts. Asked how much is owed by Weems? Requested documentation regarding Liens. Discussed County negotiating with GE and Mike Lake's role in GE debt. Directed Attorney Shuler to include language maintaining Weems as hospital in the agreement. Requested monthly reports on hospital status from the advisory board.

Matthew Hainline – Blackhawk CEO – Addressed Board and offered management services of the Hospital free of charge. Discussed hospital “breaking even” within a time period and fees and fines owed to State Health Dept.

Board: Discussed Wolfe keeping current staff and health care coverage for employees which Blackhawk agreed to provide. Stated their expectations of increased level of healthcare service in the County from Blackhawk.

Mr. Wolfe - Blackhawk: Discussed computer billing system, and a core of doctors. Also mentioned other debts owed to small vendors.

Attorney Shuler: Discussed Board insurance responsibilities

Jessica Ward: Questioned hospital employees receiving County benefits. Attorney Shuler responded informing Ms Ward that as soon as that information is available he will inform the hospital employees.

Motion by Mosconis, seconded by Crofton, authorizing staff to start process of transferring license from Dasee to County, continue negotiations with GE, and start negotiations for sale of license to Blackhawk. Motion carried 5-0.

Board: Asked Attorney Shuler if BlackHawk could participate in bill payments? Attorney Shuler did not recommend that action.

Motion by Lockley, seconded by Putnal, to authorize payment of bills regarding hospital such as payroll, insurance, Progress Energy, etc. until next regular meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

Dana Holton: Asked Board if Bayline Medical Center can share space with Health Department in Carrabelle?

Janice Hicks – Health Department: Informed Board that the building is the property of County

Motion by Putnal, seconded by Lockley asking the Health Dept and Dana Holton of Bayline Medical Center to confer and bring recommendation regarding use of Building in Carrabelle to Board at the next Regular meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

Marcia Johnson – Clerk of Court: Discussed budget solutions needed to fund hospital expense with the Board.

Dr. Marsh – Health Council: Discussed the lien on the License and status of employees. Requested BlackHawk representative to be at health council meetings and health council participation on the non-profit Hospital Board.

Board: Discussed a workshop on one cent (\$.01) tax proposal. Thanked Representatives from Speaker and Representative Offices for attending meetings.

Motion by Lockley, seconded by Putnal, to direct staff to present proposals, regarding the one cent tax, at the first meeting in February. Motion carried 5-0.

Adjourn

Chairman Sanders adjourned the Special Meeting at 10:30 AM

Cheryl Sanders – Chairman FCBCC

Attest:

Marcia Johnson – Clerk of Court