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SWMC Presents and Answers Local Group's Questions

The newest political group in town who meets at Ruffinos once a month had Southwest Medical Center put on a presentation and take questions on Thursday night. SWMC CEO Norm Lambert and local insurance owner/agent Al Shank told the group about what will occur if the hospital bond were to pass this Tuesday. Lambert and Shank then took questions from the crowd of just over twenty.

One concerned citizen questioned rather or not the hospital should be advertising no taxes if the bond passes. The citizen said the taxpayers could share the burden if the hospital couldn't pay for it down the road. Shank agreed that there is an outside shot that the hospital could have to enforce the county to levy taxes to pay for it if things went bad, but that it isn't very likely. Shank added that the hospital has a proven track record of paying for its own needs.

Shank also stressed how important it is for Liberal to have a strong hospital if health care reform is passed or changed. He said the weak hospitals would likely be the first to go and that Liberal needs to make sure and continue being one of the top places for medical care in this area. Shank also added that the people who actually use the hospital will be who pays for it, including people from surrounding communities.

The same concerned citizen then also asked Lambert why the hospital needs to to build an office building for doctors. Lambert responded by saying that it makes it easier to recruit doctors to Liberal, and that it is beneficial to patients as well so they don't have to drive across town to see their doctor. Lambert added that a new doctor who is set to join SWMC a little later this year said that the current layout for the bond is exactly the type of facility he is looking for to work in.

Advance voting will end on Monday at noon. The polls on Tuesday will be open from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. at the Activity Center.

After SWMC presented and took questions the group also discussed possible names for the group and will vote on the name "Tri Corner Society" at their next meeting. They also discussed ways to let politicians in Topeka know that Western Kansas wants to be heard.

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