

# Online Hope Star

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## MPH board sees positives in change

By KEN McLEMORE, Hope Star Editor

Several members of the community advisory board at Medical Park Hospital are emphasizing the positive aspects of the transition at the top at Medical Park with the introduction last week of new MPH CEO Todd Lorenz.

Board members and the community were taken by surprise after the sudden departure in December of former MPH CEO Jimmy Leopard, but advisory board chair Charlean Hale called the hiring of Lorenz by MPH parent company Signature Hospital Corp., of Dallas, "on target with what we need."

Hale emphasized that commitment to the needs of the community in reaction to Lorenz's introduction to the board during a Feb. 28 meeting of the board.

"Just first impressions, he seems like he will be good for the community," she said. "Some of his goals are the same as we envision for the community."

Hale did not elaborate, pending Lorenz's assuming duties at MPH in early April.

But, board member Clark Crellin, who was not at the Feb. 28 meeting, pointed out that goals are an important aspect of the board's responsibilities at MPH.

"We are an advisory board; we don't tell the company what they can do because it's a private company," Crellin said. "We try to keep and see things are done in a manner to produce the best service for the community."

Crellin said his impressions are based upon information from other board members, and he declined to comment until he has had an opportunity to meet Lorenz.

Hope Vice Mayor David Johnson said he is pleased with the selection of Lorenz.

"I sat beside the gentleman and I'm very impressed," Johnson said. "He has a sense of humor, which is good. I think he is going to make a lot of difference in the hospital administration in the betterment of the hospital and in the community."



A grass and woods fire burned a storage shed with tools inside at the residence of Jeff and Catherine Cook on Country Club Drive early Monday, and threatened to ignite the couple's residence before firefighters extinguished the blaze. The exact cause of the blaze was not known at press time Monday. Photo by GRACE LEONHART

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Johnson said, as was the case with Leopard's tenure, time will tell how effective that difference will become.

"It was kind of a short meeting, but I did learn that he is going to make a few changes for the better down the road, some remodeling in the lobby and the ER," he said. "He does have some foresight on some things we need.

"He's not going to come in and promise the world," Johnson added. "He's a slow mover, and I like that."

Long time board member George Frazier agreed.

"He is very hands-on and down-to-earth," Frazier said. "I think he will continue in Jimmy Leopard's open-door policy. He comes from a rural background, and he understands where we're coming from."

Lorenz, 37, has said he will spend some time in evaluating the situation at MPH and "listening" in order to make "informed decisions" about the needs at the local hospital.

Lorenz has been associated with Angleton Danbury Medical Center in Angleton, Texas, in the Houston area, for 12 years in various leadership positions. The Angleton facility is not owned by Signature, and is privately operated.

A native of Houston, Lorenz is a graduate of the University of Houston with a master's degree in health care administration and business administration, and he holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Texas at Austin.

He and his wife, Julie, anticipate relocating to Hope in early April.

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