

## September 2017 Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

**Will the hospital district build a new hospital building?**

The focus of St. Vincent Hospital administration and board of directors is to create a strong foundation for the future by improving financial performance, expanding services, and maintaining high-quality care for our community.

The U.S.D.A. loan monies for the construction of a new hospital are committed until 2021 which enables the hospital administration and board of directors time to strengthen the hospital's financial position and continue planning for the future. A new hospital building is not off the table and continues to be in consideration.

The hospital building was built in 1958, though there have been recent improvements made, there continue to be myriad challenges with the physical plant and utilization of the building.

Health care funding remains in a state of flux at both the federal and state levels, while our community needs evolve over time. The board of directors and staff are committed to providing cost-effective ways of making sure that the hospital facility meets the community's needs in an affordable way.

**Are the boilers no longer a problem at St. Vincent Hospital?**

There are two boilers that support St. Vincent Hospital. Prior contractors and a 2015 facility assessment consistently indicated that the boilers had reached the end of their useful life. New contractors were recently hired that provided a very different diagnosis on the boilers, indicating that although extensive repairs were needed, the boilers will continue to function now and in the foreseeable future.

The new contractor has inspected, repaired, tested and made system improvements to ensure the viability and safety of the boilers and a redundant heating system. These repairs permit us to be optimistic that hospital care for Lake County will not be interrupted due to a physical plant failure at St. Vincent Hospital. Also a focus for extensive repairs is the heat, ventilation and hot water delivery infrastructure throughout the building. Both the boilers and the infrastructure will be factors the board considers when determining whether to replace or refurbish the existing Hospital.

**What improvements has the hospital made for patient care and revenue?**

Two major improvements St. Vincent Hospital has made in the past year are increased ambulance staffing and re-opening inpatient care described below:

**Increased Ambulance Staffing:**

St. Vincent Hospital ambulance service responds to all 911 calls in Lake County. Increased staffing permits us to also provide consistent coverage for ground transfers to a higher level of care when our patients' medical conditions require it. The result is an improved experience and reduced wait-time for our patients, and increased revenue for the ambulance service.

**Inpatient Care:**

St. Vincent Hospital re-opened two inpatient beds in the second quarter of 2017. Since then we have served many patients from our community providing care – right here in their hometown. In recent months, there have been times when two beds have not been sufficient to serve our patients resulting in out-of-area hospital stays for those patients. It is hospital administration’s goal to open more beds to better serve our patients and their families in the later part of 2017. Dr. Lisa Zwerdinger is serving as a hospitalist for the inpatients and round-the-clock care is given by our dedicated team of nurses, paramedics, and certified nursing assistants.

**What are the areas of growth the hospital has experienced in 2017?**

St. Vincent Hospital is experiencing growth in nearly every department and the best financial performance it has had in years. August 2017 year to date (YTD) financial growth numbers are below, showing increases compared to August 2016.

ED Visits	14.4% increase
Radiology Procedures	9.4% increase
Lab Tests	27.6% increase
Ambulance Runs/Transfers	86.0% increase
Inpatient	90% increase (approx.)

**What is the relationship between Centura Health and St. Vincent Hospital?**

The board has approved a new affiliate agreement in September of 2017 after both parties opted to terminate the previous management agreement. The affiliation with Centura Health enables both organizations to improve health care locally through shared services. As an example, St. Vincent Hospital will receive value and assistance from Centura Health in buying/supply chain, telehealth, and pharmacy.

In September 2017, CEO Gary M. Campbell became an employee of the hospital district after serving his first ten months as hospital administrator under Centura Health. This provides the board of directors direct control over the CEO, whereas before Gary technically served both the board and Centura Health.

**What was the 5A mill levy vote for in 2015?**

The 5A ballot issue, as stated in the ballot language below, gave the board of directors broad authority to use revenues to improve community health care. Among other things, the intent was to support a 24/7 emergency room, laboratory, radiology/imaging and other hospital services at St. Vincent Hospital, which the board has done. It was also the intention of the hospital board to address sustaining hospital services and the need for a new facility to replace the aging hospital building. The hospital board remains focused on this issue, and is committed to providing a long-term affordable solution that serves the community’s needs. A new facility is not off the table and continues to be in consideration as the hospital excels at strengthening its financial position.

**The actual ballot language was:**

SHALL ST. VINCENT GENERAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED BY \$350,000 IN 2016 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER BY SUCH AMOUNT AS MAY BE COLLECTED BY AN ADDITIONAL MILL LEVY OF UP TO 3.625 MILLS, (EXCLUSIVE OF REFUNDS AND ABATEMENTS), TO PAY GENERAL OPERATING AND OTHER PURPOSES; AND SHALL ALL DISTRICT REVENUES BE COLLECTED, RETAINED AND SPENT NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REVENUE LIMITS PROVIDED BY LAW?