



*TIMES FILE PHOTO*

**The Eden Township Healthcare District (ETHD), Alameda County and the City of San Leandro want to buy San Leandro Hospital from Sutter Health and operate it as part of the Alameda County Medical Center (ACMC).**

***By Amy Sylvestri***

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The deal to try to save San Leandro Hospital has been shaken up after Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan sent a note to the Eden Township Healthcare district that was perceived as a threat that the district should be dissolved if they don't pledge more money to efforts to keep the hospital running.

San Leandro Hospital is owned by Sutter Health, which doesn't want to continue emergency room services at the hospital. The Eden Township Healthcare District (ETHD), Alameda County, and the City of San Leandro developed a plan to try to buy the hospital from Sutter and operate it as part of the Alameda County Medical Center (ACMC).

San Leandro pledged \$3 million over the next three years, as did the county. But the ETHD approved contributing only \$700,000 over two years.

In November, Chan wrote the ETHD a letter saying they needed to do more, but ETHD CEO Dev Mahadevan said that giving any more would violate the terms of a loan they have with U.S. Bank.

“I had no intention of making a threat,” said Chan of her letter. “Last April, the state held legislative hearings about health care districts. Five have been dissolved in the last decade. I was simply making them aware of that.”

Chan said that she wrote the letter to tell ETHD that, if the hospital isn't successfully bought from Sutter, they may be dissolved because they simply have nothing to do – no hospital to oversee.

“It was just a statement of fact,” said Chan. “There have been concerns that some people felt the district's contribution was too low. It's very important that the body responsible for governing the hospital step up to the plate.”

None of the plans and pledges of money will work if Sutter doesn't agree to sell the hospital to the ACMC and negotiations are ongoing.

Mahadevan said the letter felt too harsh and that ETHD has led the charge to “save” San Leandro Hospital, and is now being unfairly chastised.

“I think several of the board members and I read it to mean we would be dissolved,” said Mahadevan. “I think it was a little extreme because we were actually the first to contribute any money and we’ve put \$30 million into San Leandro Hospital over the years. I don’t think it required a threat.”

Mahadevan said that they simply do not have more money to contribute, barring a modification of their loan. ETHD is also considering placing a parcel tax on a special ballot in the second half of 2013, but that is up in the air pending Sutter’s agreement to sell the hospital.

“The amount, the timing, and the support are all still to be determined,” said Mahadevan of the possible tax. “We can’t tell people how we would spend their money on the hospital until we have the hospital. We can’t put the cart before the horse.”