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Dosher to sell Nursing Center license

SOUTHPORT—After a 90-day review and input from four groups of constituents, the Doshier Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees voted on December 14, 2015 to sell the state-approved license for the Doshier Nursing Center.

The board reviewed three options: Do nothing, invest \$3-5 million to try to upgrade the Nursing Center, or sell the license. At no time did the board consider closing the 64-bed Nursing Center.

During the review period, a study committee of the board sought input from four groups: Families of Nursing Center residents, physicians, community leaders, and board trustees.

The decision to sell the license left the board with four conclusions:

First, current and future residents of the Nursing Center can look forward to a new and improved nursing facility in the community. An important part would be expanded physical and occupational therapy services—which many other skilled nursing facilities offer—that aren't available now in the current small space.

Second, one of the terms of sale is that the new nursing center be located in or within five miles of Smithville Township. Thus, south Brunswick County residents seeking this type of care would continue to be able to access it in the area.

Third, Doshier feels that Nursing Center employees are exceptional caregivers, and wants the new operator to continue their service at the new nursing center.

Fourth, the Nursing Center costs the hospital approximately \$1 million per year. Doshier says this operating loss is due to low government reimbursement for critical access hospitals with nursing centers and the lack of space for rehabilitation services. This expense would remain even if Doshier were to spend millions to try to upgrade the current facility. Trustees didn't want to jeopardize Doshier's future as an independent, community-owned hospital.

Doshier says that for current and future residents, the sale of the Nursing Center license will lead to a brighter future. The board sent an open letter to residents of Smithville Township on this subject and it appears on the Doshier website at www.dosher.com.

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