



Emotional reaction surprises St. Francis officials

Hospital administrator talks move with ministers; says if land swap happens facility could keep name

By PAUL TACKETT
World Staff Writer

St. Francis Hospital officials say they were surprised the decision to move their Broken Arrow hospital stirred so many emotions, such as those demonstrated in a town hall meeting last week with local residents.

But they say they understand. "It's more than just another business moving — it's not like Albertson's closing," said Kathy Clark, who handles physician relations and business development for St. Francis Hospital at Broken

Arrow.

"The people that have used this hospital, they've had good service. It's a lot more," she said.

Clark talked about the subject at the monthly Broken Arrow Ministerial Alliance meeting March 14, taking questions about St. Francis Health System's controversial decision to move its Broken Arrow facility, 3000 S. Elm Place, to the St. Francis Heart Hospital at 91st Street and U.S. 169 in Tulsa.

The move, targeted for this summer, is part of \$33.8 million plan to convert the heart hospital into a full-service hospital,

St. Francis officials say.

James Farris and other residents say they may never use the new facility, though, and they aren't taking kindly to hospital officials' efforts to smooth the waters.

"What can I say," Farris said. "I think it will hurt the Broken Arrow and Coweta area to lose the St. Francis Hospital because it's been convenient to have it here."

Farris, a certified public accountant, said the people he's talked to are disappointed and "that's a nice way of putting it."

Marge Vogel, a resident of Broken Arrow for 34 years, circulated a petition in opposition for about five days and collected 501 names.

Distraught by the news of the move, Vogel distributed the petition to merchants on Main Street and stood in front of Broken Arrow Library for a couple of days collecting names.

"The thing I'm disappointed in is most of the people did not know the hospital was closing," Vogel said.

Once she informed them, their reaction was that the hospital must stay open. Vogel said she doesn't understand how

city growth can continue minus the critical building block of a full-service hospital.

"How can you bring industry in with no hospital?" she asked.

Hospital officials are quick to point out that the new acute care facility will be close to Broken Arrow — just a short distance beyond city limits. And officials with the cities of Tulsa and Broken Arrow are discussing a possible "land swap" that could keep the hospital inside Broken Arrow city limits.

SEE MOVE PAGE 8

'And to the republic'



KELLY KERR/Tulsa World

Hermenegildo Esparza (front), formerly of Mexico, recites the Pledge of Allegiance as he completes the process of becoming a United States citizen. The naturalization ceremony was held March 14 at Centennial Middle School in Broken Arrow.

Albany Hills plans take shape

► At least five restaurants, more retailers coming soon to new development.

By ANNE BROCKMAN
World Staff Writer

A new retail development will be breaking ground in Broken Arrow in the next few months.

Albany Hills, which will be located along Albany Street, Elm Place and the Broken Arrow Expressway, will be developed in two phases, said Jeff Johnson, project manager with Dixie Development.

The first is the south phase which will include 340,000 square feet of retail space on 39 acres between the Broken Arrow Expressway and Albany Street along Elm Place. It will include big box retailers, boutiques and restaurants in an open-air setting, Johnson said.

The north phase includes 66 acres which has yet to be finalized.

The south phase will cost up to \$70 million and will be completed sometime in 2008, he said.

"We're here to service the need that Broken Arrow is losing a lot of the sales tax revenue, as a city, to Tulsa," Johnson said.

Johnson added that the development could not have occurred without the development of neighboring Stone Wood Hills and the city's commitment to the Bass Pro Shops area.

City officials said it is important to generate more retail sales within the city and cut down on residents traveling outside city limits to shop.

"This is an opportunity to gather and keep our citizens shopping within Broken Arrow and promote the Buy Broken Arrow



Michael Skates

SEE HILLS PAGE 5

Report underscores new image need

► Committee of community leaders named to work with branding firm.

By TIM STANLEY
World Staff Writer

Developing a new image for Broken Arrow has been a hot topic lately among marketing-minded city leaders.

But Broken Arrow has something working against it, according to a new report: the overall image of the Tulsa area and the state of Oklahoma.

The report, released last week by Angelou Economics — hired to help the city attract economic development — mentioned some barriers Broken Arrow will have to overcome.

"The image of Broken Arrow is inextrica-

SEE IMAGE PAGE 5

Angelou: Support BA Development Corp.

Board advised to launch a capital campaign soon to raise up to \$3 million

By TIM STANLEY
World Staff Writer

Broken Arrow's primary organ of economic development earned the praise of an economic consultant last week, but leaders note that it can't fulfill its promise without funding.

In their final report, Angelou Economics officials urged leaders to throw their full support behind the new Broken Arrow Economic Development Corp. and build a reserve of private sources to fund it.

The consulting firm's report will serve as a guide for the independent nonprofit board, which was established last year by the city, chamber and school district to spearhead economic growth.

The board got the jump on one of Angelou's recommendations last month, hiring a fundraising firm to generate private money to supplement public subsidies.

Angelou recommends the board launch a five-year capital campaign soon to raise up to \$3 million.

"The strategies contained within this plan are meaningless if there are no funds for implementation," the report

Angelou Economics' 83-page final report for Broken Arrow can be downloaded for viewing.

Go to www.brokenarroweconomicdevelopment.com and click on the Reports link.

said.

BAEDC chairman Joe Robson said the funding question is the board's first priority.

"First we must come up with a budget," he said. "We're having a feasibility study done to show us what we should be able to raise in the community."

Robson said he's optimistic they can raise the amount recommended by Angelou.

"I think we should be able to, particularly because of the response we've had to the report," he said. "We had a great crowd for the presentation and everyone's showing great enthusiasm in the community."

The board should have a yearly budget of \$400,000 to \$500,000, split between public and private source fund-

ing, Angelou said.

The board was funded this year with \$200,000 from the city of Broken Arrow, but leaders say ideally the funding should be 75 percent private.

"The capital campaign will be a key to the success of the BAEDC," said Broken Arrow Public Schools Superintendent Jim Sisney, an ex-officio member of the board. "Economic development must be a shared partnership between the public and private dollar."

"Business and community leaders are more likely to put their funding behind projects in which they feel they have a stake," the report said.

Several of Angelou's recommendations dealt with the structure of the board, including one that the BAEDC and chamber of commerce share one president.

The report "recommends a structure that allows the President of the Chamber to serve as President of the BAEDC. This improves efficiency by allowing for shared resources, including administrative resources, between the two organizations ... This ensures that a single vision for economic development exists and will be efficiently implemented."