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JFL Executives Come Under Fire For Missing Accounting of Millions of Dollars, Failure to Document Settlement and Lack of Employer Contributions to GERS

Government / **Published On July 13, 2022 04:47 AM /**

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The Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

Executives at the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center were subject to intense scrutiny during Tuesday's budget hearing before the Committee on Finance, for being unable to fully reconcile with its creditors and to provide documentation for settlement agreements even after sufficient funds were appropriated by the government in the last budget.

Greg Bryant, chief information officer at JFL, told lawmakers that he was not aware that \$4 million had been made available by the government to settle payment for Medi Tech Expense — an automated clinical decision support system — until recently.

“We were not aware of the \$4 million. I started doing searching last week for that appropriation,” Mr. Bryant said. He added that he had “checked the books” at the hospital along with a colleague and had not “seen that money at all”.

“I have been at that hospital now for 18 months, \$4 million has not crossed my desk at all,” Mr. Bryant recalled.

The hospital had also been unable to properly document a settlement with Medical Imaging Inc. for a second and final payment of \$250,000, which would complete a \$4.7 million settlement.

Rosalie Javois, JFL's interim executive vice president of finance explained that she needed documentation, which she requested last week, to be able to write off the debt from a financial best practice stand point.

Monies for retirees under the Government Employees' Retirement System program have also not been disbursed due to what hospital officials said was a technical issue with identifying the recipients.

"The monies are there," Ms. Javois said, telling lawmakers that “they are in the process of trickling down” but that she needed to sit with G.E.R.S. to find out who they have on record and who they do not.

Senator Kurt Vialet, who chairs the Committee on Finance, urged hospital executives to come up with a process to deal with those who retire now.

"This isn't a money issue, this is a documentation issue," he noted, recommending to the hospital that it locates the outstanding employer contribution for retirees and advise G.E.R.S. to draw it from the lump sum of money that was appropriated over a year ago.

Senator Novelle Francis also noted that some level of documentation must be maintained as governments are elected and toppled.

“We understand that people come and go but we should not be fighting ourselves, having the same discussions over and over and over,” he said.

The sentiments of the other senators were echoed by Senator Kenneth Gittens, who gave a stern warning that there is no excuse for the lack of documentation, functionality or transparency within the institution.

"It's heartbreaking to hear of the lack of documentation especially when it comes to our finances and receiving monies etc," he stated.

Meanwhile, Ms. Javois acknowledged that it is going to take a concerted effort between the hospital and government agencies to reconcile payments that are owed to the hospital, suggesting that, “Where there is absolutely not enough evidence to write them off and where there is evidence to go either to the central government or come back here to get assistance to settle.”

The hospital has proposed a conservative budget projection of \$77.88 million for the fiscal year 2023 excluding collective bargaining agreements which were still being negotiated. JFL said the projection is based on the anticipated potential revenue decline during the transition from the JFL main building to the modular buildings commonly referred to as JFL North.

However, senators believe that the money proposed in the budget, which includes net collection of \$47.5 million and another \$26.7 million from the local government, will not be sufficient for the hospital's operations given the high number of vacancies and predicted expenses.

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