

Ten apply for Holy Cross Hospital board

By Andrew Oxford

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The board of Holy Cross Hospital could get some new blood.

Ten local residents applied to fill three seats that will open at the end of May.

While the six candidates selected by a nominating committee for interviews later today (May 1) include a fixture of local politics, Taos Town Councilor Fred Peralta, they also include Ivy League university graduates and medical professionals from beyond the hospital.

The finalists reflected an interest expressed by several members of the nonprofit board's nominating committee in candidates who could offer fresh perspectives as Taos Health Systems weathers tectonic changes to the health care industry, grapples with turnover among doctors and staff, and financial reserves continue to dwindle.

In addition to Peralta, the nominating committee will interview Karen Matherlee, a former analyst at the National Health Policy Forum, as well as David Brown, a former deputy mayor of New York City. Both are local residents.

Bruce Coleman, a businessman who serves on the board of the Taos Community Foundation, was also selected for an interview with the nominating committee, as was Diana McMains, a Ranchos de Taos resident with extensive medical experience.

Jonathan Romero, a Penasco Valley resident who was interviewed for a position on the board in 2013, is under consideration again.

There was no indication from Monday's meeting whether Charlie Gonzales, a sitting board member from Questa who applied to remain in his post, would be considered for another four-year term.

Seats on the 13-member board open each summer as the nonprofit's directors serve staggered four-term terms.

Anna Martinez and Gus Córdova, the other board members whose terms expire this year, announced during a board meeting Feb. 26 they would step down.

The nominating committee is expected to submit recommendations for filling the three posts by mid-May. The board is expected to vote on candidates during its next meeting May 28.

Directors are to be chosen for their “experience, relevant areas of interest and expertise, and ability and willingness to participate,” according to the nonprofit’s bylaws. The body consists of representatives from the nonprofit’s medical staff, auxiliary and local governments.

The bylaws also suggest members of the community selected to serve as directors should reflect the geographic diversity of the areas served by Taos Health Systems, “insofar as is reasonably possible.”

Martinez and Còrdova represent central and southern Taos County, respectively. Gonzales serves at-large.

The boundaries of those areas are not clearly defined, however, and nominating committee members indicated Monday they may dispense with that precedent.

The nine-member nominating committee includes three sitting board members, a physician representative, and one representative each from the Taos County Board of Commissioners, the Questa Village Council, the Taos Ski Valley Village Council and the Red River Town Council.

The committee is chaired by Taos Town Council member Andrew Gonzales.

Each local resident who applied to serve on the nonprofit’s board of directors submitted an application and a resume.

The names of the applicants though not their applications were disclosed at request of

The Taos News.

The nominating committee’s two meetings have been open to the public but interviews with the candidates will be conducted privately.