

Clark makes plea for reinstatement at hospital board meeting

Nursing director says situation appears to be ‘calculated public humiliation’

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Longtime medical provider Shawna Clark, who was placed on paid administrative leave last month for adding something to her medical records in violation of Blue Mountain Hospital District policy, requested to be reinstated Thursday at the district’s board of director’s meeting.

Clark, a family nurse practitioner, said in a statement to the board that she accessed her own chart with a phlebotomist witnessing and put in an order in her provider’s name for fasting blood work that she said her provider had already ordered.

“I accessed my own medical record. After hours. When I had been checked in as a patient, my blood was drawn. And there were no orders, despite the fact that they were sent twice over the month prior by my provider,” she said.

Clark said the accessing of her own medical records was not what she was at the board meeting to dis-



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Family nurse practioner Shawna Clark addressed the hospital board Thursday at the Blue Mountain Hospital. Clark, who was placed on paid administrative leave in July, asked to be reinstated.

pute. She said she was witnessed accessing her records and that she knew she was violating an internal policy.

“I assumed that I would be given the reasonable opportunity to explain, which I was not given prior to being asked to leave the facility while I had two patients roomed and waiting,” she said.

Clark said she is not a safety



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Deborah Morris, director of nursing at Blue Mountain Hospital, addresses the hospital’s board Thursday during its monthly meeting.

concern and that she had given over nine years to the district.

“I’ve been loyal,” she said. “You have always got way more out of me work-wise than you’ve ever paid me for. And I am asking for reinstatement. I believe I deserve it. This is not a competency thing. It’s not a competency issue.”

Thursday before the meeting, Clark said she had met with district CEO Derek Daly about a separation agreement.

“Derek and I have had several meetings and have attempted to work some something out. But there’s also the question of what type of privileges I’m allowed to have in our facility, other than ancillary services. So I’m not going to be able to provide the same level of service to my patients that I have been providing — that’s not acceptable. So I’m asking for reinstatement,” she said.

Board chair Amy Kreger thanked Clark for coming and said the board would need to talk about Clark’s statement in a closed executive session. The board took no immediate action.

Clark gave the board additional documents related to the incident, including a self-report of the incident to the Oregon Board of Nursing.

Clark said she was told by the hospital that if she did not self-report to the board of nursing that it would “look really bad.” Clark said she meets with the state board of nursing about the incident Oct. 8.

She said the nursing board meets the first week of the month and that they will not meet again until the first week of November to review her case.

Deborah Morris, hospital district director of nursing, said Clark

being placed on paid administrative leave appears to be “calculated public humiliation.”

“Why would you remove a provider in the middle of the day when they have patients waiting?” she said. “I’m sorry but this has created a lot of distrust within our organization.”

In a letter to the board, Morris said “justice does not appear to be administered equally within our organization.” Morris said five staff members told her they have accessed their medical records, or a family member’s medical record, without being reprimanded.

Morris said she supervised an employee she believed was engaging in an illegal activity and, despite numerous ongoing complaints, the employee was not terminated until many months after being spoken to about the activity.

“(Clark) was not a liability to the organization,” Morris said in the letter. “... It makes me believe that there must be some hidden agenda. I do not believe that the punishment fits the infraction. This situation has damaged trust within our organization along with damaging public perception regarding our hospital.”

Daly declined to discuss the issue, stating it is the protocol of the district to not comment on an active personnel matter.

County affirms public records request policy

Court forgoes payroll tax deferral

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant County Court said Wednesday that all public records requests to all county departments would need to go through county court members in the future.

The county adopted a public records policy Aug. 14, 2019.

Additionally, Grant County Commissioner Sam Palmer said that if one media organization asks for a reduction or waiver of fees, all other organizations should get fees waived.

Court moves to forgo payroll tax deferral

Laurie Wright, Grant County human resources manager, requested the court forgo payroll tax deferral, which would have allowed county employees to defer their social security tax payment temporarily.

Last month, she said, President Donald Trump issued a memorandum directing the Treasury Department to allow employers to defer payment of Social Security payroll taxes for employees making less than \$4,000 every two weeks.

Wright said the problem



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Grant County Justice of the Peace Kathy Stinnett requests funding to hire another employee Sept. 23 during a session of Grant County Court.

with allowing county employees to defer the payroll tax is that ultimately the employees would have to pay the money back.

Grant County Commissioner Jim Hamsher said allowing employees to defer the payroll tax would

“cause a hardship” in January when employees would be required to pay the money back.

Wright said allowing the deferral would double the deductions in the new year.

County Judge Scott Myers said the court voted “yes, to

say no” to allowing employees to defer the payroll tax.

In other county news:

- The court approved the renewal of its membership with the Association of Oregon Counties.
- The court approved the extension of its contract with

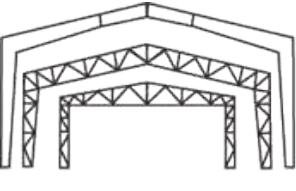
Blue Mountain Community College. Palmer pointed out a potential conflict of interest



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
County Roadmaster Allen Hickerson addresses Grant County Court Sept. 23.

as an alumni of BMCC. Myers said he appreciated him pointing that out, but he did not see a conflict of interest since he would not be benefiting from the vote.

- Grant County Justice of the Peace Kathy Stinnett requested funding for a part-time employee to assist with collections. The court approved the request.
- The court approved the Road Department’s request for the purchase of an electric snowplow.



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Grant County Republican Party

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Sheriff Candidates Glenn Palmer,
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S208893-1



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