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From: Jeff Comer [mailto:jcomer@sitkahospital.org]

Sent: Friday, January 02, 2015 4:24 PM

To: Mark Gorman; Angela McGraw; Wendy Fowler; Celeste Tydingco; Robin Koutchak; Mim McConnell; Jay Sweeney

Subject: Statement

Hello everyone,

Given the event today I think you will understand I am not able to come to the Assembly meeting in person. I have prepared the following statement to be read in my absence. I am also fine with it going to the media and employees and think it probably should as I have been contacted by the media and many employees.

Jeff

I regret that I cannot be here at the Assembly meeting in person tonight, but as many of you may have heard I was physically assaulted today and further attacked as I was injured on the ground. As a result, I am still quite shaken up and do not feel safe coming to this meeting in person.

As anyone in the interview process knows my wife and I came to Sitka with the intent of becoming a part of the community, adopting a child, and raising a family here. We wanted this so much we came at substantially lower salaries and left our home and our family in Arizona which is the state in which I was born and raised. I did not come here for financial reasons, or because I needed a job, or to build my resume to go to bigger positions. We willingly gave up everything we had in Arizona to be part of Sitka.

Unfortunately, from the time my wife and I arrived we have endured constant verbal abuse, disrespect, and rudeness from many people. I am tremendously saddened by the treatment my wife and I have received and the assault today is simply far too much.

In the interview process I was very clear that I did not want to do turnarounds of troubled facilities any longer. I was assured this hospital is not troubled and, although it has challenges, it is doing well. Unfortunately, the hospital has many problems that have been growing for the last few years. Although this job is different from what was communicated to me I have worked extremely hard in a very short period of time to address the problems that should have been resolved a few years ago. I have worked this hard simply to help - to help protect the hospital's future and to protect the jobs of the staff.

I am glad I have been able to deal with many problems and enact a solid short term and long term plan. But ultimately, like virtually all other small community hospitals, Sitka Community can no longer survive as a stand alone hospital, particularly in a town that has two hospitals who are both struggling. Sitka Community no longer has the long term financial strength to meet it's obligations nor the supporting infrastructure to remain in compliance with the tremendously complicated regulatory environment that grows daily. The hospital has faced tough times before, but not like today. Sitka Community must merge with a partner to survive long term. I encourage you to take my departure as the opportunity for meaningful discussions with Searhc about how the two facilities can join. In my experience it is only through a united approach that the best care for Sitka can result.

I had hoped to make my departure an easy transition and was even willing to forgo compensation for the remainder of my contract to help the hospital's financial situation. Given the physical assault I endured today I can no longer remain in Sitka and will be leaving this weekend. Even with this I am still willing to be available to help the City and Hospital as needed, but it will now have to be from Arizona.

It is with the greatest sadness that I leave for simply trying to help...

For the many of you who have been welcoming and friendly we will miss you. I also wish the Mayor, Assembly, Board, City Administration, and the many positive and caring employees at Sitka Community Hospital the best.

Jeff and Mariah