

*Rev. Stephen E. Braddock, Ph.D.  
133 Golf Club Drive  
Key West, FL 33040*

Cheri Smith  
City Clerk  
City of Key West  
3132 Flagler Avenue  
Key West, FL 33040

August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

RE: Commission Workshop on LKMC 08/11/16

**Please read into the public record.**

Good evening Mr. Mayor and Commissioners:

I am Reverend Stephen Braddock, I reside at 133 Golf Club Drive and I am a member of the Committee to Rescue Our Hospital.

Unfortunately, I am not able to be with you in the Chamber this evening but will be watching remotely via the web. I first want to thank the scores of patients, families, and staff of LKMC that shared their concerns about, and experiences with the hospital, publicly and with me and others in private.

Since my own experience with Lower Keys Medical Center was made public on the front page of the Key West Citizen newspaper just over one year ago, hardly a week goes by without fellow citizens telling me their stories and frequently seeking my advice.

It is less than one mile from my front door to the Emergency Room entrance. As a heart patient and one still recovering from a brain hemorrhage I should take comfort in that fact. Sadly, quite the opposite is true. And, when my elderly mother comes to visit me I am terrified something could happen and I would have no choice but to take her to Lower keys Medical Center.

When I experienced my brain bleed and traumatic brain injury from the subsequent fall, as confused and disoriented as I was, I absolutely refused to

be taken to the hospital emergency room. Instead, I was transported directly to Baptist Hospital in Miami where I received excellent emergency care. I continue to receive superb care at Baptist and have not had a single issue with medical treatment or billing. But, it is tragic that I, like many others, must travel 145 miles to access care at a hospital I have confidence in.

You are all well aware of the serious nature of the issues our fellow citizens and visitors have been expressing about LKMC. Specifically: patient care, questionable billing and aggressive collection practices, use of out-of-network ER physicians, failure to offer the Sheriff's Trauma-Star when available, the exorbitant costs charged by the for-profit Life-Net helicopter, low hospital staff and local physician morale, lack of transparency by Community Health Systems (CHS) and the Board of Trustees, and the questionable legality of the lease between the Hospital District Board and CHS.

CHS claims in their Statement of Beliefs, contained within their Code of Conduct, that they, quote- "are dedicated to providing personalized, caring, and efficient service to our patients with total satisfaction as our top priority."


"Total satisfaction" is far from what we have been experiencing with Lower Keys Medical Center. Profit, not patients, seems to be top priority for CHS.

Our community deserves much better. Our community needs much better. Our community is demanding much, much better!

It is indeed past time to Rescue Our Hospital for the sake of our current and future citizen's health, safety, and well being. I urge you to take any and all possible actions to hold CHS accountable. They have failed miserably to live up to their own slogan, "*Promises Made. Promises Kept.*"

Thank you for holding this workshop so that our voices may finally be heard.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fr. Stephen E. Braddock', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fr. Stephen E. Braddock, Ph.D.