



MORROW COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

80 North Walnut Street, Suite A
Mount Gilead, Ohio 43338

Commissioners:
Thomas E. Whiston
Burgess W. Castle
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March 11, 2020

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Morrow County Hospital Board of Trustees

c/o Chad Miller, Chief Executive Officer
651 West Marion Road
Mount Gilead, OH 43338

OhioHealth Corporation

c/o Stephen Markovich, MD, Chief Executive Officer
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: THE FUTURE OF MORROW COUNTY HEALTHCARE

Mr. Miller and Mr. Markovich:

We are disappointed that the OhioHealth Corporation threatened to close the Morrow County Hospital if Morrow County won the pending lawsuit. The purpose of this letter is to tell the public, and you, that these threats are unacceptable. The County is committed to its citizens and to good government. Threats will not stand in the way.

We propose a way forward: OhioHealth immediately ends its operation of the hospital so an entity dedicated to *increasing* services can take its place. This will end the lawsuit. While the Hospital Board and OhioHealth consider this offer, the County will explore all options for increasing service, including leasing unused county space to healthcare providers. The County must do what is best for Morrow County citizens.

A. You Threatened To Shut Down Our Hospital If OhioHealth Loses Its Preferential Contract

On February 28, 2020, counsel for OhioHealth called our attorneys. During that conversation OhioHealth explicitly threatened to remove healthcare options for Morrow County citizens. OhioHealth said that if the County sold the hospital, then OhioHealth's primary care physicians would be ordered to stop referring patients to the hospital. Because OhioHealth has most primary care doctors in Morrow County under contract, hospital revenue would crater without their referrals and it wouldn't have the money to keep the doors open.

This was an alarming and unprecedented threat. After the call, our attorneys sent a follow up email to avoid any confusion. We asked OhioHealth if it would **"stop sending patients to the hospital, causing it to close,"** as heard on the phone. (*See Enclosed*). OhioHealth confirmed the threat: **"[W]e believe patients are best served staying with the OhioHealth family."** (*See Enclosed*). That language is clear. If any entity paid a fair price for the hospital, then OhioHealth would keep patients in the "OhioHealth family" rather than send them to the Morrow County Hospital. As a result, the hospital would close. This is outrageous.

B. You Have Been Taking Patients From The Hospital And Serving Them in Your Other Facilities

But in many ways, OhioHealth has already taken steps to close the hospital. Over the last three years the Morrow County hospital has seen fewer and fewer Morrow County citizens. In fact, the hospital's Morrow County market share—its service within Morrow County related to its competitors—dropped approximately 20% over that time. In contrast, OhioHealth's market share has increased a proportional amount. The Hospital Board has a report from the Ohio Hospital Association, as well as other data, that confirms these facts. That report and similar information must be released to the public.

Referring rural healthcare to Columbus is the OhioHealth playbook. That happened with Southeastern Med in Cambridge, Ohio and Berger Hospital in Circleville, Ohio, to name a few. These are rural communities just like ours. And just like in those places, OhioHealth hurt the community by decreasing services to benefit its Columbus campus. The game must change.

Morrow County needs an organization dedicated to *increasing* services for patients, not threatening to close the hospital and pocketing the difference. The current management agreement does not work. That is why the hospital should be sold to the highest bidder committed to increasing services. An organization that owns the hospital would be committed to increasing services—just as the County owns the building now and is committed to increasing services.

C. We Need To Protect Healthcare And You Can Be Part Of It

There is a reasonable path forward. OhioHealth must end the current management agreement. In response, the hospital will be sold to the highest bidder *that promises to increase services*. OhioHealth would be free to open an urgent care facility in the County, or whatever it feels is in its best interest. This way, everyone gets what they want: citizens receive more service and OhioHealth receives an urgent care.

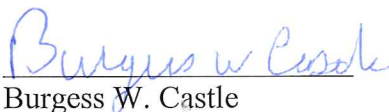
Finally, the County is taking steps to increase healthcare services for Morrow County. The County will lease space to any healthcare entity willing to provide services to Morrow County citizens. That may include unused space in the Morrow County Hospital, as well as other facilities. Simply put, Morrow County citizens deserve access to healthcare.

Sincerely,

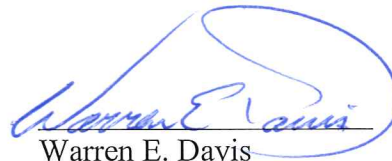
BOARD OF MORROW COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



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MCC/ch

Enclosures

Matthew R. Aumann

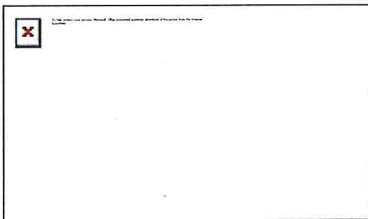
From: Mark Landes
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 5:33 PM
To: 'Steven W. Tigges'
Cc: Matthew R. Aumann
Subject: RE: Morrow County Hospital [IWOV-DMS.FID55130]

Steve,

Sorry you feel that I mischaracterized anything. You've not said what, if anything, I got wrong from our conversation. I really was trying to get it right, and thought I did.

Given that the Hospital Board has given over its functions to OhioHealth, I am not sure how helpful is your suggestion that we "work out with the Hospital Board...." I would like OhioHealth to be part of the solution, and to get credit for being part of the solution.

Let's figure out how to do that.



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From: Cynthia Piett <piett@litoiohio.com> **On Behalf Of** Steven W. Tigges
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 4:51 PM
To: Mark Landes <mlandes@isaacwiles.com>
Cc: Steven W. Tigges <tigges@litoiohio.com>
Subject: Morrow County Hospital [IWOV-DMS.FID55130]

Mark,

I reached out to you in good faith in an effort to open a productive dialogue and am disappointed in your mischaracterization of our conversation. First, OhioHealth physicians always do what is in the best interest of their patient, which in considering the number of facilities and scope of services offered by OhioHealth, we believe patients are best served staying within the OhioHealth family. To the extent OhioHealth's relationship with the Hospital were to change, OhioHealth remains committed to the citizens of Morrow County and has given no indications otherwise. Second, OhioHealth's goal in every community is to keep care local when possible. We have continued that commitment in Morrow County by stabilizing the physician practices and ensuring access to primary care services (which commitment will not change) and by rationalizing hospital

services that makes sense for the community. Finally, the Commissioners' request for the "evaluation" is something you need to work out with the Hospital Board of Trustees.

I regret that we were unable to open a productive dialogue. OhioHealth will continue to work under the management agreement with the Hospital Board of Trustees.

Steven W. Tigges
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Matthew R. Aumann

From: Cynthia Piett <piett@litohio.com> on behalf of Steven W. Tigges <tigges@litohio.com>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 4:51 PM
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Matthew R. Aumann

From: Mark Landes
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 2:34 PM
To: W. Tigges Steven
Cc: Matthew R. Aumann
Subject: Morrow County Hospital

Steve,

Thanks for the conversation on Friday. I'm sure we can work together. And it sounds as if we all want this thing resolved.

To move forward, I want to make sure we are clear on the points to share with our clients:

- To share with the Commissioners:
 - OhioHealth, if no longer in charge of the Morrow County Hospital, through its primary care physicians, will stop sending patients to the hospital, causing it to close. Hence, the county commissioners should not challenge whether the Hospital Board properly contracted with OhioHealth to operate the Morrow County Hospital.
 - OhioHealth plans on decreasing services but wants to keep the hospital so it can maintain a foothold in Morrow County should it be useful in the future.
 - The Commissioners should spend ~\$40,000 to get an independent evaluation to understand the price offered by OhioHealth. We understand that the Hospital Board spent \$380,000 in tax dollars on an evaluation, but it has not been shared with the commissioners or the public. The commissioners are thereby and understandably concerned about whether the evaluation is truly independent.

- To share with OhioHealth:

- The Commissioners want what is best for Morrow County: the most service and the best price.
- The Commissioners would like to consider the valuation already paid for with public dollars (which they have requested multiple times).
- The Commissioners are open to receive any and all information provided by OhioHealth to explain the operation of the hospital and hospital-related decisions.

I'll probably talk to the Commissioners at some point this week or next. Please let me know if I missed anything.

Thanks,

Mark