

SABINE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES

April 5, 2016

The Sabine County Hospital District Board of Directors met for a Regular Meeting on April 5, 2016 at 5:30 PM in the Sabine County Hospital Board Room.

**Present**

**Phil Yocom, President**  
**Earl Willis, Board Member**  
**Joe McNaughten, Secretary**  
**Mark Pearson, Member at Large**  
**Dr. Lana Comeaux, Board Member**  
**Gary Williams, EMS Administrator**  
**Emily Taylor, Administrative Assistant**

**Others Present**

**Jerry Howell, Sabine County Hospital Administrator**  
**Penny Ferguson, Daily News and More**  
**Cecil Tatum, Sabine County Reporter/Toledo Chronicle**  
**Montez McNaughten, Sabine County Citizen**  
**Philip Blair, Sabine County EMS**  
**Chloe Hardy, Tax Payer**

- I. Mr. Yocom called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
- II. Mr. Willis opened the meeting with prayer.
- III. Public comments:  
Jamie Payne asked if they could comment after they came back open session. Mr. Yocom stated no it wasn't on the agenda. Mr. Payne stated he would like to know who hired the attorney that cost the district over \$20,000. He also stated that it was his understanding that someone had a conference with CHI St. Luke's and he asked if they had authority to do so as a Board member. He also asked about the 1115 Waiver Program and would like to know who wants the program cancelled if this is one person or the whole Board. Mr. Payne stated that he wants people to realize that overall economy of Sabine County is at risk if this was to happen. He stated he wants to do the best for Sabine County and it looks like there was a pretty good go at it now and if not someone will have to tell him it's not good hopefully we can stay on a good path. Mr. Payne stated that if you lived

here when there wasn't any Doctors now Sabine County has several doctors and P.A.'s and its great. He stated that he thinks everything is good and he is sticking to it.

Mrs. McNaughten stated that she has been at just about all the Board meetings since Joe had been elected. She stated that she knows all the Board members personally and had taught most of them and employees of Sabine County Hospital. Mrs. McNaughten stated that she was a little concerned when she left the prior meeting. She stated that she wanted everyone to be assured that her comments are hers not Joe McNaughten's words or thoughts. She stated first of all the Boards opened with a prayer and is very proud that the board opens with a prayer. She stated on the same note that she thinks that if they open with a prayer and ask God guidance that the Board member should be accepting to God's guidance. Mrs. McNaughten thinks that if good people meet together and strive to make good decisions that will be achieved and happen. Mrs. McNaughten stated that when she left the other day she felt there may be some negative feelings along the employees of Sabine County Hospital, Patients, Nurses and Doctors. She stated that she knew many of them personally. She stated that over the past week on her own she had talk to a couple of Doctors, some nurses, some regular employees, and patients of Sabine County Hospital so they could tell her about their visit in the hospital. She stated that she never heard any negative comment. She stated that she has been their friends for years so they know they can talk to her and tell her the truth. She stated that she was not pro nor anti Preferred Leasing she wanted the truth. She stated that she talked to at least 20 people and no one has a negative comment. Mrs. McNaughten stated that Sabine County Hospital has saved her life several times when she was brought there to be stabilized before they transferred her to the Nacogdoches facility. She stated that if she was told she would have made it another minutes even after being stabilized at Sabine County Hospital. She asked the board to consider what was important for Sabine County and she is concerned that if the Board does not stay with a so called small leasing company. Mrs. McNaughten stated that as of now they had the same doctor in the ER, Clinics, and Nursing Home facility's that might change. She stated that there might be a different group of doctors for each facility. She stated that she like to come into the Emergency room and see the local doctors that knows her history.

Dr. Luraguiz stated she was there to support the 1115 Waiver program. She stated that it was started by Dr. Gulbis then left to the clinic for Dr. Backofen and herself. Dr. Luraguiz stated that Preferred had a hard time getting new Doctors to come to this County with an unstable situation between the Providers and the Hospital Board. She stated that one day the younger providers are going to wake up and going to say they are tired of the Hospital Board, tired of investing money into a Community and spending all my time helping the Community so that every month there can be a different problem. Dr. Luraguiz stated that she would appreciate if the Board would clarify the situation and stated if they wanted Preferred or if they wanted CHI. She stated that she has worked for CHI before and they will come to Sabine County and close the Hospital because it is a rural Hospital that does not make any money, with only one clinic. She stated that it would affect the business in the whole county because people will not come and retire in a county that does not have a Hospital. Dr. Luraguiz stated that she hopes the Board realizes that the problem the board is having with one company is affecting the whole

Community. She stated that most of the people at the meeting are her patients and she was really upset along with Dr. Backofen. Dr. Luraguiz stated that if the board wants to go back to a Hospital from the fifties that does not have any Doctors then the board needs to explain to the community why there are no Doctors.

Ms. Laura McCroskey stated that she has had several people ask her what was going on. She stated that's she tried to explain the 1115 Waiver Program to them the best she knew how and they want to know what the boards problem with the 1115 Waiver was and was concerned with what would happen to the hospital with the 1115 Waiver Program goes away. Ms. McCroskey stated they don't want another company in Sabine County they like what is going on. She also stated that some people think that it is an underhanded thing to get EMS more money. She stated that she told them she was unsure they would have to contact the Board themselves to find out what the Boards reasoning was. Ms. McCroskey stated that you will always find someone that does not like Sabine County, Nacogdoches or even Lufkin but there was a lot of people that worry it's under handed and want more money for EMS. She stated that they wanted the EMS and Hospital service to work together. Ms. McCroskey stated that there was a lot of concerned citizens and they do not like what is going on. She stated they went through this before and they don't understand what's going on and why the Board is even consider taking away the 1115 Waiver if it helps the Hospital or the Clinic. Ms. McCroskey stated that people don't understand why the EMS financials are not published and everyone look at that. She stated that she was just letting the Board know what people are saying.

Michele Pressley stated that it was her understanding that the Board wants the 1115 Waiver wanted to be taken away. She asked why you would take something away that was being given to a community that is one of the poorest counties in Texas. She stated that if you take the 1115 Waiver away then you can't pay the Doctors if you can't pay the Doctors then you close the clinics. She stated if you have not doctors then you have to close the hospital. She stated that Sabine County has many motor vehicles accidents we need the Hospital. Ms. Pressley stated why anyone would consider cutting money off that they was getting would be ridiculous when it would affect Sabine County. She stated that one clinic had already closed this month boom gone with no explanation. Ms. Pressley stated that you cannot get patient records and people are tired of it. She stated that if these people couldn't come to an arrangement that didn't affect people lives not only in accidents. She stated that people come here to live, put down roots, and gives to the community and the hospital board just wants to take it away and give no explanation because it's not on the agenda. She stated that she does not care that it is not on the agenda to fly to Jasper when they are in in critical condition because they could not get alone. Ms. Pressley stated that it was not fair or right she asked the board to be honest with them if they want to be St. Luke's then they needed to say it don't say I want to get rid of the 1115 Waver because I don't know where it goes. She asked the board where do you think it goes. She asked if there was extra money somewhere. It goes to pay these people.

Mary Hill stated that many people remembered her and many people don't like her but she also knows she has watched this hospital and hear the hospital Board for 16 years.

She stated the cant get alone, don't want to do this, and don't want to do that, write letters in the paper, ruin people's reputation, get rid of them do this and that. Mr. Hill stated she wanted to tell them something. She stated that her husband has had to come to Sabine County ER three times. She stated the first time they was lucky they had Chad and he has been in the community for many years and is community minded. She stated hat he knows the people, and who he has help. Mr. Hill stated the second time Dr. Natalia came to the rescue with wonderful care energetic, sympathetic. She stated a week ago she had to bring him back and Dr. Backofen was there. She stated that it takes forever for Preferred to find these doctors that gives wonderful care and you want to get rid of them. She asked what the hell was really going on. Ms. Hill stated that Dr. Backofen and the nurses where so perfect that the hospital called her up the next day and want to know how her husband was doing. She state the second question was were you satisfied. She stated that she told them it was 100% perfect care. She stated that Sabine County now has Doctors and hospitals that they could count on why would you want to waste your time finding good Doctors and PA's then say get out of here we are going to change the whole system. She stated we should all get down on our knees and thank god we have to doctors we have and the Hospitals functioning in a good way where people can learn to get along and accept a little bit of criticism. She asked the board to remember who lives in Sabine County. She asked if they were going to tell a 91 year old lady that they had to close down the Hospital. She asked if they wanted to drive her to Lufkin if she needed help or did they want to keep the hospital? She stated that she was serious about the issue and has never been more serious in her life she was tired and sick and tired of all the fighting going on day in and day out about are we going to have a hospital or Doctors. She stated now we have good Doctors asked anyone that goes to them, she asking the board to leave everything where it was at. Ms. Hill stated that if you would sign contracts with them and told them how wonderful it was to live there. She stated to let them live here and prove it to them how wonderful it really is.

IV. Executive session at 5:50 P.M.

A. An executive session concerning Contract Maters.

V. Return to open meeting at 6:34 p.m.

VI. No Action

VII. Board member comments:

Mr. Willis No comment

Mr. Pearson stated that he said a while back get involved and stay involved. He stated that there was a big influx in the meetings a while back when there was an issue then when everything tapered off it was just the same faces. Mr. Pearson stated that this was the community's hospital and they needed to come to the meetings, listen and see what's going on. He stated that begin involved was very important. Mr. Pearson stated just as he has told some of his fellow Board members and understands he does stand behind each

and every one of them always come with facts. He asked for them not to add to the rumor mill problem that is already in this community as some have done tonight. Mr. Pearson stated he could not stress enough how important it was for them to come with the fact of the problem. He stated that the community did not realize how hard it was because it's not on agenda to sit and listen to a public comment that it not factual. He stated that it makes his blood boil to listen to it and there has been both some public people and professional people in the room make some statements that are not facts. Mr. Pearson stated to get involved and stay involved. He also asked then to educate themselves on the issue at hand. He stated the Board was there for them but the public was also there for them and if the public doesn't get involved then the Board has nothing to go off.

Mr. McNaughten stated that the Board member, Gary Williams have done a super good job. He stated hat we have a great hospital with wonderful nurse and a fantastic ambulance service. He stated that he hopes that everyone could pull together and make everything work. Mr. McNaughten stated that on September 23 of this year he would be 80 years old and he would be leaving the Board in the next few months. He stated that he is not able to keep up anymore his health was going down but he has enjoyed working with each and every one and loves every one of them.

Dr. Comeaux: No comment

Mr. Yocom stated to Mr. McNaughten that back in 2007 he step into the leadership role of the Sabine County Hospital District. He stated that Mr. McNaughten was there during the most turbulent times. Mr. Yocom stated that these issues are nothing compared to what was going on back in 2006, 2107 and 2008. He stated that Mr. McNaughten stepped nans took over the leadership role doing a magnetic job in leading the Board to where it was today. Mr. Yocom Thanked Mr. McNaughten on behalf of the current Board, Former Board that the Public for everything he has don't for the Sabine County Hospital Board.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

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Phil Yocom, President  
Sabine County Hospital District  
Board of Directors

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Joe McNaughten, Secretary  
Sabine County Hospital District  
Board of Directors