

# Four Local Experts Named to Hospital Advisory Board

BY MICHÉLLE ASCHWALD

A new Marin Healthcare District commission of nine members includes four area residents, who will advise MHCD as Marin General Hospital returns to district control before July 1, 2010.

The Transition Advisory Committee is comprised of leaders in medicine, business, marketing, communications, and insurance.

Belvedere resident Robert Peirce, president of Warm Springs Holdings, LLC, former chairman and CEO of Ocadian Hospitals and Care Centers; David Joyner of Tiburon, Senior Vice President of Blue Shield of California; Derek Parker of Tiburon, former principal and chairman of Anshen & Allen Architects and Steve Schroeder, M.D., professor and Director of the Smoking Cessation Leadership Center at UCSF, also a Tiburon resident, were announced at a recent special healthcare board study session.

Other Transition Advisory Committee members are Harvey D. Bichkoff, CEO of California Cancer Care, Inc.; David Hill, former chairman of KQED and founder of Saatchi Corporate Communications Co.; cardiolo-

gist Ann K. Kao, M.D.; Mara Perez, founder of Mara Perez Ph.D. Development and Planning Services; and gastroenterologist Timothy Sowerby, M.D.

"I am pleased to announce such a qualified and diverse group of members from our community who will make up this committee," said MHCD executive director Lee Domanico. "They all have unique and invaluable expertise for the transition process."

Strategic planners Kurt Salmon and Associates (KSA) strongly recommended the creation of a "firewall" or subsidiary board to separate the five-member publicly elected MHCD board from the operation of MGH due to the district's turbulent history.

The subsidiary board is designed to broaden community participation, supervise the day-to-day management of MGH and hire the hospital chief executive officer.

Marin County Administrator Matthew Hymel advocated an operating board in a September 2, 2008, letter to the district: "The county supports a governance structure that includes an appointed board that can act independently, under specified parameters, to oversee hospital planning."

A group of activists, who back the Coalition for Excellence at Our Hospital, oppose a MGH operating board because they want MHCD to have ultimate control. They contend there will be infighting like the situation between Sutter Health and MHCD.

"It is interesting that Dr. Sowerby is on the new board," said Dr. Bill Rothman of Belvedere, a coalition member. "This may be a sign of progress. He signed a petition last year to sell Marin General. Perhaps, Dr. Sowerby is more open-minded and wants to save the hospital?"

MHCD board chair Sharon Jackson said the new transition advisory panel will be discussed at the October 14 meeting and would form the possible nucleus of a subsidiary board once the hospital is transferred. She stressed that board responsibilities would be determined over the next six to nine months and there is time for public input.

"It is wonderful to have this resource of talented experts in our community," Margaret Jones, Belvedere resident, told *The Ark*. She monitors the MHCD meetings for the League of Women Voters. "The hospital is headed in the right direction." ☺