

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)
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COUNTY OF STOKES)
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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA
MAY 27, 2010

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Public Hearing regarding the future of Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital, Inc. in Courtroom “A” at the Government Center Complex located in Danbury, North Carolina on Thursday, May 27, 2010 at 7:00 pm with the following members present:

Chairman Jimmy Walker
Vice Chairman Ernest Lankford
Commissioner J. Leon Inman
Commissioner Ron Carroll
Commissioner Stanley Smith

County Personnel in Attendance:
County Manager K. Bryan Steen
Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins

Chairman Jimmy Walker opened the Public Hearing.

Chairman Walker welcomed those in attendance for the Public Hearing.

Chairman Walker read the following opening statement:

- Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital, Inc. consist of the hospital, long term care unit, JRJones Outpatient/Urgent Care Facility and the rented space at Stokes Medical Park

Commissioner Smith delivered the invocation.

Chairman Walker invited the citizens in attendance to join the Board with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Walker noted that 3 minutes would be allowed for each speaker and 10 minutes for a designated spokesperson representing a group.

Commissioner Inman read the following possible options previously listed by the Board of Commissioners:

- **Option** - Go back to the original concept – county owns and operates all components as a government agency
- **Option** - Lease the hospital to a private agency (no public involvement or subsidy)
- **Option** - Lease to private agency and provide some level of public subsidy
- **Option** - Lease to private agency to operate and the county assumes responsibility for the operating losses if any
- **Option** - Continue to own the hospital and employ a private management agency to operate the facilities for the County

Commissioner Smith read the following remaining possible options previously listed by the Board of Commissioners:

- **Option** - Spin the entire operation as a independent, self governing, non-profit corporation
- **Option** - Sell the operation to a private agency
- **Option** - To maintain the hospital as a separate corporation controlled by the County
- **Option** - Convert to a for profit corporation
- **Option** - Create a “holding company” with private share holders who would own and operate the hospital
- **Option** - Sell part of the ownership of the hospital corporation

Chairman Walker stated that the Board of Commissioners is not endorsing any of the options over any other possible options and there could be other options.

The following spoke regarding Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital, Inc:

Dean Gordon
1101 Coon Road
Pinnacle, NC

Mr. Gordon spoke regarding the following:

- Mother received exemplary care during her 4 year stay in the long term care unit and at other times in the hospital’s acute care
- Hospital is very unique
- Hospital is desperately needed on the northern side of the county
- Hospital can’t be closed
- Need to increase the long term care unit
- Family oriented place for people who need medical care
- Make a wise decision to keep all the facilities open

Garry Merritt

229 Whispering Creek Road
King, NC

Mr. Merritt spoke regarding the following:

- 2009- 938 medical calls within the city of King
- 2009- 27 automobile accidents within the city of King
- Thus far in 2010- 280 medical calls and 4 automobile accidents within the city of King
- Numbers indicate the need for medical services in southwest part of the County
- Stokes Reynolds, which is an old facility, needs to be upgraded with new technology
- Need to expand outpatient services in the northern end of the County
- Possible Urgent Care Center in the Meadows area
- Upgrade the JRJones facility
- Possible outpatient facility at Stokes Medical Park
- Outside management providers work great at operating facilities – it has worked at Village Care in King
- Timing is everything – gather all the facts and information and make the right decision to get the health care services in Stokes County where they need to be

Keith Lawson

1327 Weldon Smith Road
Lawsonville, NC

Mr. Lawson spoke regarding the following:

- Proud to be associated with Stokes Reynolds Hospital as an employee that provides quality care, not just quantity care
- Hospital provides health care for all citizens of the county
- Patients are treated like family members
- Recent opening of King Clinic indicates the additional need for health services in the King area
- Without the facilities, health services can't be provided to the citizens of the County
- Good things are happening at Stokes Reynolds
- Need the Board of Commissioners' support to keep the facilities open
- Staff at Stokes Reynolds is a team that provides excellent care
- Besides being a great health care facility, Stokes Reynolds is staffed with dedicated, loyal employees with a great depth of knowledge and skill who want to continue to provide exceptional medical service to the citizens of Stokes County

Dr. Sam Newsome

124 Mountain View Road
King, NC

Dr. Newsome spoke regarding the following:

- Stokes Reynolds is a community hospital
- Stokes Reynolds sponsors the County's Emergency Medical Services
- Stokes Reynolds serves as a vital component of the County's disaster plan

- Stokes Reynolds partners with Stokes Family Health Center on various programs and events
- Stokes Reynolds has an active Rehabilitation Program (inpatient and outpatient)
- Stokes Reynolds has a Pulmonary Rehab. Program
- Stokes Reynolds provides diabetic education
- Stokes Reynolds provides exceptional care that is sometimes not provided in a larger institution
- Times have changed and the needs of the community have changed; Stokes Reynolds is changing in order to take care of the needs of the community
- Need to find some way to keep the hospital open
- My belief is that the hospital is a vital part of the big puzzle in the county which provides health care to the citizens of Stokes County

Mr. Gordon Docking

HMC
Kansas City, MO

Mr. Docking declined to speak at this particular time.

Ms. Robin Sessoms

2133 Moorefield Road
Danbury, NC

Ms. Sessoms spoke regarding the following:

- Career Development Coordinator for Stokes County Schools
- Stokes Reynolds provides educational opportunities for Stokes County Health Occupational students such as internships, shadowing experiences, and hands on clinic sites, etc.
- Stokes Reynolds provides jobs for high school graduates
- Many students return to work at Stokes Reynolds after graduation from college
- Please take into account what this facility and its employees do for the young people in Stokes County

Mr. Barry Stevens

3945 NC 8 HWY North
Danbury, NC

Mr. Stevens spoke regarding the following:

- Come as a citizen and former patient
- Received excellent care while being a patient
- Stokes Reynolds can make money
- Support Stokes Reynolds like other departments that do not bring in enough money to support their department's expenses
- Stokes Reynolds is a valuable part of the County
- County does a good job running other departments, so why not run Stokes Reynolds Hospital as a department

Ms. Bonnie Baker
840 Rierison Road
Madison, NC

Ms. Baker declined to speak noting that Mr. Dean Gordon stated exactly what she wanted to say and reiterated the County needs to keep Stokes Reynolds open.

Ms. Gena Bowen
4102 Dodgetown Road
Walnut Cove, NC

Ms. Bowen spoke regarding the following:

- Proud to be an employee of Stokes Reynolds who treats everyone just like a family member
- Need for an emergency room – to keep from having to drive an hour away when you have an emergency
- Skilled Nursing Facility provides an exceptional place for your family member
- Facility does need some modernization
- Very important to keep the hospital open

Mr. Dwayne Young
1387 Hart Road
Lawsonville, NC

Mr. Young spoke regarding the following:

- Support continuation of health care for all of Stokes County in any capacity possible
- Reduction of health care services in the county would be devastating
- Access to health care remains a top priority for people looking to move into Stokes County
- Trickle-down effect of decreasing access to health care would most likely be long lasting and debilitating
- Access to health care is extremely important and vital to those who live in this area
- Stokes County needs access to care which includes inpatient, outpatient, disease management, long term care, emergency care on a 24 hour basis, and primary care
- Board has an opportunity to review and make the right decisions on recent health care discussions based on rural medicine:
 - Access
 - Shortage of health care professionals
 - Role of communities in designing their own health care system
 - Differences in home health services delivering to the rural areas that need to continue
 - Effects of rural hospital closures on hospital care for rural Medicare/Medicaid populations
 - Organizational barriers to the delivery of recommended vaccines to children in rural areas
- Thanks to Stokes County for taking on this huge challenge
- Challenge the County to make the right decision to keep all facilities opened, financed, supported, and the opportunity for staff to continue what they are doing to provide medical care

Ms. Deanne Moore
841 East King Street
King, NC

Ms. Moore spoke regarding the following:

- Speaking on behalf of King Chamber of Commerce
- Speaking on three main topics related to the importance of the medical facilities in Stokes County
 - Hugh employer in Stokes County- need to retain the current jobs and if possible increase jobs
 - Access to health care in the county not only for those who currently live in the county, but for those looking to move into the county
 - County is continuing to expand the tourism initiative, with more visitors coming into the county, the need for health care is increased

Health Director Josh Swift
174 Victoria Street
Elkin, NC

Director Swift spoke regarding the following:

- Stokes Family Health Center is a strong partner with Stokes Reynolds
- Continuing to work on various projects such as providing accessibility for expanding mental health services at Stokes Reynolds
- Stokes Reynolds provides the professional staff needed to operate the King Clinic (PA)
- Three of the eleven Board of Health members are connected or work for Stokes Reynolds
- Danbury and the northern part of Stokes County is classified as a medically underserved area and a health professional shortage area
- The health of Stokes County is dependent on a strong infrastructure which has three main parts – public health, hospital and providers
- All these components work together to provide a safety net for healthcare for the entire County

Ms. Robin Voss
517 Trinity Church Road
King, NC 27021

Ms. Voss spoke regarding the following:

- Member of this community, a healthcare professional, and member of the Stokes Health Services Alliance
- All citizens need access to healthcare in Stokes County
- Stokes Reynolds provides the critical access for this part of the county especially with the hundreds of thousands who visit Hanging Rock Park each year
- A new facility would provide additional jobs in Stokes County
- Support Stokes Reynolds which provides a great service in Stokes County
- Desire to keep Stokes Reynolds open

Dr. Scott Vogler
5430 Stewart Circle
Pfafftown, NC

Dr. Vogler spoke regarding the following:

- If the County loses the facilities, then the county will lose the physician level of care
- Recruiting providers to come to Stokes County is very difficult
- Need for an integrated health care plan which includes primary care, emergency departments, hospitals, physicians, etc.
- Stokes Reynolds currently coordinates health care in Stokes County
- Time is now to move forward to develop the needed health care in Stokes County

Ms. Wendi Uselton
109 King Circle
Danbury, NC

Ms. Uselton spoke regarding the following:

- Most of what I planned to say has already been said
- Impressed with quick response received when having to go to the Stokes Reynolds Emergency Room and the fact of knowing who is taking care of me
- Impressed with the citizens of Stokes County who take pride in their own self reliance and the fact that the people of Stokes County take care of themselves
- All components of the hospital are Stokes County's "community hospital"
- People work at Stokes Reynolds because they believe in Stokes Reynolds
- Urge the County to maintain some element of control
- Have heard very good comments about HMC as a managing company

Ms. Jane Priddy-Charlieville
105 King Circle
Danbury, NC

Ms. Priddy-Charlieville spoke regarding the following:

- The topic being discussed tonight is very important as you can see by the number of people who have come out in support of the hospital
- County has an opportunity to make health care better in Stokes County
- Echo the comments already made tonight
- All four components mentioned by Chairman Walker are all very important parts of Stokes County health care
- In order for Stokes County health care to work, everyone must work together
- Believe in Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital
- County needs to stay in control of what happens in Stokes County
- Stokes County is unique
- When looking for the answers, don't look at what everybody else is doing, look at what we do best in Stokes County and you will find your answers
- Stokes County has qualified people that can bring this situation together for success

- Believe Stokes Reynolds can be profitable
- Stokes County has the opportunity with this new management company for change and that change can result in a positive direction for Stokes County
- Reiterated the need to “Stay in control”
- As a Board of Commissioners, your top priorities are health, education, and public safety
- Every citizen in Stokes County deserves the best available health care

Ms. Jane Humphries

3181 Rosebud Road
Walnut Cove, NC

Ms. Humphries spoke regarding the following:

- Finished nursing school and chose to stay at Stokes Reynolds
- Have worked in several areas at Stokes Reynolds and JRJones
- Have cared for many Stokes County citizens
- Have witnessed quality care being given to all patients
- Hope to be able to continue to care for Stokes County patients

Ms. Kim Palmer

6741 NC 66 HWY S
King, NC

Ms. Palmer spoke regarding the following:

- Keep in mind that this meeting is about the future of Stokes County and not a political contest
- This is about the future for our children and their children
- For years, elected officials have always looked at issues as “now” and not the “future”
- You now have the chance to change how this county looks at the future
- Need to be progressive to find new businesses
- If we have no hospital, we have no place for our children who wish to enter the medical field to come back to work in this County
- Need to find a way to keep all the facilities operating in Stokes County
- Great place to work that provides quality care to the citizens of Stokes County
- Some of the elderly will not go to Forsyth County for medical care
- Take time to visit each facility and ask questions about health care in Stokes County before you make a decision
- Find ways to promote the growth of the medical facilities in Stokes County
- Continue to make Stokes County a place that we are all proud
- Elected as County Commissioners to make the best decision for our county, its citizens, and our children’s future
- You are the voice of citizens and we are depending on you to make the right decisions

Ms. Brittney Palmer
6741 NC 66 HWY S
King, NC

Ms. Palmer spoke regarding the following:

- Youngest person attending the public hearing tonight, need to get young people involved
- Employed at JRJones, currently attending East Carolina, with hopes to becoming a PA and returning to Stokes County to work
- Speaking in support of keeping Stokes Reynolds Hospital and JRJones Facility open for public use
- Both facilities provide quality care
- Citizens who can't afford to pay for health care or have no health insurance, have no other place to go other than the Emergency Room
- Without these facilities, people in Stokes County would have nowhere to go for medical care except for the local health department
- Believe the County needs two critical access care centers as we have now, one operating room, and possibly find private management to take over the long term care facility
- From January to April 2010, JRJones saw on an average of 678 patients a month
- There are 75+ neighborhoods in King, significant traffic with Highway #52 and future I73 that needs medical care
- JRJones serves as a perfect facility to stabilize a critical patient before transporting to Forsyth or Baptist
- Stokes County needs to provide adequate health care facilities for all citizens of Stokes County

Mr. Lamar Tillman
PO Box 624
226 Grace Stone Drive
King, NC

Mr. Tillman spoke regarding the following:

- Stokes Reynolds facilities are needed in Stokes County
- Have used the facilities and have been very pleased with the care provided by the facilities
- Need to keep jobs in Stokes County
- Work to see that the facilities stay in Stokes County
- Make health care available to all citizens in Stokes County
- Outside management teams can do an extraordinary job in running health/long term care facilities
- Find the means to keep our facilities open and operating

Ms. Melody Bowman
1742 Delta Church Road
Sandy Ridge, NC

Ms. Bowman spoke regarding the following:

- Started at Stokes Reynolds as a CNA and came back to Stokes Reynolds after graduating nursing school
- Wants to be able to give back to Stokes County and be able to provide health care to all citizens of Stokes County
- Stokes Reynolds provides quality service and has an excellent staff
- If you haven't used the services provided by Stokes Reynolds' facilities, try and see for yourself the quality care that Stokes Reynolds can provide
- Need to focus on promoting health care in Stokes County
- Every patient is treated like "family"
- Need to keep jobs in Stokes County
- Time to make the right decision for everyone in Stokes County

Ms. Pam Tillman

113 Gayle Drive
King, NC

Ms. Tillman spoke regarding the following: (Spoke on behalf of Stokes Reynolds' employees)

- Stokes Reynolds Critical Care Access Hospital provides a bridge in Stokes County
 - Hospital is an unique "bridge" that has an indescribable value to this community
 - Both locations (King and Danbury) are critical in order for this "bridge" to stand
 - "Bridge" serves as a place where citizens drive to when they don't want to call an ambulance
 - Emergency Room serves as a "bridge" that provides a place where critical patients can be stabilized and transported to a larger facility
 - Hospital serves as a "bridge" for patients who wish to come back from a large hospital for one on one services
 - Hospital serves as a "bridge" for patients who have Alzheimer's
 - Hospital has served as a "bridge" for hospice patients and day care facility in the past
 - Hospital serves as a "bridge" for cancer treatment
 - Hospital serves as a "short bridge" for physical therapy
 - Hospital serves as a "bridge" for education
 - Hospital serves as a "bridge" for Emergency Services in Stokes County
- Please think about this "bridge" as decisions are made
- Think how important this "bridge" is regarding medical services in Stokes County
- Must keep that "bridge" standing
- One challenge that faces the hospital is recruitment of new physicians – physicians desire to work in new, modern facilities
- Possible options are on the table for a new hospital facility for this community
- Personally encourage the building of a new hospital
- A new facility will improve the recruitment of new physicians, grow services, and provide the best medical care available to the citizens of Stokes County
- On behalf of Stokes Reynolds, would be willing to speak to any organization regarding the services that can Stokes Reynolds can provide

Ms. Emily Moorefield
1565 Moorefield Road
Danbury, NC

Ms. Moorefield spoke regarding the following:

- Agree with the comments given by Pam Tillman tonight
- Stokes County needs all the facilities associated with Stokes Reynolds
- Right now there is an opportunity for Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital and JRJones to grow, but in order to grow, we must have financial resources to purchase new equipment, recruit new physicians and provide new services
- Citizens must support facilities in the County
- Staff at the facilities are a “family”
- That family can grow with financial support and support from the community
- Take an opportunity to look at all options to make the best decision possible

Ms. Anna Marie Mazzocchi
3810 Pinetop Road
Greensboro, NC

Ms. Mazzocchi spoke regarding the following:

- Originally from New York
- Drive from Greensboro 50 miles each way to work with wonderful, down to earth people in an underserved community as a primary care provider
- Wonderful place to work and very appreciated by the patients in this area
- Wonderful dedicated staff to work with at Stokes Reynolds
- Need for new facilities in order to recruit providers
- Would like to continue to work in the area

Ms. Janet Whitt
902 N Main Street
Danbury, NC

Ms. Whitt spoke regarding the following:

- Would love to be able to work at Stokes Reynolds
- Speaking on behalf of my mother Vera Whitt, the late Dr. Flores and Dr. Zarate who I feel believe in what I am speaking about
- Health care is an ever changing environment
- We, as an organization, must move forward, if not, we will only move backwards
- Sometimes a different approach can make all the difference in the world
- A new for-profit hospital is essential for our survival
- A for-profit hospital will attract new physicians, new technology and new services
- This county needs a for-profit hospital

Board members expressed appreciation to those in attendance for taking their time to come out to express their concerns, support and ideas about health care in Stokes County and the facilities of Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Walker entertained a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Inman moved to adjourn the Public Hearing. Vice Chairman Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

Jimmy Walker
Chairman