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Please print as written.

Call me first if you have any suggested changes to this article.

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What Happened to ‘Community’ in this Community Organization?

These are the facts, events and analysis from a large volume of research done by many people. This is not an accusation of corruption or deliberate violation of law but follow me on this and see if you don’t agree that there may have been things done that were unethical at best. Even if you don’t agree, I prefer clarity over agreement.

First, a little history of the Payson Hospital. It was back in the early 50’s when a women’s group decided it would be a good idea for Payson to have a quality medical facility. Thereafter, the entire community came together and for over six decades contributed to this growing facility (the Payson Hospital). Individual citizens, civic organizations, individual bequeaths, volunteer hours, sweat, tears and personal donations all contributed to creating a hospital that served Payson and its citizens well. The Payson hospital was a community asset that was used by the entire community.

From the late 50's, the Mogollon Health Alliance, Inc. managed the Hospital. One of the last major management decisions of the Mogollon Health Alliance was in 1997 when they leased the hospital to Community Health Systems (CHS). CHS paid approximately 17M up front to lease the hospital for 18 years. This wiped out approximately 15M in debt that the hospital had incurred. Note, this was all done prior to Kenny Evans' involvement. CHS' 18-year lease was scheduled to expire in July of 2015 unless they renewed the lease, or the hospital was sold.

As the lease to CHS was still six years out, the Mogollon Health Alliance had already begun maneuvering so that it would be in a position to sell the hospital. It appears discussions for the sale/transfer to Banner also began very early on. Prior newspaper articles indicate that CHS had made significant investments into the hospital which made sense as they had first right of refusal to purchase the hospital. Dignity Health was associated with CHS; and to avoid selling the hospital to Dignity Health the Mogollon Health Alliance merged with Banner Health so that it was not an official sale – simply a merger of two entities that came with a donation of \$41M from Banner to the newly created MHA Foundation.

A Roundup article dated July 17, 2015 by Alexis Bechman reported the following:

“Under Community Health Systems management, the Payson Regional Medical Center grew to a 44-bed facility with services that included diagnostic, imaging, medical, surgical and emergency care. Thomson Reuters also named the hospital one of the nation's Top 100 Hospitals.

After failed negotiations with Community Health Systems, the MHA Foundation began looking for another operator and last autumn opened talks with Dignity Health, Banner and several others.

Although it received an offer \$21 million over what Banner offered, the foundation went with Banner.” From this I can only assume that we left \$21M on the table.

Rim Country Educational Alliance (RCEA) and MHA Foundation Board member, Jennifer Smith, claimed when the RCEA was created the citizens of Payson were polled and 93% wanted a four-year university in Payson - Wanted a four-year

university as opposed to what? What other options were offered? Had the citizens of Payson been made aware of all their options, I think the outcome of the survey may have been much different. If one option was to accept the 41M donation from Banner and spend millions on the purchase of the forest service land and related efforts in hopes of convincing a college to come to Payson; **or** accept Dignity Health's offer with an extra \$21M attached using the additional \$21M to build a very nice community center, aquatic center, cover the event center AND still have 40M+ in the foundation where the investment income would cover any operating short fall of the new facilities in perpetuity. Which would you have chosen? Those were two very real options facing the MHA Officers and Directors. But unfortunately, the citizens of Payson were not presented these possible options. Had they been clearly presented with these two options, I'm confident which one they would have chosen. Think about it; we now could be enjoying the use of all these facilities I described at no cost to the citizens of Payson or the Town of Payson. These facilities would have encouraged and enhanced economic development in Payson translating to additional sales and property tax revenues to the Town. It appears that the community's investment in the hospital was commandeered to pursue the desires and possible benefit of a select few. By the Mogollon Health Alliance and the MHA Foundation handling the sale of the hospital and steering the Foundation assets in this manner, they maintained complete control of the assets that rightfully belongs to you - the people of Payson.

In June of this year as Kenny Evans was being interviewed by Debra Rose on her Facebook show, Kenny said, and I'm paraphrasing, "there is a huge cry from a bunch of scaly wags about this (MHA) being so secret – it's not secret it's just private and people have a right to privacy." What? Did I just hear that right? Apparently, Kenny Evans feels that a charitable 501(c)3 corporation that is the custodian of assets which rightfully belong to all the citizens of Payson should be private. The MHA Foundation is registered as a 501(c)3 and its board has a fiduciary responsibility and a moral obligation to all the rightful owners and contributors of those assets.

Ask yourself, who was mayor while all of this was taking place? Who orchestrated, negotiated, voted for, and signed the agreements to authorize the creation of the RCEA-SLE? The RCEF? The SLE Intergovernmental Agreement and Governance Agreement? All of which was necessary for the SLE to be formed. And who controls the purse strings that allows these entities to function? Follow the money. All the money they are spending is your money. How much 'say' do you have in how your assets are being used? How much say should you have?