

Carroll County Local Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Carroll County Health Center
Thursday, April 2, 2015
12:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Chad Franklin
Dr. Philip Habas
Dr. Robert Kates
Jodie Kemper
Dr. Ben Kutnicki
Dr. Cecil Martin
Sandra May
Wilbert Oder, Chairman
Judge Bobby Lee Westrick

Members Absent:

Dr. Mark Miller
Susan New
Bill Osborne

Staff Present:

Rachel Dermon
Karen Evans
Ashley Froman
Georgia Heise
Nieves Leon
Allison Napier
Justin Pittman
Candice Selph
Chastity Smoot

Community Present:

Tom Hammer
Michael Kozar
Carl Mudd

Welcome: Chairman, Wilbert Oder, called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. A quorum was present.

Topic: Proposal from Carroll County Memorial Hospital

Discussion: Dr. Georgia Heise explained that a special board meeting was arranged to hear the expansion proposal of Carroll County Memorial Hospital; and to learn more about potential implications for the Carroll County Health Center. Despite a report by State Auditor, Adam Edelen, regarding the declining state of rural health departments in Kentucky, Carroll County Memorial Hospital is thriving and has the need to expand. Dr. Heise agreed with their reasoning for expansion, citing change is inevitable and adaptation is necessary. The hospital's planned additions include a designated entry and a reconfiguration of its current layout.

In order to expand the hospital as desired, the location of the Carroll County Health Center presents a challenge. Property occupied by the Carroll County Health Center building was donated by the county and is now owned by the Board. Most of the health center's parking lot is still owned by the county while the land behind the health center is owned by Carroll County Memorial Hospital. Architects hired by the hospital visited the Carroll County Health Center to assess the current situation and come up with potential solutions. One of the initial options presented was for the hospital to absorb the health center into their expansion plans, and build another health center elsewhere. The architects determined this to be an unworkable plan due to the cost of bringing the Carroll County Health Center up to code for the hospital facility. Another potential option for the hospital is to build in front of the health department. Dr. Heise emphasized the need for maintaining a good working relationship with the hospital and put forth the suggestion of a four-bay garage in exchange for the hospital proceeding with this option.

Michael Kozar, Chief Executive Officer of the Carroll County Memorial Hospital, and two architects, spoke to the Board about the expansion. Kozar explained that Carroll County Memorial Hospital has experienced unprecedented growth over the last few years, especially with the advent of Kentucky's expanded Medicaid program. The hospital has seen increases in both outpatient and inpatient care. ER visits and patient registrations have increased, as well as patients enrolled in the hospital's physical therapy program. An MRI unit is now in place, and the hospital's geriatric psych program is running out of room across the street, limiting the amount of patients who could be benefiting from the service. The hospital recently signed a contract with a pediatrician, who also has experience in sports medicine. In order to accommodate her and anticipate the needs of her patients, the hospital must continue to shuffle space when space is already so limited. Additional space has been temporarily leased near the courthouse and jail. While the growth is positive, the lack of space has become an issue, necessitating the expansion project.

Mr. Kozar explained that the hospital board possesses a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) note

that matures in March of 2016. Based on the current debt structure, the hospital's board felt that they could accommodate five million dollars to incorporate an addition of 25,000 to 30,000 square feet. Although the core of the hospital was built in 1955, the functionality of the current space is limiting. The hospital bought the land around the health department anticipating future expansion. Looking toward the future, their goal with the expansion project is to build a structure to anticipate future needs—not one that will be obsolete in five years. Mr. Kozar then introduced two architects from the firm of Lockett and Farley, who were selected to help complete the project.

Mr. Tom Hammer, a health care building architect, introduced himself and elaborated on his experience in working with health departments like Spencer County Health Department in Taylorsville, Kentucky. In late February of 2015, Mr. Hammer had made a presentation to the Hospital Building Committee regarding possible plans for expansion. In preparing a bid for Carroll County Memorial Hospital, Mr. Hammer emphasized that his instructions from Mr. Kozar and the hospital building committee were three-fold: optimal site selection, incorporation of existing structures, and a plan for the future. He then introduced the second architect, Carl Mudd, as the creator of many of the concepts and ideas for this project.

Mr. Mudd began by showing a slide of the existing site, explaining the need to create a new “face” for the hospital. Dr. Heise requested that he show the Board the current property lines. Ms. Ashley Froman pointed out that there was currently no access to Sherman Road, other than through 11th Street. Per the slide, the Carroll County Health Center possesses an L-shape piece of property, containing the building and a small portion of the parking lot. The majority of the health center's parking is owned by the county.

After reviewing the property lines and span of the individual buildings, Mr. Mudd presented three options being considered for the Carroll County Memorial Hospital expansion. Option A comprised of expanding along Main Street by the Masonic Lodge. However, this option limits future expansion and does not allow for the “new face” of the hospital along 11th Street. Furthermore, this plan would require using some of the hospital's current parking space and helipad. While Option B also ties into the existing hospital structure using a “bridge” to the new structure, it does not provide for the optimal “new face” along 11th Street either. This option is also problematic because it would prevent the creation of a drop-off point for patients, and create other access issues, like enclosing the current courtyard. Option C provided the street scape that the hospital desires, using property directly behind and in front of the Carroll County Health Center. This option would allow the hospital to expand to a second floor. While Option C is the most preferable to the hospital, this option would be the most detrimental to the health center. The Carroll County Health Center would no longer be visible from the road as a result of the new face to the hospital, proposed in Option C.

Judge Bobby Lee Westrick pointed out that the new building appeared to be too close to 11th Street. However, Mr. Cobb stated that it would not really be that close and that it only appeared that way in the visual representation. Sandra May expressed that the health department's needs were also growing, which is why the Carroll County Health Center was built in this spot. It provided the health department with increased visibility, and allowed the community to take advantage of the services they needed. Ms. May argued that a building hidden from view would decrease the effectiveness of the health department's operations. Dr. Heise admitted that the Carroll County Health Center could provide services with a smaller building, if necessary, however, it would need to be laid out differently and would need to be a new building—not a smaller version of the current building. Mr. Kozar expressed that the initial plan was to incorporate the Carroll County Health Center into the expansion; but the way the health center was constructed created a challenge. He shared that the amount of money required to bring the building up to code for use by the hospital expansion would consume a large part of their projected budget. However, Mr. Kozar felt the health center building should not be torn down if it is still a usable space. Mr. Hammer suggested that the Board look at the Carroll County Health Center as a part of the new hospital, and not as a separate entity. Dr. Heise emphasized that the health department is and will continue to be a partner for the hospital, but that these two agencies were distinct.

To help the Board visualize the plans, Mr. Hammer and Mr. Mudd showed some additional images of how the Carroll County Health Center could be incorporated into the hospital's design under Option C. The plan could provide the health center with a side entrance and signage, designating that particular part of the hospital as the health department. Although the plan did not show areas for parking, Mr. Kozar expressed interest in having a parking lot at the back of the hospital (behind the health center) for staff to use. As was discussed previously, Dr. Heise shared the idea of a four-bay garage facility being incorporated into the plans. She clarified that the health department provides more than clinical services. Improving community health status is a crucial goal. While supportive of the health department possibly being part of a complex, Dr. Heise emphasized the need for functionality for all parties involved. Dr. Richard Kates requested further clarification about why the current face of the hospital could not be modified; and a new building be constructed behind the Carroll County Health Center. Kozar replied that it was all about square feet. The hospital needs to use the money to buy as much space as possible. However, Kozar did express a willingness to consider building a four-bay garage next to the health center. Dr. Heise reminded the Board and all present that the Carroll County Health Center would be giving up any equity in our building if the hospital proceeds with Option C. Selling the building would be impossible if it is assimilated to the hospital. Karen Evans asked why the current hospital structure could not be used for administration with a separate hospital located behind the current one. Mr. Hammer replied that the hospital desires to use every square foot possible for patient care, and not for administrative purposes.

Kozar emphasized that the list of options presented is not an exhaustive list, and that the process is still in its preliminary stages. The respective boards of both organizations will need to work together to come up with solutions.

After the presentation by Mr. Kozar and the architects, Vice Chairperson, Ms. May, conducted the remainder of the meeting at the request of Mr. Oder. Judge Westrick suggested that any talks or agreements entered into with the hospital should include provisions for the sale of the health center building in the event the health department wanted to leave. He added that a dollar figure should be agreed upon ahead of time. Dr. Heise suggested a discussion, leading to a motion, outlining any necessary next steps. She mentioned that she was currently serving on the Carroll County Memorial Hospital Board, but might resign due to the situation and potential conflict of interest. Dr. Kates felt that the hospital was disregarding the needs of the health department.

Another proposition from Dr. Heise was for the health department to perform its clinical services within the hospital, and then build somewhere else to house other services. Justin Pittman agreed that this was a viable option, and not uncommon. Concerns were expressed by Ms. Froman about the efficiency of health center operations during such a large-scale construction process.

Further comments included the suggestion by Michelle Wilburn to retain an attorney who specializes in real estate law to act as a liaison during the process. Mr. Pittman relayed a suggestion from Mr. Bill Osborne, who could not be present, that the health department "flip" their building, changing their entrance from facing 11th Street to facing the opposite side of the building. This suggestion still results in the health center being hidden from view, according to Dr. Kates. Ms. May interjected that that the health center would still be unable to be sold if not purchased by the hospital. In addition, Ms. Froman pointed out that there would still be no room to expand. Dr. Habas felt like it made more sense for the hospital to buy the building from the health center, do what they wanted with it, and provide the health center with an alternate location. This option may cost a little more up front, but the end result would be a satisfactory arrangement for everyone. Jodie Kemper inquired about what other options might be available. Dr. Kates suggested renovating the Kentucky Utilities building for our use, and Judge Westrick mentioned some county land available near Walmart.

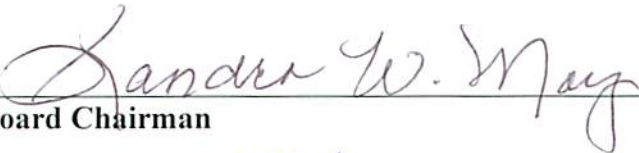
In closing, Dr. Heise suggested that an independent appraisal of the Carroll County Health Center be conducted.


Judge Westrick interjected that an assessment of the health center building as a potential fire hazard also needs to be examined. This assessment might have implications for both the health center and the hospital's plan.

Action: Dr. Philip Habas made a motion to commission an appraisal of the Carroll County Health Center. Dr. Ben Kutnicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Topic: Adjournment

Action: Mr. Franklin made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Martin provided a second. No other agenda items were discussed due to the unanticipated length of the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1:53 p.m.


Board Chairman 10-16-2015
Date


District Director 10/22/15
Date


Board Secretary 10/02/2015
Date