

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD

State of Minnesota  
County of Kanabec  
Office of the County Coordinator

**September 29, 2020**

The Kanabec County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing at 6:00pm on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 pursuant to adjournment with the following Board Members present: Gene Anderson, Kathi Ellis, Dennis McNally, Craig Smith, and Les Nielsen. Others Present: Welia CEO Randy Ulseth, Doctor Peter Donner, Board Clerk Kris McNally, Recording Secretary Kelsey Schiferli.

The meeting was held at The Grand Event Center in Mora, MN in order to allow for social distancing due to COVID-19. The meeting was also held via WebEx for anyone wishing to attend virtually. Approximately 75 people attended the hearing in person, and approximately 10 people attended the hearing virtually.

The Chairperson led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A notice of public hearing was posted in the courthouse lobby, on the county website, in the Kanabec County Times on September 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>, and in the Advertiser on September 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>. County Coordinator Kris McNally read the following public notice aloud:

## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO SEEK PUBLIC INPUT ON THE TOPIC OF POTENTIAL PRIVATIZATION OF THE KANABEC HOSPITAL**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Kanabec County Board of Commissioners intends to seek public input on the topic of potential privatization of the Kanabec Hospital (dba Welia Health). A public hearing will be held on this matter on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2020 at 6:00pm at The Grand Event Center at 2025 Rowland Rd, Mora, MN 55051.

All persons interested may appear and be heard at the time and place set forth above, or may file written comments with the County Coordinator prior to the date of the hearing set forth above.

For more information, contact the office of the Kanabec County Coordinator at 320-679-6440 or visit the Public Notices Section of the Kanabec County website at [www.kanabecounty.org](http://www.kanabecounty.org)

**6:03pm** – The Chairperson called for public comment. Those that responded included:

Gerry McCabe	Comments regarding Allina, the current
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	organization of the hospital, and the hospital board.
Larry Brettingen	Comments regarding the history and background of the hospital, clinics, and affiliation with Allina.
Dave Chmiel	Comments regarding the benefit of the hospital to the county.
Mike Johnson	Comments regarding insurance coverage.
Charlie Strickland Jr.	Comments regarding retirement plans for Welia staff.
Jean & Troy Mork	Comments regarding the presentation of potential privatization given to Welia staff.
Chuck Flanders	Comments regarding potential benefits of privatization for both the hospital and county residents.
Karen Renaud	Comments regarding support of privatization as a 22 year employee of Welia and county resident.
Jane Schmidt	Comments regarding the hospital board, and the importance of the hospital to the community.
Brian Niskanen	Comments regarding hospital facility, staff, and recruitment.
Erika Nelson	Comments regarding employee benefits and affiliation with Allina.
Kayla	Comments regarding potential changes to the cost of services and specialists.
Vicki Milbradt	Comments regarding benefits of the county owning the hospital.
Richard Anderson, via WebEx	Comments regarding employment, furloughed staff, and employee contracts.
Evangeline Tutt, via WebEx	Comments regarding concerns from the Nurse's Association including employee benefits, benefits to county residents, and lack of information.
Tom Mullen	Comments regarding affiliation with Allina and support of the privatization of Welia.
Jean Mork	Comments regarding hospital administration, and support of privatization.
Name not provided	Comments regarding keeping the hospital local, and compliments to the organization.
Carl Nordquist	Comments regarding first right of refusal if a larger hospital wanted to buy Welia in the future.

Name not provided	Comments regarding PERA, 457b, and other retirement options for hospital employees.
Name not provided	Comments regarding the hospital being a great place to work and PERA.

The Chairperson read letters of public comment submitted by Jon Sanford, Ronald Peterson, and Robert Jensen.

**7:55pm** – The Chairperson closed public comment.

**7:56pm** – The Chairperson adjourned the public hearing.

The Kanabec County Board of Commissioners will meet again in regular session on Tuesday October 6, 2020 at 9:00am in basement meeting rooms 3&4 of the Kanabec County Courthouse.

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chairperson of the Kanabec County Board of Commissioners,  
 Kanabec County, Minnesota

*Attest:* \_\_\_\_\_  
 Board Clerk