

## **Retirement association official named to hospital board**

**By Andrew Oxford**

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The newest member of the Taos Health Systems Board of Directors is touted as bringing a younger perspective and financial savvy to the hospital's governing body.

Gregory Trujillo, of Des Montes, was named to the board during its regular meeting May 27.

Deputy director of the Public Employees Retirement Association, Trujillo replaces Jeannie Masters, of Questa, who stepped down after 26 years as part of the hospital's board.

Hers was one of two seats on the 13-member board open to applicants this year.

Andy Torres, a Pe-asco area educator and school administrator who reapplied for his seat, was tapped for a third four-year term.

A nine-member nomination committee comprising representatives of local governments, medical staff and the board received eight applications for the two seats.

The seats open for applicants this year have typically been reserved for residents of northern and southern Taos County, though those areas are not sharply defined in the nonprofit's bylaws. Trujillo indicated serving on the board is a way of supporting what he sees as an important local institution.

"After living in Denver and Albuquerque, I moved back to Taos, along with my wife and two kids about three and [one] half years ago. Since then, we've had two additional children and have decided we're probably going to be back for a bit," he told *The Taos News* in an email. "This decision is what drove me to apply for the board. It is my intention to raise my family in Taos and I'd like to do what I can to ensure the healthcare that is provided by Taos Health Systems is adequate for not only my family but the community as a whole. I think what I bring to the table is a different perspective than the board may currently have as far as what concerns me as a parent."

In explaining the committee's decision to recommend Trujillo, board member Karen Matherlee described him as a "very articulate advocate for health care" and touted his experience working with policy makers in Santa Fe.

Trujillo has a master's degree in business administration from the University of New Mexico and a bachelor's degree in computer network management from Westwood College.

Before working for the Public Employees Retirement Association, Trujillo was the information

technology manager for the New Mexico Educational Retirement Board.

Experience with finances was doubtless an important quality as the nominating committee considered applicants.

Taos Health Systems continues to grapple with financial uncertainty. The nonprofit, which operates Holy Cross Hospital, has less than one month worth of cash in the bank and is expected to seek a countywide property tax to finance deferred maintenance of the hospital building.

One candidate reportedly withdrew his application for the board.

Nominating committee members interviewed the other seven, rating them based on what was described as their capacity to bring new perspectives, promote a culture of safety and service excellence, communicate effectively, advocate in the community and meet the expectations of serving on the board.

The nominating committee recommended Trujillo and Torres. The recommendation received unanimous approval at Tuesday's board meeting. Torres abstained from voting for his own reappointment.

Stuart Hamilton, a board member who served alongside Matherlee on the nominating committee, suggested Trujillo's relative youth (he is in his 30s) was also seen as a positive trait.

The board has been criticized as static, though last year's selection of two new board members who had not previously served on the nonprofit's governing body was influenced by what was described as a demand for change.

The bylaws of Holy Cross require the board consist of between nine and 13 members who serve four-year terms. It is a goal, though not a requirement, one member be part of the hospital auxiliary, one be a financial professional and one represent a government entity in the hospital's service area. The chief of staff serves on the board, but can only vote if permitted to do so by a majority of a quorum of the board.

Another member is to represent the hospital's physicians.

Charlie Gonzales, a former state lawmaker who served on the board but was not reappointed when his term expired in 2014, sought a seat again this year.

The other applicants interviewed by the nominating committee were Barbara Crews, Pamela Devon, Dirk Herrman and Armando Jaramillo.