

Hospital board approves budget and announces new board member

By Amanda Miller
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The Cheyenne County Hospital Board met on Monday, Dec. 16, and went over the budget for 2014 as well as the hospital's strategic plan. Also, the Cheyenne County Commissioners have made their decision for the new board member this year.

The meeting began with board reports. Darrell Reed, the director of diagnostic imaging, reported that the department is doing very well. Judy Rockwood, the Chief Executive Officer of Cheyenne County Hospital, said that Mr. Reed has had a huge jump in numbers and that the department is doing very well.

As of January, the bone density scanning truck will no longer be able to come to the hospital. The department just found out about the sudden change at the meeting, and will plan on looking at a dexascan for the hospital.

Chief Executive Officer report
Ms. Rockwood also gave her report. A strategic plan was compiled by the executive team. The four pillars for the plan include finance, quality, community and team. All employees are to uphold the four pillars of the strategic plan and it will be reviewed quarterly in 2014.

Ms. Rockwood stated that this

strategic plan was put in place for one year, and at that time it would be reassessed. Due to the healthcare changes, it is hard to look more than one year ahead at this time.

Commissioners meeting
At the Cheyenne County Commissioners meeting on Dec. 13, interviews were held for the board seat that became available at the end of this year. Kari Gilliland's four year term on the hospital board has come to an end. Mrs. Gilliland chose to run again, as well as Roxie Neitzel and Jeff Paulsen.

It was announced at the hospital board meeting that the commissioners had chosen Roxie Neitzel to be on the board. Mrs. Gilliland's last meeting will be Jan. 16.

Several board members thanked Mrs. Gilliland for her long service on the hospital board and all the work she had done. Many members expressed sadness to see someone leave the board that had so much experience and education in the complicated finances and running of the hospital.

Mrs. Neitzel will begin her hospital board term after the first of the year.

Budget approval
With the large change in finances, the hospital budget had to be looked at closely and decisions made regarding the budget for 2014. The

commissioners reduced funding to the hospital.

Heidi Tice, Chief Financial Officer of the hospital, said the commissioners requested that the hospital stop funding depreciation, and instead use that money to pay it's bills.

The funded depreciation account is a savings account for when the hospital needs new equipment to treat patients, new upgrades, or any other requirements in the ever-changing field.

A current example is the dexascan. The hospital was given less than a month's notice that the bone density truck will no longer come to Cheyenne County beginning in January. Therefore, a dexascan machine will need to be purchased. The hospital would use funded depreciation to purchase the expensive machine. Without the funded depreciation account, that machine would not be available here in the county.

Erika Zimbelman, board member, stated that not funding depreciation is not good for the hospital's stability. It is okay short term not to save temporarily, but long term it will have negative effects.

Les Lacy, area director for Great Plains Health Alliance, said that Cheyenne County Hospital is enviable because of the funded depreciation account.

"This hospital gets pointed at quite a bit. Other hospitals wish they had a funded depreciation account like this."

Mr. Lacy said that money that is invested into the hospital (through funded depreciation) is invested into the future of our hospital, which in turn invests in the future of our community.

After some discussion, the board decided to suspend the repayment of depreciation funds that have been previously borrowed until such time as they are more financially able. They will continue to fund depreciation at this time until further measures are needed. The budget was then approved.

Other business
The board received a bid from Troy Porter to complete the cement work that is needed on the west side of the hospital. The concrete has deteriorated under the MRI scanner that parks there. Mr. Porter's bid was accepted at \$9,740. The hospital board has asked the city to consider paying half of the bill.

Ms. Rockwood held a Christmas party for all hospital employees. Mrs. Gilliland said she heard that everyone really enjoyed it, and thanked her for setting time aside to do something for the hospital staff.

The next hospital board meeting will be Jan 16 at 1 p.m.



RACHEL HUFFMAN checked out the lavender at the Community Garden open house and fund raiser held Thursday at the greenhouse. Herald staff photo by Tim Burr



JACKSON SUITE open house was held Thursday. Lezlie Hook shows Robin Burr some of the features of the newly remodeled house. Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

Across the County

Calving Schools Planned

With the new calving season just around the corner, K-State Research and Extension will host calving schools in five locations, with a focus on challenges producers might face during this critical period. "Handling Calving Difficulties" features Robert Mortimer, recently retired associate professor of clinical sciences at Colorado State University's Veterinary College.

A specialist in bovine reproduction, obstetrics and nutrition, he will address such topics as: signs of calving; differentiating between normal and abnormal calving; and how to manage a difficult birth.

Larry Hollis, beef cattle veterinarian with K-State

Research and Extension, will speak on scours prevention and colostrum management.

"Producers have a significant investment to get each cow to a full term pregnancy. Losing calves at or near birth is an economic loss, but it is often a personal loss, too, and can leave producers asking themselves 'what if' type questions on how they might have saved a particular calf," said Sandy Johnson, extension livestock specialist based at K-State's Northwest Research Extension Center in Colby. "Continued sharpening of our skills when it comes to saving calves is time well spent for anyone that calves cows." Dates, locations, and K-State contact information for

each school:

- Jan. 6, Oberlin, 6 p.m., The Gateway – Byron Hale, bhale@ksu.edu or 785-475-8121.

- Jan. 7, Phillipsburg, 10 a.m., Phillipsburg County Fair Building – Rachael Boyle, rboyle@ksu.edu or 785-425-6851.

- Jan. 7 – Sylvan Grove – 6 p.m. CST – Sylvan Sales Commission – Neil Cates, ncates@ksu.edu or 785-738-3597;

- Jan. 8 – LaCrosse – 10 a.m. CST – LaCrosse Livestock Market – Jared Petersilie, jaredp11@ksu.edu or 785-222-2710; and

- Jan. 8, Sharon Springs, 6 p.m. mountain standard time, CAB Building, Wallace County Fairgrounds – Marty Fear,

By
Marty
Fear



County Extension Agent

cfear@ksu.edu or 785-332-3171.

Financial support for the program is being provided by Zoetis and other local sponsors at each site. There is no cost to participate, but those wishing to attend are asked to contact the appropriate local office by Jan. 3 so the staff can plan for adequate meals and materials. Contact the Cheyenne County Extension office at 332-3171 or cfear@ksu.edu with questions or comments.

Till next week - Marty

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