

**MINUTES OF WELLS CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING OF OCTOBER 2, 2017**

CALL TO ORDER

Date: Monday, October 2, 2017
Time: 7:00 P.M.
Place: Council Chambers, Wells City Hall
525 Sixth Street Wells, Nevada
Type of Meeting: Special Meeting of City of Wells Board of Councilmen
Presiding Officer: Layla M. Walz, Mayor

ROLL CALL

Present: Layla M. Walz, Mayor
Cindy Fuller, Vice-Mayor
Laura Moore-DelRio, Councilwoman
Tamrah Jackson, Councilwoman
Yvonne Stuart, Councilwoman

Absent: None

Quorum: Yes

Staff Present: Debra Campbell, Senior Citizen Director
Heather Iveson, Utility Clerk
Sherry Justus, Deputy Clerk
Jolene M. Supp, City Manager/Clerk
Patti Zander, Deputy Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Walz led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance

CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

There were none.

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION ON MEDICAL CENTER MANAGEMENT AND CARE
OPTIONS TO INCLUDE SERVICES OFFERED AND HOURS OF OPERATION.
CITIZENS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND**

Supp declared a conflict of interest as her daughter has been contacted by both of the providers and Supp stepped out of the room. Walz began that a few weeks ago, a decision was made to pursue a contract with Nevada Rural Health Centers for health care at the Wells clinic. Since that time, Walz has had second thoughts and wanted a chance for the Council to review the contract to make sure this is best for the community.

Walz personally had an incident with NRHC since the decision was made. Walz has guardianship of her grandmother. An incident occurred where her grandmother had dislocated or broke a rib. Walz called NRHC to make her an appointment and after being on hold for six minutes, was told that the earliest appointment for a new patient would be ten days out but she could be seen in Carlin right away. Walz stated she could take her to Carlin the next morning. The Carlin provider called Walz that afternoon and told Walz not to come, that he could not help her, did not have the equipment to do an x-ray and tomorrow was his last day on the job. Walz felt very uncomfortable with the service that was not provided. What really bothered Walz is that an appointment was made knowing an x-ray was needed and there was no x-ray machine at the facility. That is when Walz wondered if the right decision had been made as well as feedback received from the community and leaders in other communities. One of the councilmen in West Wendover was very displeased with NRHC and felt they were willing to make the sale and didn't always have the ability to follow through.

Stuart stated after reading the contract provided by NRHC, the \$40,000 fee that had been discussed was spread over twelve months as well as locking the City in for three years. Stuart does not think the City will ever get away from the \$40,000 fee plus utilities. Fuller had heartburn after reading the contract because Council was led to believe the \$40,000 could go away. The new contract states effective March 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018 Lessor shall provide monetary assistance in an amount not to exceed \$13,500 as well as monetary assistance to lessee in an amount not to exceed \$40,000 annually. The City has no control over how or where the \$40,000 annual payment is spent.

Walz had other concerns that the contract states a minimum of twenty four hours a week but were told there was potential for more days if needed. Walz thinks that should be in the contract. It also says the City will be responsible for maintenance of the x-ray machine which NRHC had stated they would provide. The default section says nothing about the City being able to default on the contract based on the lack of coverage or services. NRHC also said they would provide tele-medicine and tele-mental health but that is not in the contract.

Paul Bottari stated he is not a resident, is a businessman but Wells is his community and wondered what the alternative was. Walz stated a second provider, Dave White, who is a for profit entity and been in Elko for several years, is opening a clinic in Spring Creek as well as managing the Golden Health facility. Initially White had contacted Supp and Walz a few years ago looking to staff the clinic but lacked a provider. Now White thinks he has a strong local provider and wants to be here. Stuart added that White is not

requesting \$40,000 a year. Walz continued that some of the initial discussion that led to choosing NRHC was because of their sliding pay scale for low income patients and the services they claimed to offer. Walz looked at the requirements to qualify for the sliding scale and they are very extensive. White was also willing to accept Medicare and Medicaid and a lot of the doctors in Elko do not.

Elaine Swanson stated she would be more than happy to have Veronica Supp at the clinic as she is local, her husband is local and they have invested in the community. Rusty Tybo agreed with Swanson and thinks it is important to hire locally. Tybo continued that one entity wants the City of Wells to make the investment and the other wants to invest in the community. The last situation with NNRH as a provider, left everyone hanging.

Fuller asked members of the audience if they would go to the clinic or keep their current doctors. Marjean Kidner stated that everyone is going elsewhere and have their own doctors but would be willing to stay local. Moriah Manning stated as a mother, she would love to have the clinic available for her kids when they are sick. Walz stated it is imperative to get health care in Wells. It is cost prohibitive when a whole day is taken off of work to travel out of town and the time waiting for a prescription.

Bottari asked about a pharmacy and Walz stated both are offering limited pharmacy services with pre-packaged antibiotics on site. Walz stated that when NNRH was staffing the clinic, had made the same promise of dispensing medication and was never able to. NRHC is doing that in several locations and is not sure if White is but sounds like he has someone to help set it up. Walz stated that is something that could be put in the contract. DelRio thinks that is a make or break situation. When you take your child to the doctor for an ear infection or strep throat, you expect to get treated and get your prescription not have to go to the doctor in Wells then drive to Elko to get your prescription. Walz stated this was not an action item so there would be no vote to take any action. Walz stated she is hearing the public is wanting the private practice five days a week.

Jackson wanted to add that another reason NRHC was chosen was because White stated if he was not profitable he will not stay and NRHC was committed to stay. Jackson felt the \$40,000 was misrepresented as was the x-ray machine as well as several other things. Jackson thinks there are drawbacks with the other option that need to be looked at before signing a long term contract. Walz thinks the Council was thrilled with what NRHC had to offer but after getting the contract, realized it was obvious they weren't willing to offer everything they said they would. DelRio stated the selling point for her was the tele-medicine and now that isn't an option. The contract also states the City would maintain the City's tele-medicine equipment and x-ray equipment and that is not something the City has. Jackson added that NRHC stated they would be willing to offer x-ray equipment which was again misrepresented.

Denny Stanhope was surprised there was no representative from NRHC at the meeting and wondered if they had been contacted and informed of the meeting. Walz stated she

did not inform them because she felt the Council had been coerced at the last meeting. NRHC had an answer for everything and were willing to say what the Council wanted to hear. Walz wanted to be able to have a frank discussion about the contract and about what had been promised and not in the contract. Walz stated the next step is to tell NRHC the community is concerned service cannot be provided five days a week and the concern about the tele-mental health, x-ray machine and tele-medicine equipment and give them an opportunity to respond. They were pretty adamant they will not provide service more than three days a week. Stanhope was at the meeting and felt the Council was intimidated. Stanhope did not feel good about the whole deal. Stanhope stated they made it seem the \$40,000 was negotiable but doesn't appear that way in the contract. Walz stated the original contract was revised concerning the \$40,000 and came back with a pro-rated monthly amount for the first year.

Walz continued that this will be on the next agenda and brought back for action and is hearing from the community that NRHC is not necessarily the best option. Fuller added there is no fail safe and nothing that can be done if NRHC doesn't provide what they say they will. They have the option to go back and fix any problem but the City doesn't have that option. Fuller stated the City needs that fail safe, has done this before and everything needs to be spelled out in the contract. Fuller would rather have nothing, knowing there is nothing rather than being promised three days a week and only have one day. Walz stated it is impossible for a provider to build a clientele if they are not reliable. Stuart suggested the City write their own contract and have the provider sign it instead of the provider writing the contract and the City signing it. The City needs to list what is expected. Walz stated that is something to consider.

CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

LAYLA M. WALZ, Mayor

ATTEST:

JOLENE M. SUPP, City Manager/Clerk