

Between a rock and a hard place

Written by By Beth Blakeman Managing Editor
Friday, 10 December 2021 07:00



County commissioners respond to Mezoff letter

McKinley County Commissioners Billy Moore, Dist. 1, Genevieve Jackson, Dist 2, and Robert Baca, Dist. 3, all received copies of Dr. Kathleen Mezoff's letter about the hospital and chose Moore to speak to the *Sun* on their behalf.

Moore said Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services is the biggest issue commissioners face.

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“We have no control over operations of the hospital itself,” he explained.

“We own the building —We have a lease with RMCHCS —They have a lease with Community Hospital Corporation as a management company,” he continued.

“We keep going back and forth.”

Moore said the commissioners’ concerns are the same as those of the community.

Although he said the hospital is starting to have better communications, open meetings, more transparency, he admitted that it is not clear why some of the people who worked at the hospital have left, and was also not sure of the reason for the resignation of the latest board member.

He didn’t think anything had improved since RMCHCS doctors signed a bargaining agreement and Union of American Physicians and Dentists Organizing Director Rachel Flores told the *Sun* that the union is still in the process of forming a bargaining committee.

Moore said the McKinley County Commission doesn’t hold any chips to bargain with when it comes to Gallup citizens’ complaints about RMCHCS.

He pointed out that the lease signed in January is for 20 years.

“The only option we have as the County Commission is the lease,” he said.

If RMCHCS or the county wants to dissolve the lease, they are not required to give a reason, but they must give six months notice.

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Moore said taking action to break the lease could slow progress at the hospital, possibly by as much as a year.

He said he doesn't think anybody wants to start all over.

"How long do we have to go is the million dollar question," Moore said. "...haven't decided the answer to that ... hopefully ...we need to have an answer by the end of the year."

By Beth Blakeman
Managing Editor