

Sublette County Rural Health Care District  
Board of Trustees  
Special Meeting  
August 29, 2018

**Venue:** County Commissioners Room, Pinedale, WY

**Trustees Present:**

Scott Scherbel Chairman  
Laura Clark, Vice-Chairman (via telephone)  
John Godfrey, Secretary/Treasurer (via telephone)  
Wendy Boman, Trustee  
Chuck Bacheller, Trustee

**Call to Order:**

Mr. Scherbel called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

**Agenda:**

**Approval of the September 2018 lease offered by the County Commissioners:**

Ms. Boman made a motion to approve the September lease offered by the Sublette County Commissioners as written. Ms. Clark seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Final Discussion & Decision on Construction Site for Sublette County Medical Center and any other directly related items of discussion or action:**

Ms. Boman and Bill Johnson presented the board with a comparative site cost spreadsheet and a letter discussing the cost savings methods for the current Pinedale Clinic site construction. Some of the cost savings methods included: 4 patient rooms instead of 6, no kitchen area, put mechanical room in current clinic or in partial basement of hospital, one operating room and less support room, don't tear down the old Pinedale Clinic, and build the new hospital in the north/south direction with the ER on the west side. Mr. Johnson emphasized the SCRHCD board has ruined the relationship with the Board of County Commissioners. The BCC are the only one who can bail SCRHCD out if it gets into financial trouble.

Mayor Murdock of the Town of Pinedale told the SCRHCD board SCSD#1 is willing to lease acreage next to the current bus barn off of Hwy 191 to the Town of Pinedale for a Sports Complex. The schools are willing to partner with the Town of Pinedale to manage the new ballfields at the sports complex. The cost to the District to relocate the ballfields would be \$2.1 million but the Town of Pinedale would donate \$1 million toward this project. He also told the board John Sulenta had told him that he is willing to give 15 acres in the Redstone Subdivision to the SCRHCD for free.

Mr. Scherbel asked Mayor Murdock how much acreage the District would be purchasing for the \$2.1 million. Mr. Murdock stated the amount included would have to be discussed as there is also a need for the land for the cemetery. The \$1 million donation from the Town of Pinedale is based on the District working with all of the governmental entities in the county.

Mr. Godfrey asked what the timeline would be for availability of the ballfields for construction. Mayor Murdock stated that the partnership with the school district would have to be finalized and engineering plans completed so full access may not occur until 2020.

Ms. Clark asked Ms. Boman if she had the documentation she requested at the last regular meeting regarding the necessity for a turning lane on Ehman Land and the construction of Garrison Road. Ms. Boman stated that the BCC had given their opinion that the Ehman Lane turning lane would have to be completed but have not had their engineers review anything yet. Mayor Murdock stated that the Town of Pinedale Master Plan requires three entrances to Bloomfield from Ehman Lane. Cost would be approximately \$2 million to construct Garrison Road. The developer or the entity constructing must complete the road. He also said that he had discussed this with Ms. Werner of the USDA and the road must be included in the loan. Mr. Scherbel asked if Mayor Murdock thought the Town of Pinedale would approve a waiver or change of opinion of the construction of the road. Mayor Murdock answered, "No".

Discussion followed regarding best practices, effects of efficiencies, effects on the cost report and revenue stream with cuts made to the current design plan.

Mr. Scherbel presented a combo option to the board which placed the new hospital on the Bloomfield site and left the clinic and ambulance barn where they are currently located.

Ms. Clark reminded everyone that everything has been evaluated and investigated thoroughly and there is a time constraint that also needs to be considered.

#### Public Comments:

Mr. Scherbel asked those in attendance that are candidates for the SCRHCD board's next election to introduce themselves and comment on this discussion.

Sam Bixler stated that he commends Ms. Boman, Mr. Johnson, and Mayor Murdock for putting together their report.

Bill Johnson stated that he is just trying to help in the process.

Tonya Hoffman stated that she is a RN and has been around the block with healthcare. She doesn't think the District is headed in the right direction.

Marti Seipp and Mike Pompy were unable to attend the meeting.

Betty Fear stated she was a Sublette County Commissioner at the time when the clinics were built. She doesn't believe the District has gathered enough public support.

Tali Manning told the board that the population has been decreasing over each of the past two years. The board should consider this in their decision making process.

Jim Malkowski stated that the Garrison Drive study was done at a time when it appeared that the subdivisions in the area would be filled; during the gas field boom. He has seen value engineering actually force costs to be twice as much when those cuts were determined necessary and added in later. He explained that the public always wants another study that comes up with the same result.

Dr. David Kappenman stated the one population group that is growing in Sublette County is the Medicare age group. Cost reporting is based on Medicare patients. This is the reasoning behind wanting a critical access hospital. He pointed out that the percentage of Garrison Drive that touches the District lot is approximately 25% of the curb.

A five minute break was taken at 8:00 pm. Resumed the meeting at 8:05 pm.

Mr. Bacheller stated that the letter and spreadsheet presented by Ms. Boman and Mr. Johnson is full of approximates, estimates, suppositions, unknown code regulations, etc. This is the reason why the experts were hired to put together the plan. The Town of Pinedale cannot tell the board how much land is included in their offer for the ballfields. All of this discussion took a four year step backwards. The public needs to understand the cost based reimbursement that the District is looking at with a critical access hospital. The cost of construction for Garrison Drive just increased by \$1 million since last discussed. It is just not fiscally responsible to add \$5.1 million to the project.

Ms. Boman stated that both sides of this discussion are full of suppositions. There are always unknowns, changes in Medicare, and the aging population goes south for the winter. By building on the current Pinedale Clinic location, the entire community benefits.

Mr. Godfrey said the board needs to look at today's costs. The National Rural Health Association website cites \$350-\$400 per square foot cost to build a hospital. Eide Bailly, experts in critical access hospitals, state this cost does not include land acquisition. If the hospital is in a remote region, costs should be on the upper end of this amount. Mr. Godfrey's point is that the District cannot pare down to the point where it really isn't a hospital, just a glorified clinic.

Ms. Clark reminded the board that accusations do not offer solutions. The current SCRHCD board had nothing to do with the animosity with the BCC and building the current clinics. The data necessary for this decision has been prepared by competent and experienced experts. She applauded the Town of Pinedale for stepping up and putting "skin in the game" as well as the Town of Marbleton for offering the loan to build the hospital in Marbleton. Change is emanate and healthcare changes cost lots of money. This board has been intimately involved in researching and educating themselves on everything they can regarding critical access hospitals.

Tonya Hoffman told the board that she is passionate about her community. She feels that the District lost the community on the south end of the county when they took away their basic medical needs. Affordable, basic and emergency care are gone in Marbleton and there is no trust in the board.

Joan Mitchell asked Ms. Clark to explain her comment on the taxpayers paying for the clinic twice. Ms. Clark stated the taxpayers paid to build the current clinic, if the District purchases the current property from the county, they will pay again for the same property.

John Paravicini told the public decorum needs to be positive in the meeting setting, not side talk, rolling eyes, etc. Whatever decision is made by the board, the public needs to make the best of it.

Ms. Clark made a motion to approve the Bloomfield site for the critical access hospital construction. The motion was seconded by Mr. Godfrey. Mr. Scherbel called for discussion and told the board that he appreciated the offers from the BCC and the Town of Pinedale but the District needs to remain committed to the construction budget and he cannot support any solution that increases that budget amount. Mr. Godfrey, Mr. Bacheller, Ms. Clark, and Mr. Scherbel voted aye; Ms. Boman voted nay.

Motion carried.

Ms. Clark mad a motion to allow Mr. Scherbel to sign an offer to purchase the Bloomfield property. It will include \$100,000 earnest money contingent upon the District getting adequate financing. Mr. Bacheller seconded the motion. Mr. Godfrey, Mr. Bacheller, Ms. Clark, and Mr. Scherbel all voted aye; Ms. Boman voted nay. Motion carried.

**Adjournment:**

Ms. Boman made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 pm. Motion seconded by Mr. Bacheller. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes taken by Lorraine Gatzke

  
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Scott Scherbel, Chairman

  
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Lorraine Gatzke, Finance Director