



CITY OF MELROSE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ROBERT J. DOLAN
Mayor

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May 21, 2009

Michael Sack
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hallmark Health System, Inc.

Dear Mr. Sack,

I am in receipt of your correspondence regarding your inability to provide a donation for the Memorial Day parade. In the past, Melrose-Wakefield Hospital has donated bottled water, not a monetary contribution. I am disappointed that you will not be able to do that this year.

As the largest tax-exempt property in the city I am even more disappointed with your letter regarding your annual contribution of \$45,000, which Hallmark Health contributes to city services. Although this money, by your request, has not been earmarked, we use it to support school nursing services and for police support of an emergency room that you yourselves recognize to be at times unsafe for staff without police presence. In fact, you have met with us regarding the excessive service of our police department in light of the many altercations and threats made to your staff and patients on overnight ER shifts.

Despite our limited police resources, which will be cut even further in the next budget, we always answer the call.

In speaking with the chief of police, although we only have three patrol officers for the entire city, we go to the hospital almost every weekend with an estimated response of 500 calls annually. When a call goes to the hospital, it ties up all the units, which potentially puts the rest of the city in jeopardy.

The \$45,000 you contribute, in proportion to the amount of land that the hospital has taken off the city's tax rolls over the years, is not only reasonable but recognizes the city's partnership to keep Hallmark Health as an important part of our community.

I have always enjoyed a positive relationship with you and with the hospital, and I want to see you succeed. To inform me that we are going to lose this critical support in a letter and not in person, and within one month of the closing of our fiscal year, is disrespectful and disingenuous considering our past relationship, and especially considering that we have just spoken within the past three days.

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Although costs go up across the board through the years, and the services you require have risen in cost as well, the citizens of Melrose have never asked for an additional dime, in recognition of the services you provide. To not meet that reasonable commitment is shortsighted and is not in line with your mission as a community hospital.

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss this matter.

Very truly yours,

Robert J. Dolan
Mayor