



document 1 of 1  
Full Text | Newspaper

## DMC officials address issues at town hall meeting

Paintsil, N. (2003, Jun 25). DMC officials address issues at town hall meeting. Michigan Chronicle  
<https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/dmc-officials-address-issues-at-town-hall-meeting/docview/390255298/se-2?accountid=35812>



### Abstract

An estimated 400 people gathered in mid-June 2003 at the Northwest Activities Center to talk to officials from the Detroit Medical Center about the proposed closing of Detroit Receiving Center because of financial losses. The hospital has the only level one trauma capability in Detroit, is a nationally-recognized training center for doctors and provides health care for thousands of uninsured Wayne County residents.

### Full Text

An estimated 400 people gathered recently at the Northwest Activities Center, taking advantage of an opportunity to question Detroit Medical Center (DMC) officials.

Wendell Anthony, NAACP Detroit Branch president, established order after a heckler interrupted the first speaker, Arthur Porter, CEO, Detroit Medical Center.

"That's the last outburst we are going to have in here tonight," said Anthony, signaling for Dr. Porter to proceed with his presentation.

"I had the opportunity a few years ago to move to an administrative role at the DMC," said Porter. "At the time we were losing about \$140 million a year...I know that I have become somewhat unpopular for (asking the) question, 'How are we going to collectively solve that problem?'"

The problem is the possibility of closing Detroit Receiving Hospital, which has the only level one trauma capability in Detroit and a major component for homeland security. It also offers a nationally-recognized training site for student doctors and provides health care for thousands of uninsured Wayne County residents.

"I want to put a face on the uninsured. I don't want to hear your number crunch. I'm not interested in your statistics. I want some answers. I don't want to hear more of that garbage," said Camillie Williams, an unemployed college student.

She told the president of Henry Ford Health System that she was turned away from their hospital with a promissory letter asking for \$50 to receive health care.

"When you are unemployed, you don't have \$50," said Williams.

If DMC shuts down its operations, the remaining hospitals, Henry Ford and St. John, will experience an overload of patients while coping with the same financial strain of uncompensated insurance from indigent patrons.

"It is easy to point fingers at each other and say you should have done this or that, but at the end of the day, collectively, if you look at the amount of uncompensated and under compensated care, any ship will sink," said Dr. Porter, attributing financial woes to caring for 15 percent of Wayne County residents without insurance.

In her presentation, Detroit City Council President Maryann Mahaffey's said the hospital made a profit in 2002 and reported a loss of \$12 million. She questioned what happened to \$225 million left in the reserve fund.

Leon Atchison, former chairman of the board at Detroit Receiving Hospital, agreed the hefty cost of the uninsured and uncompensated is draining, but pointed out that it has only increased by 2 to 3 percent over the past five years. He suggested that the problem revolves around the decisions and actions of management and board members.

"The real problem which they failed to mention is DMC has lost 25 percent of its market share during this period," said Atchison. "This equates to \$250 million of lost revenue each year that far exceeds \$130 million in losses they attribute to indigent people."

Atchison noted that admissions in southeastern Michigan hospitals increased by 7 percent, the result of DMC investing resources in the suburbs and utilizing the profits to be used in Detroit instead of applying dollars to build local hospitals. He also said this process sent over 40 percent of Detroiters with premium insurance to outside hospitals.

"They call it the Robin Hood theory, taking from rich suburbanites and gearing it for Detroit, while we call it the Robbing the Hood theory," Atchison said.

As a panelist approached the podium, Robert Davis, director of the governor's office for southeastern Michigan, anxiously blurted out, "We got the money!" signaling for Rev. Anthony to let him speak.

During his speech, Davis spoke of a stabilization partnership of legislators, elected officials, and hospital presidents collaborating to improve the system which would include some money, but no amount was given. Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano is expected to join the partnership.

Shortly after Davis finished, Rev. Anthony stated, "If I read what you said correctly, the state has the money? Is that what you said?"

Davis seemed reluctant to discuss financial details pertaining to the money that will be provided to DMC via the partnership.

"Yesterday the governor met with her people and she was ... working on a short-term plan that includes a partnership (involving) a number of people in this room, which would include some money."

Although Gov. Granholm and Mayor Kilpatrick pledge includes elected officials, politicians such as Senator Buzz Thomas already introduced a bill to hold board members for nonprofit hospitals personally liable for false fiscal decisions.

"When you talk about restoring public confidence, accountability does need to be a part of that discussion," said Sen. Buzz Thomas. "I feel very strongly that people who serve on boards of hospitals, like Enron, WorldCom and any other bankrupt corporation, need to be held responsible for the decisions their hospitals are making."

The next day, DMC announced the restructuring of the current board and addressed the conflict of interests of board members who are direct business affiliates.

NanaDansoa Paintsil is a freelance reporter, producer and talk show host.

Photograph (Wendell Anthony)

Copyright Michigan Chronicle Jun 25, 2003

## Details

<b>Subject</b>	Health care access; Uninsured people; Public hearings; Civil rights; Government; Local government; Municipal government; Organizations; Politics; Hospitals; Business closings; Trauma centers
<b>Location</b>	Wayne County Michigan
<b>Company / organization</b>	<b>Name:</b> Detroit Medical Center Corp <b>NAICS:</b> 622110 <b>SIC:</b> 7352, 7389, 8062 <b>DUNS:</b> 08-875-0005
<b>Ethnicity</b>	African American/Caribbean/African
<b>Title</b>	DMC officials address issues at town hall meeting
<b>Author</b>	Paintsil, NanaDansoa
<b>Publication title</b>	Michigan Chronicle; Detroit, Mich.
<b>Pages</b>	A6
<b>Publication year</b>	2003
<b>Publication date</b>	Jun 25, 2003
<b>Publisher</b>	Real Times, Inc.
<b>Place of publication</b>	Detroit, Mich.
<b>Country of publication</b>	United States, Detroit, Mich.
<b>Publication subject</b>	African American/Caribbean/African, Ethnic Interests, General Interest Periodicals--United States
<b>Source type</b>	Newspaper
<b>Language of publication</b>	English
<b>Document type</b>	News
<b>Document feature</b>	Photograph
<b>ProQuest document ID</b>	390255298
<b>Document URL</b>	<a href="https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/dmc-officials-address-issues-at-town-hall-meeting/docview/390255298/se-2?accountid=35812">https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/dmc-officials-address-issues-at-town-hall-meeting/docview/390255298/se-2?accountid=35812</a>
<b>Copyright</b>	Copyright Michigan Chronicle Jun 25, 2003
<b>Last updated</b>	2011-12-15
<b>Database</b>	3 databases View list  Ethnic NewsWatch ProQuest Central ProQuest Central

## Bibliography

Citation style: APA 7th - Sentence Casing, DOI: empty

Paintsil, N. (2003, Jun 25). DMC officials address issues at town hall meeting. Michigan Chronicle  
<https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/dmc-officials-address-issues-at-town-hall-meeting/docview/390255298/se-2?accountid=35812>

Database copyright © 2021 ProQuest LLC. All rights reserved. Terms and Conditions