

State approves MUSC takeover of Tideland's Health

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A takeover of Tideland's Health by the Medical University of South Carolina received approval this week from the state Fiscal Accountability Authority.

Tideland's is on track to lose

\$50 million in the fiscal year that ends Sept. 30 and has cash reserves to cover another two years of losses, MUSC Health officials told state lawmakers last week.

"We think there are a variety of things we can do to help strengthen them financially and then turn them around

fiscally," Patrick Cawley, chief executive of the state-owned Medical University Health Authority, told legislators last week when the takeover received approval from the legislature's Joint Bond Review Committee.

The approvals from the committee and the fiscal au-

thority are required by state law.

Tideland's Health, as it has been known since 2014, began as Georgetown Memorial Hospital in 1950. In addition to the 145-bed hospital in Georgetown, it owns the 124-bed Waccamaw Community Hospital and rehabilitation hospitals in

Murrells Inlet and Little River. It has approval to build a 36-bed hospital in Socastee.

MUSC Health acquired a 30 percent interest in the nonprofit Tideland's system in 2020, but has no claims on the profits or responsibility for the losses, according to filings with the state.

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LANDUSE

No complaints as commission signs off on lots at Litchfield

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A plan to develop 14 lots on 6.6 acres along the Avenue of Live Oaks at Litchfield Plantation drew residents to a public hearing before the Georgetown County Planning Commission.

Things didn't go quite the way some people expected.

The commission is required to review plans for subdivisions of 10 lots and above for compliance with regulations. If it denies its approval, it is required to state the reasons and give the developer a chance to change the plan or appeal.

The project, called The Grove, already meets the zoning, said Judy Blankenship, a senior planner.

Erik Fromm, president of the homeowners association, said they had concerns about the trees. Since they will be protected, "we find no objection," he told the commission.

The zoning allows for lots as small as 6,000 square feet. The smallest at The Grove will have 9,752 square feet.

The property could be developed with 17 lots.

"We're relatively pleased the density is coming down," Fromm said.

The development is a project of TriCorp Investments of Pawleys Island, whose managing partner is Ben Harris.

"It's really low density," he said, 2.4 units an acre once land is subtracted for roads and stormwater facilities.

Mary Beth Gagne, who lives across the street from the proposed development, told the commission she was pleased. So did her husband, Denis.

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Photos by Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Summer music series ends with a homecoming

The boys were back in town and their friends and fans turned out to greet them. Winyah closed out the Rectory Lawn music series sponsored by All Saints Church. Thomas Rowland, above, assured the crowd that filled the lawn that they were happy to be home at Pawleys Island. Opening for the Nashville-based band was The Abnormals, below, which includes the fathers of two Winyah members, Tommy Gordon, below right, and Bobby Buffington, left.



SCHOOLS | Lowcountry Prep

A lesson in nostalgia marks private school's 30th anniversary

BY MADISON SHARROCK
COASTAL OBSERVER

This "little" school has expanded in big ways in a matter of 30 years.

It was Aug. 24, 1995 when Lawly Ford's vision of the ideal learning environment came to fruition. The Lowcountry Day School opened the doors to the Pawleys Island Presbyterian Church's educational building for 29 students in kindergarten through eighth grades.

There, the standard of small classrooms began as students were put into classes of six to 10. Ford, who became the day school board chairman by 1996, said the purpose was, and continues to be, for students to learn how to trust each other



Sharon McCurdy/Coastal Observer

Lowcountry Day students in class at Pawleys Island Presbyterian Church, where the school opened in 1985.

and understand their differences.

"Providing a personalized academic program, character development, and an opportunity to do that in a spiritual setting was what they set out to do," said Wes Wehunt, headmaster of Lowcountry Preparatory School. "The buildings have changed, some of the specific values may have been adjusted, but the heart of who we are still remains."

Lowcountry Prep aims to be the premier college preparatory school in the area where students discover that who they are is just as important as what they know. By graduation a student should embody faith, character, service, leadership, lifelong learning and self-

awareness.

The 30th anniversary of the school was nostalgic for many graduates who returned to the area.

"We just wanted to come check out how things had changed since we've been here," said Marguerite Barr, a 2015 graduate.

Barr was with her sister, Emory Bowen, who graduated in 2017. They spent their entire academic careers there, and after being away for a number of years they've made their way back to their roots in Pawleys Island.

"I loved the small school," Bowen said. "It was a lot of fun to play all the sports, and I learned a lot. I have a lot of

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Paul's garden: Murrells Inlet man cultivates an annual crop of butterflies.

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