

Minutes of the Joint Work Session of the Gallup City Council and the McKinley County Board of Commissioners, held at the West Training Room of the County Conference Suite, Second Floor of the New Extension of the McKinley County Courthouse, 207 West Hill Avenue, Gallup, New Mexico at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, October 18, 2021.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Billy Moore, Chairman of the County Commission.

Upon roll call, the following were present, constituting a quorum of both bodies:

Gallup City Council:	Mayor Louie Bonaguidi Councilor Linda Garcia Councilor Michael Schaaf Councilor Yogash Kumar (via Zoom) Councilor Fran Palochak
McKinley County Board of Commissioners:	Chairman Billy Moore Commissioner Robert Baca Commissioner Genevieve Jackson (via phone)
Also present:	Maryann Ustick, City Manager Anthony Dimas, Jr., County Manager Curtis Hayes, City Attorney Doug Decker, County Attorney

The County Commission and the City Council conducted a work session regarding issues facing Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services, Inc. (RMCHCS) and the community.

Mr. Decker provided an overview of the history of the hospital and the relationship between McKinley County and RMCHCS. Mr. Decker provided information concerning the lease of County owned properties to the hospital as well as the audit of the County's mill levy funds.

Steve McKernan, RMCHCS Board Chairman, presented information regarding the management of the hospital, the current board structure, the makeup of the RMCHCS Board and board member search process.

Open discussion followed regarding RMCHCS and issues related to the recruitment and retention of medical staff, the loss of the behavioral health and women's health component at the hospital, the need for quality healthcare, the need for improvements to the operation and management of the hospital, the loss of medical staff due to the distressed financial condition of the hospital and through personnel actions and resignations and the need for local residents as members of the RMCHCS Board. Don Smithburg, Interim Chief

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Executive Officer at RMCHCS, answered the questions raised during the discussion.

About thirty community members and current and former hospital staff provided comment regarding their concerns about RMCHCS, including the problems with recruiting and retaining qualified medical staff, the need for behavioral health services, the need to improve the local healthcare system, concerns with hospital administrators intimidating and retaliating against their employees, the lack of respect shown by hospital administrators towards their employees, the loss of medical staff due to personnel actions and resignations, the lack of basic safety measures at the hospital, the lack of adequate primary care providers, financial mismanagement by hospital administrators, the need for local members on the RMCHCS Board and the potential loss of the residency program. Former employees also shared their negative experiences in working at RMCHCS. Some audience members called for the termination of the interim CEO and the management contract with Community Health Corporation.

In their closing comments, some members of the City Council and the County Commission asked the hospital administrators not to retaliate against any of the employees who spoke during the meeting.

Mr. Smithburg said they will work closely with the County Commission as they will do their best to provide a very viable, safe, high quality, community hospital.

There was no official action taken by the City Council and County Commission during the work session.

There being no further business, the Work Session adjourned.



Mayor Louie Bonaguidi

ATTEST:



Alfred Abeita II, City Clerk

