

RCH,

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pay from time-and-a-half to “triple pay.”

The measures to address retention apply to specified nurses maintaining employment at RCH through the next pay period running from March 27-June 30.

With demand for healthcare workers at an all-time high, RCH Chief Nursing Officer Judy Withers said the hospital is dealing with other healthcare entities offering RCH staff incentives to work elsewhere.

“I told my folks, ‘Look, there’s no way we can give you a sign-on bonus, we can’t pay your house payment, make your car payment...pay your school loans,’” she said.

Fielding employees’ concerns, Withers approached the board to address the nursing crisis, and offered suggestions including a \$4 an hour raise for several employees.

“We’ve got to retain our nurses,” she told the board. “I don’t know what you (RCH Board) would be able to do... but we’ve got to do something.”

She said she is currently receiving notices from nurses who are leaving RCH - some of which are being offered up to \$10 more an hour than they are presently making.

“This is the highest (rate of resignations) I’ve had forever...even all through COVID,” Withers said.

Withers said after dealing with the challenges of COVID, and with recent discussions over possible cuts in benefits, some employees “just want to feel appreciated.”

Dr. Rick Miles said some nurses are presently working for \$11 an hour, and can literally make more money “in fast food.”

He told the board he is aware of a nurse working at a nearby hospital for \$90 an hour.

“The house is on fire,” Dr. Miles said metaphorically. “You’ve got to put the fire out.”

RCH Board of Directors Vice-Chairperson Daryl Hammond, and board members Stuart Carman and Steven Fletcher asked several, detailed questions about not only how incentives would affect the hospital financially, but how they would be implemented, and what the accountability process would include.

Hammond also queried the board about how RCH employees not receiving incentives would be affected.

Board Chairman Neal Dalton said he is concerned people

leaving RCH may find “the grass is not always greener.”

Withers said some employees who left have signed multi-year contracts with other entities.

“So we’re not going to get them back...anytime soon,” she said.

With tact and transparency, Withers told the board she felt if incentives are put into place, “some will be OK with it...but I think the ones that are going to leave are going to leave.”

“They’re looking more long term, she said. “If they can make \$10 more an hour...even for just three years... that’s what they’re going to do.”

Withers said she thinks incentives serve as recognition of “hard work” by dedicated employees.

“I just hope I don’t lose any more,” she said.

Fletcher made a motion to initiate the incentives for a 13-week period.

The motion was seconded by RCH Board Member Winfrey Bates, and approved by the entire board.

Hammond said he hopes employee retention will be “a front burner item” for the hospital’s new CEO.

# Unity Martial Arts Competes in IKF Spring Classic



Pictured not in any specific order; Ralphie Patterson, Mckayla Patterson, Emma Grider, Anakin Mondie, Riley Mondie, Landon Campbell, Nathan Dehart, Conner Barnett, and Matthew Wethington.

Members of Unity Martial Arts competed in the 5th Annual IKF Spring Classic in Myrtle Beach, S.C. on Saturday March 19th. Several members won their divisions, including: Anakin and Riley Mondie, and Emma Grider. They competed in the 14-16 year old age bracket for the PKB (point kickboxing) competition. As well as, Landon Campbell, who won the grand championship belt in the 14-16 year bracket in PMT (point muiy thai).

Other members

that competed in very competitive matching over the weekend include: Nathan DeHart, Conner Barnett, and Matthew Wethington.

We are very proud of all of our students for their hard work and dedication. We are eager to begin training to compete at the World Classic hosted in Orlando, Florida in July.

Special thanks to all of our sponsors: Reel Java & Creamery, Hayes HVAC-HMO4361, Just Teasin’ Hair Salon, Morgan

Trucking, Trent’s Plumbing and Electric, Cash-Tansom Chism, Dunamis Fitness, S.P.A.R.C. Recovery.

We appreciate having people and businesses from our communities pour back into our students.

If you want to help sponsor the next fights and grow the sport of kickboxing in our area, please reach out to Head Coach, Ralphie Patterson at 270-585-1949



Dr. Rick Miles, left, listened as RCH Chief Nursing Officer Judy Withers, right spoke about nurse retention last week.

# Ribbon Cutting For Lock-N-Stow



A ribbon cutting was held Friday for a new, 9,000 square-foot Lock-N-Stow business owned by Tom and Joyce Holt, and Todd and Stacy Wilson. The climate-controlled storage is located at the intersection of Lakeway and W. Steve Wariner Dr. in Russell Springs. Local dignitaries joined the Russell County Chamber of Commerce in welcoming the new business.



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