

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the City of Huntington Park
Health and Education Commission
held February 1, 2007**

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The Special Meeting was called to order at 5:25 p.m. by Chairman Loya. Present: Commissioners Arlene Savage, Rosa Perez and Chairman Ric Loya. Absent: Joe Englanoff and Jorge Morales. Also in attendance were Director of Community Development Henry Gray, Assistant Planner Albert Fontanez, Council Member Ofelia Hernandez, and Recording Secretary Genny Ochoa.

Minutes of the Meeting held on January 22, 2007:

A motion was made by Perez, seconded by Savage, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 22, 2007. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Loya introduced Mr. Felipe Aguirre, Vice Mayor of the City of Maywood. Mr. Aguirre expressed his support to Community and Mission Hospitals, as well as the community, and urged that the hospitals' urgent care services not be closed to the community as has been reported.

On behalf of the Health and Education Commission, Chairman Loya read a statement on 1) the status of the reported plan to close the urgent care clinic at Mission Hospital and intention to expand the emergency room at Community Hospital; and 2) the Commission's goal of ensuring that the hospital "continue to provide essential healthcare services to the Huntington Park community and to the Southeast." Mr. Loya announced that the hospitals' owner, Dr. Edward Rubin, had informed staff that he would not be attending tonight's Special Meeting at the advice of his legal counsel.

Public Appearances:

Mario Beltran, Representative of State Senator Ron Calderon (400 N. Montebello Blvd., Ste. 100, Montebello, CA 90640), expressed the Senator's concern for the closure of urgent care clinic at Mission Hospital as these services are very much needed in the community. Mr. Beltran further expressed his disappointment in Dr. Rubin's absence and stated that on behalf of Senator Calderon, he looks forward to meeting with Dr. Rubin to urge him and his hospital administration to take seriously the concerns of the community and Senator Calderon.

Ricardo Lara, representing State Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez, stated that Assembly Speaker Nuñez is committed to working with the hospital staff and management to continue to provide needed urgent care services to the community.

Yvonne Correa, Huntington Park resident, asked if, as a member of the community, there was anything she could do to assist in maintaining emergency and affordable health care services in the community.

Sandra Jimenez, representing Community and Mission Hospitals' employees, expressed the employees' concerns for the hospitals' financial status and "deteriorating quality health care." Ms. Jimenez added that hospital employees have a right to be informed of Dr. Rubin's plans for the hospitals.

Lisette Perez, employee of Community and Mission Hospitals, came forward and shared her personal experience in seeking emergency medical treatment, and emphasized the importance of affordable urgent health care services available to the community.

Francisco Garcia, chief contract negotiator for the hospitals' employees, expressed concern for the hospitals' financial problems, including, but not limited to, employee benefits, wages, and working conditions, lack of medical equipment and supplies, and the possible closure of the urgent care clinic at Mission Hospital, which would reduce the community's health care available to the community. Mr. Garcia called for Dr. Rubin "to be a good community partner and employer."

Discussion on investigation of Community and Mission Hospitals problems/issues:

Chairman Loya announced that the Commission had received a communication from Dr. Rubin that he would not be able to attend tonight's meeting because his legal counsel can not attend but that Dr. Rubin would be able to attend a meeting anytime on Tuesday, February 6, 2007.

Chairman Loya stated that he would like entered into the record a Notice of Deficiency issued by the State Department of Health Services (DHS) in December 2006. Chairman Loya stated that some of the items in the Notice of Deficiency included:

- 1) Critical need to improve the nurse to patient ratio;
- 2) problems with blood availability; and
- 3) lack of supplies for heart patients.

Council Member Hernandez stated that she wishes to communicate and work with hospital administration to find a solution to the hospital problems.

Chairman Loya presented the following questions for Dr. Rubin from a prepared statement:

- 1) What is the status of the Urgent Care Clinic at Mission Hospital? We are hearing mixed stories again. Is it open or closed? (Hospital officials announced that they would close the clinic on February 1st). When do you plan to close it?
- 2) What will happen to patients in our community if you close the Urgent Care Clinic and have not yet expanded the Emergency Room to accommodate those displaced patients?
- 3) Do you have a plan to alert the public about the closure of the Urgent Care Clinic? Can you describe this plan and the various means by which you intend to communicate with the public?

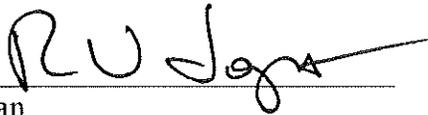
- 4) Why are you planning to close the Urgent Care Clinic?
- 5) Am I correct that many of the patients treated at the hospital are low-income and uninsured? How will they be affected if they no longer have access to lower cost care that used to be available at the Urgent Care Clinic?
- 6) I understand that you have opened, or are planning to open, a number of free-standing medical clinics? Why are you focusing resources on these new facilities even while the hospital is reportedly facing a dire shortage of resources?
- 7) Am I correct that you used to be the CEO at Lincoln Heights Medical Center? During your tenure, did the hospital file for bankruptcy? Can you explain what happened?
- 8) We have heard that your hospital has been unable to meet payroll in recent times – that is, that the paychecks of your employees and physicians have bounced when they attempted to cash them at the bank. Can you explain what is going on? What steps have you taken to address this problem? How can we be assured that the hospital is pursuing a responsible plan to ensure that it is on sound financial footing?
- 9) As you well know, there is a growing shortage of urgent and emergency care services in South Los Angeles. Many ERs in nearby areas, including Centinella, have closed down. How will the closure of the Urgent Care Clinic affect this growing shortage of emergency care?
- 10) As you know, many leaders in this community and SEIU United Healthcare Workers – your employees – made enormous efforts to address the hospital's financial problems by intervening with the Medicare Program and the California Medical Assistance Commission to secure higher revenues for the hospital. We took these efforts to ensure that this hospital is healthy and stable and provides quality care to our community. We expect that you would reciprocate these efforts by taking at least the following actions:

- Postponing the closure of the Urgent Care Clinic until we can thoroughly investigate its impact on our community;
- Providing this commission with a full set of financial documents for the hospital so that we can better understand its current financial position and future prospects (annual financial statements and recent monthly statements) As you had promised to do at a prior meeting. We realize you legally don't have to comply but you did offer and we went to bat for you.
- Removing your proposal to eliminate fully employer-paid healthcare coverage for your employees."

Following a discussion, a motion was made by Chairman Loya that the Commission request to the City Council that the Council direct the City Attorney and appropriate staff to investigate and monitor the legal and regulatory oversight issues of Community and Mission Hospitals, and report back to the Commission and City Council as soon as possible; seconded by Commissioner Perez, with the motion amended by adding "within the City's scope of authority." The motion was unanimously approved, as amended.

Chairman Loya further motioned that, as representative of the Health and Education Commission, he be authorized to confer with representatives of DHS on this matter, and to report back to the Commission at its next meeting on the hospital issues. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Perez and unanimously approved.

Chairman Loya adjourned the meeting at 6:13 p.m. to a Special Meeting on Tuesday, February 6, 2007.



Chairman



Secretary