

New River Board to Unable to Close Business

Written by Steve Frank
Friday, 13 April 2012 05:38

Hopes were to have all business of the New River Behavioral Healthcare settled with one last meeting of the New River Service board yesterday in Wilkesboro, but early in that meeting, all agreed that the plan to close April 18th was way too optimistic, and the board will trudge on. There are lawsuits to settle, equipment to deal with, bills to pay—and hopefully—money to come in. The board did vote to settle one lawsuit—at one-third the amount. A \$447,000 suit filed for breach of contract by Crossroads Behavioral Healthcare involving leases for facilities and advanced money was settled—gladly—for \$150,000 in the vote.

The board also dealt with the issue of years of medical and employment records from New River, turning the records over to a firm that handles such records, Iron Mountain, and those records were being transferred as the meeting was underway yesterday afternoon. The process for obtaining those records was not clear as the meeting ended. Then there's the continuation of the audit issue. With New River records in disarray, the board had sought help from the state to modify that requirement for the past two years, but were denied, and \$40,000 was applied to the process of doing those audits. The board also approved an outlay of up to \$10,000 to hire the Poyner Spruill law firm to assist the board attorney on two separate Medicaid appeals involving New River. The board is still appealing the N.C. Division of Medical Assistance denial of Medicaid reimbursements from October of 2011 after receiving what it called a "credible allegation of fraud." Nearly \$630,000 in reimbursements are still being sought by New River. Next meeting: Boone, May 11th.