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TRIBUNE

Deaton says MU chooses head over heart

No closure at Big 12 meeting, but finality appears imminent.

By Dave Matter

Newly empowered to strike a deal with the Southeastern Conference, Missouri Chancellor Brady Deaton spoke Friday of making a decision "expeditiously" and "rapidly" and vowed there will be "no unnecessary or inappropriate delays in that process."



Brady Deaton

Yesterday proved to be too soon for a major breakthrough, but Deaton said this morning that Missouri has "reached a firmness" in its decision on conference affiliation. That decision appears to be a move from the Big 12 to the SEC, a verdict Deaton likened to listening to the head over the heart.

"We have to conclude the process ... and we're working expeditiously as possible to finalize that," Deaton said this morning during his traditional monthly appearance on Columbia radio station KFRU.

"We feel a great urgency to clarify" the decision "as quickly as possible," he added. "It's hard to put a time frame on it. Our hopes were days, possibly a week or two."

A day after attending a Big 12 board of directors meeting in Dallas, Deaton said he had already been on the phone this morning and hoped to have some decisions resolved by the end of the day.

“There’s uncertainties involved here that we’re addressing as rapidly as possible and as expeditiously as possible and as systematically as possible,” he told reporters in the station’s lobby after the radio interview.

Deaton said there’s been “a coalescing of view” on the school’s choice of conference but stopped short of saying a decision has been made. “We’re focused very clearly on steps we’re needing right now,” he said, “and we’ll be undertaking that quickly as possible.”

Deaton declined comment on Big 12 settlement fee negotiations and whether Missouri would join the SEC for the 2012 athletic season. He said last week in Kansas City that Missouri’s decision on a conference would be “applicable next year.”

During the radio interview, Deaton touched on the emotional attachment some fans have for the Big 12 and its historic rivalries but also stressed the league’s “continuing instability.”

“There’s a deep warmth for the history of this tradition of playing in the Big Six, the Big Eight and now the Big 12,” Deaton said. “In a sense, I think most of the nostalgia relates back to the history. We’ve been a member of this conference from its beginning. Changing something like that is significant. The emotional attachment by a lot of people is very real. We listen to that very carefully.

“The world, of course, is changing very drastically, as the University of Missouri has changed. Coming to terms with those changes is very much of what we’re all about. It’s often the case where our head has to outweigh our heart in achieving some of the objectives, because the heart won’t necessarily in this case lead to where the university is going and needs to be going.”

Deaton attended yesterday’s Big 12 meeting but said he abstained from voting and participating in discussions regarding future decisions that didn’t involve Missouri as a member of the conference.

After the meeting, the Big 12 offered this statement: “In a regularly-scheduled meeting today at an undisclosed Dallas area location, the Big 12 Conference Board of Directors reaffirmed previous action to execute institutional grants of Tier 1 (over-the-air) and Tier 2 (cable) television rights to the Conference.

“The Board also discussed a wide range of topics including NCAA legislation, the Bowl Championship Series, and exploration of a Conference dedicated TV network. Additionally, a strong desire for the University of Missouri to maintain its Big 12 affiliation was expressed. All 10 member institutions and TCU participated in the meeting.”

A university source indicated that yesterday was too soon to expect Deaton to work out several details with both the Big 12 and SEC before he could formally complete the withdrawal process.

It appears Missouri’s replacement in the Big 12 is already lined up. The New York Times reported today that West Virginia has applied and been accepted to the Big 12 contingent on Missouri leaving.

West Virginia is currently a member of the Big East, a conference that has been looted by the Atlantic Coast Conference and the Big 12 in recent weeks.

The Tribune's David Briggs contributed to this story.

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KC chamber urges Mizzou to stay in Big 12

By KEVIN COLLISON

The region's premier business organization is urging the University of Missouri to remain in the Big 12, saying that leaving the conference would cost Kansas City at least \$14 million in lost basketball tournament revenue and damage its other ties to the community.

The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce board voted unanimously this week to ask MU Chancellor Brady Deaton to reject overtures to leave the Big 12 for the Southeastern Conference.

"We want to emphasize the importance of MU's decision to businesses in the greater Kansas City area," said Jim Heeter, chamber president and chief executive officer, said in a letter to Deaton.

"Departure by MU from the Big 12 would have an adverse impact on Kansas City companies large and small whose businesses are affected by collegiate athletics and an adverse impact on the identity of so many fans who help to make Kansas City what it is."

Separately Tuesday, Cerner Corp. chief executive Neal Patterson said in a letter to Deaton that Missouri needs to stay put. Among other things, Patterson said he was concerned about the University of Missouri system's "commitment to the Kansas City region" through the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Deaton on Tuesday suggested he hoped to reveal the university's future conference address in "days or possibly a week or two."

In Heeter's letter, the chamber estimated the value of the annual Big 12 men's and women's basketball championship alone at \$14 million for Kansas City businesses.

The group is concerned that other, more emotional bonds could be weakened as well. The chamber estimated there are 20,000 Missouri alumni living in the metropolitan area.

"The University of Missouri has had a long and rich relationship with the greater Kansas City area, including a large and loyal MU fan base for athletics and competition with other area Big 12 schools," according to Heeter.

One board member warned that "in 10 years this would be less an MU town and more of a KU town if this decision goes through."

The chamber letter joins other local organizations in urging Missouri to remain in the Big 12. The Kansas City Sports Commission, the Convention & Visitors Association and Kansas City Mayor Sly James also have waded into the fray.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Deaton says Mizzou is united on plans

BY VAHE GREGORIAN | vgregorian@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8199 | Posted:
Wednesday, October 26, 2011 12:15 am

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Despite no clear, or at least no publicized, action regarding Mizzou's athletics affiliation coming out of the Big 12 board meeting Monday in Dallas, MU chancellor Brady Deaton left little doubt Tuesday morning that change is imminent.

During his regularly scheduled monthly radio appearance on KFRU-AM in Columbia, Deaton said he spent most of that meeting outside the room and abstained from voting and that there is no wavering in MU's strategy now as it appears bound for the Southeastern Conference.

"There has been a coalescing of view on what is best for the University of Missouri longer-term, and that's really driving where we're heading right now," said Deaton, who earlier said, "We've reached a firmness in where we are headed, where we want to analyze and focus our attention."

Asked by host David Lile if he could assess a time frame on a resolution, Deaton said, "Our hopes were days, possibly a week or two. We're hoping the sooner the better."

While MU's intent is rather clear, paving the way is another matter at play from multiple angles.

Among other key issues probably requiring negotiation would be departure fees and the timetable.

Whether it's merely posturing for negotiating purposes or not, the Big 12 has indicated it wants MU to stay for 2012 because of criteria it needs to meet for inventory for its football television contracts.

At the same time, West Virginia and other Big East schools are on the Big 12's radar. The Big East says it will hold firm to its 27-month departure bylaws - which could impact when Missouri leaves and how much it would have to pay.

The implications of legal snares in turn could leave the SEC delaying an acceptance of an MU application until all such matters are reconciled.

"Involved in these steps that are being taken at this point are two conferences, two boards of directors, two sets of legal counsel, two sets of financial analyses, or three, if you count the university separate from the Big 12, and then you have a commissioner in whichever conference you're dealing with," Deaton said. "They're complex issues, and we have to look at a wide range

of issues affecting our student-athletes, travel, financial issues, future security, stability of the conference.

"And what we're trying to do in other areas such as developing private development funds depends on the environment you're setting within the institution. And so these issues, such as stability, take on very, very important long-term meaning, and we're trying to look ahead at where we're going as a university and where the Big 12 is going, where the SEC is going and where the world of sports entertainment is going, for that matter.

"And we're analyzing each of those issues very carefully. These are not decisions that can just be made at the press of a button."

Still, Deaton said Mizzou was working on just such issues even as he spoke.

"There's a significant amount going on at every moment, from very early in the morning," said Deaton, who greeted reporters waiting for him after the show but left in a hurry and essentially declined further comment. "I've already been on the phone earlier this morning with critical individuals in the analysis with new information coming forward, with commitments to continue the discussion later in the day, and hopefully have some of them resolved even by the end of this day."

Deaton said a move to the SEC would not be just about money, which an MU analysis leaked to the Associated Press said would mean at least \$2 million more a year and potentially up to \$12 million more annually than the \$17.16 million it projects to make in the Big 12 next year.

"Let me say, a lot of people point to the fact that this is just about money. That could not be, I don't want to say farther from the truth, (but) that simply is not the case," he said. "As we are looking at alternatives here, the financial considerations are not the principal considerations.

"Looking to long-term stability, for an environment for the University of Missouri to prosper, for our student-athletes to reach their highest, most effective level of competitiveness, with clarity of where we're going as a university, are really the most important overriding factors that we're looking at."

Deaton, who resigned as chairman of the Big 12 board earlier this month, said he understands the feelings of those who might be torn, alluding to a head vs. heart question posed in a column by Columbia Daily Tribune sports editor Joe Walljasper.

"Let me just say, I was very touched by that statement, because I think it does reflect a lot of what we're seeing across the state," he said. "There's a deep warmth for the history of this tradition of playing in the Big Six, the Big Eight and now the Big 12. ...

"We've been a member of this conference from its beginning. And so changing something like that is significant, and emotional attachment by a lot of people is very real. We listen to that very carefully.

"The world of course is changing very, very drastically, as the University of Missouri has changed, and coming to terms with those changes is very much a part of what we're all about.

"And as often is the case, our head has to outweigh our heart in achieving some of the objectives, because the heart won't necessarily in this case lead to where the university is going and needs to be going."

Big 12 to invite West Virginia

By BLAIR KERKHOFF

The Big 12 wants Missouri to remain part of the conference, but the league isn't waiting to expand.

West Virginia is expected to be invited to the Big 12 soon, but not on Wednesday, according to sources.

The Mountaineers would become the league's 11th member. But the number could soon be reduced to 10 if the Tigers announce they're applying for membership and are accepted into the Southeastern Conference.

The Tigers' future won't stop the Big 12 from adding its first member in the Eastern Time Zone. West Virginia has been a member of the Big East since 1991 and its football champion six times.

And its coaches know the Big 12.

Football coach Dana Holgorsen is in his first year at West Virginia after spending last year as Oklahoma State's offensive coordinator. Earlier, he was an assistant coach at Texas Tech.

Men's basketball coach Bob Huggins was hired away from Kansas State after a one-year stay in Manhattan. He took the Mountaineers to the Final Four in 2010. West Virginia becomes the second school to join the conference in a matter of weeks, following Texas Christian University. TCU of the Mountain West was set to become a Big East member next season but detoured to the Big 12.

Plenty of unknowns remain, starting with Missouri. All indications are the Tigers are SEC-bound, but it hasn't happened. Chancellor Brady Deaton said the school "has reached a firmness in where we are headed, where we want to analyze and focus our attention."

Part of that analysis figures to be when Mizzou can start competition in the SEC and how much will it cost the school in withheld revenue from the Big 12.

West Virginia has the same issues in the Big East. That league requires a 27-month notice for departure, which would mean the Mountaineers would spend the next two football seasons as a lame-duck member of that conference.

Clearly, that is not a desirable situation. But it may be difficult for Missouri and West Virginia to make moves that begin in the 2012-13 school year. One consideration for the Tigers is the Border War football game at Arrowhead Stadium. The game with Kansas is contracted through 2012 and has provided a payout of at least \$1 million per team each year.

If new membership can happen next year, West Virginia could assume Missouri's Big 12 football schedule.

Also, the Big 12 may not be finished with expansion. Notre Dame is seen as a possible future member in sports other than football, and the conference had had membership discussions with Louisville and Brigham Young.

KC will be just fine after Missouri is gone from Big 12

By SAM MELLINGER

COLUMBIA | I have checked Faurot Field, seen the columns on campus, even poked my head into Shakespeare's, and can now report the following with near 100 percent certainty:

The grim reaper of the Kansas City sports scene is nowhere to be found here.

Missouri is as good as gone, of course, off to the Southeastern Conference and its voluntary class schedules for football players and disregard for the NCAA rulebook, and you know what?

Good for them.

Kansas City will probably lose something, of course, maybe even the Big 12 basketball tournament, but you know what else?

We'll be fine. Actually, the potential addition of West Virginia is one more brick of credibility to a rebuilding Big 12, and as long as that continues, life for a Kansas City sports fan will be better than fine.

The more you think about this, the more something a bit unexpected becomes obvious:

Kansas City's sports scene is about to get better — stronger and more interesting than ever before — as soon as MU finishes off the worst-kept secret since Paris Hilton's sex tape.

Full disclosure, this is an about-face of my previously grumpy feelings (or a "fun-80," if you read the blog). I've endured the last few weeks in something like a metaphorical fetal position, worry and sadness about losing a unique rivalry and watching a pillar of Kansas City sports drift south toward the accents and pickup trucks and pretty girls.

Insecurity and uncertainty and probably just an aversion to change made this all sound like such a horrible and unnecessary idea, raw emotion driving my reaction and maybe yours, and did you notice something?

Each day, the sun has come up, and each day has brought even more to argue about and obsess over.

Once Mizzou finally makes the move — can someone give Brady Deaton a hand with that, by the way? — each day that passes will come with an opportunity our region hasn't had in at least a decade, since the opening of Kansas Speedway:

A genuine addition to our sports scene.

The ongoing conference realignment story has been best defined with marriage analogies — most regrettably with noted adulterer Rick Pitino chastising other schools for their lack of fidelity — so it's with a bit of embarrassment I've previously missed one.

Kansas City is not losing Mizzou. We're gaining the SEC.

Think about it. A two-hour drive and we can see Kentucky basketball or LSU football. We can get to know Nick Saban and Billy Donovan and Steve Spurrier and John Calipari as part of the region's sports footprint.

If Mizzou were in the SEC the last four years, we might've seen Cam Newton, John Wall, Tim Tebow, Nick Fairley, Joakim Noah, Mark Ingram, Derrick Favors, A.J. Green and DeMarcus Cousins. Those are Heisman Trophy winners, No. 1 NBA draft picks, superstar coaches and national championship teams.

Who knows what we'll see in the next four years?

Until now, the markets that have a presence in two major conferences are places like St. Louis, Atlanta and Baltimore/Washington D.C. Right away, Kansas City joins that list but with the benefit of being a city that actually appreciates college sports.

Maybe we lose the Big 12 basketball tournament, maybe not. But if you worry about that, you must also at least hope we pick up the SEC tournament. If this is really the college basketball capital of America, it'll be a blast.

Even the arguments about what Kansas City is supposedly losing deserve scrutiny. MU fans aren't going anywhere. Mizzou is likely to continue to play both football and basketball here.

How about a game against Nebraska at Arrowhead?

Look, the official stance of this column is that MU will regret going to the SEC and that either way Kansas should swallow its pride and continue to play Mizzou.

But with each side apparently marching on, the strange and unintended consequence is the Border War now effectively running on a case of Four Lokos.

Even in the midst of stiff public statements, there is private admission on both sides that KU and MU may very well resume playing each other in a few years. Now just isn't the time, and even if that robs Kansas City of a few fun games, you gotta admit, the cold war is plenty entertaining for the moment.

The move to the SEC is already making things more interesting around here.

Just wait until it actually happens.

MISSOURIAN

Reports say West Virginia is set to join Big 12

Tuesday, October 25, 2011 | 5:08 p.m. CDT; updated 5:14 p.m. CDT, Tuesday, October 25, 2011

BY HARRY PLUMER

COLUMBIA — While Missouri seems to be moving away from the Big 12 Conference, reports surfaced Tuesday about the league's contingency plan should the Tigers depart for the SEC. The New York Times, and later The Associated Press, reported that the league is set to add West Virginia as a 10th member to replace Missouri.

The report cited an anonymous source and said the move to accept West Virginia was approved unanimously by the Big 12 board of directors.

MU Chancellor Brady Deaton said during a radio interview on KFRU with David Lile on Tuesday morning that he had removed himself from the meeting under the advice of legal counsel when the board was discussing decisions that related to future of the league.

Reports have also suggested that the Big 12 could have a press conference as soon as Wednesday to announce the addition of the Mountaineers. If that is the case, it stands to reason that Missouri would announce its departure before that, either Tuesday night or Wednesday morning, though at this juncture, there is no official word.

During the KFRU interview, Deaton said it would be "days" or "a week or two" before MU officially announced its decision.

"There's uncertainties involved here that we're investigating as rapidly as possible, as expeditiously as possible, as systematically as possible," Deaton said to a group of reporters after the interview.

The addition of West Virginia could also lower the exit penalty for Missouri. With a highly regarded replacement, the Big 12 might feel more comfortable letting MU off the hook more easily, even for the 2012-2013 athletic year.

Deaton declined to comment on the issue of exit fees when asked after the KFRU interview.

During his conversation with Lile, which lasted about 30 minutes, Deaton pointed out that the decision to leave the Big 12 would be about stability rather than money.

"These issues in terms of stability take on a very, very important long term meaning. We're trying to look ahead at where the Big 12 is going, where the SEC is going and where the world of sports entertainment is going for that matter," Deaton told Lile. "A lot of people point to the fact that this is just about money. That simply is not the case."

He also hinted perhaps that the decision to leave had already been made, speaking of a "coalescence" in the decision-making process at this point.

"Over the last three weeks, or it's been more than that, I'd have to look back, we've reached a firmness in where we're headed, where we want to analyze and focus our attention," Deaton said. "I would say we have to conclude the process the board of curators has granted me right now, and we're working as expeditiously as possible to finalize that."

Mountaineers moving to the Big 12? Not yet

By **BLAIR KERKHOFF** and **MIKE DeARMOND**

Word spread quickly Tuesday that West Virginia would become the newest member of the Big 12, and that an announcement could happen in Morgantown, W.Va., as early as today to introduce the league's newest member.

But no announcement is expected today. West Virginia issued a release on Tuesday saying no news conference has been scheduled, and a Big 12 spokesman said Tuesday night that the expansion plans will continue.

"It remains an ongoing process," Big 12 associate commissioner Bob Burda said.

One without a resolution, either in the Big 12 or the Southeastern Conference, where Missouri is considered on the doorstep of membership.

The Big 12 Board of Directors met on a conference call and, according to two sources familiar with the call, the presidents essentially hit the pause button on expansion.

For a day? Longer? It's uncertain.

MetroNews, a statewide radio network in West Virginia, reported the Mountaineers' "move to the Big 12 will happen regardless of whether Missouri stays in the league or applies for membership in the SEC."

West Virginia would become the league's 11th member. But the number would be reduced to 10 if the Tigers announce they're officially applying for membership and are accepted into the Southeastern Conference.

West Virginia has been a member of the Big East since 1991 and its football champion six times.

And its coaches know the Big 12.

Football coach Dana Holgorsen is in his first year at West Virginia after spending last year as Oklahoma State's offensive coordinator. Earlier in his career, he was an assistant coach at Texas Tech.

Men's basketball coach Bob Huggins was hired away from Kansas State after a one-year stay in Manhattan. He took the Mountaineers to the Final Four in 2010. Huggins was hired at K-State in 2006 by Big 12 associate commissioner Tim Weiser, then the Wildcats' athletic director.

Earlier this month, Texas Christian University of the Mountain West was set to become a Big East member next season but detoured to the Big 12.

Plenty of unknowns remain, starting with Missouri. All indications are the Tigers are SEC-bound, but the move hasn't happened yet. Chancellor Brady Deaton said the school "has reached a firmness in where we are headed, where we want to analyze and focus our attention."

Part of that analysis figures to be when Mizzou can start competition in the SEC and how much it will cost the school in withheld revenue from the Big 12.

If new membership in the Big 12 and for Missouri in the SEC can happen next year, it's possible that the newest Big 12 member could assume Missouri's Big 12 football schedule. That schedule ends with the annual game against Kansas at Arrowhead Stadium, an event that's been worth more than \$1 million to both teams in each of the first four years of the arrangement.

Also, the Big 12 may not be finished with expansion. Notre Dame is seen as a possible future member in sports other than football, and the conference has had membership discussions with Louisville and Brigham Young. Until late last week, Louisville was strongly speculated as the top candidate to follow TCU into the conference.

Tuesday morning, Deaton suggested he hoped to reveal Mizzou's future conference address in "days or possibly a week or two."

Deaton — in an interview on Columbia radio station KFRU-AM and in conversations with newspaper reporters in the station lobby before and after the broadcast — suggested continuing and longstanding concern over the viability of the Big 12.

He noted the speculation that last month dealt with the anticipation of Texas, Texas Tech, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State leaving the Big 12 for the Pac-12. The Pac-12 ended that talk, for the time being, when it said it was not going to expand.

However, Deaton said Missouri had been assessing its status during the last year.

"We were carefully analyzing how we stood nationally, what our options might be, as we looked at continuing instability which was driving us, really, from the Big 12 perspective."

Many expected Deaton to announce, at a meeting Monday of the Big 12 Board of Directors in Dallas, that Missouri was conditionally withdrawing from the Big 12 in anticipation of being accepted into the SEC.

While the Big 12, in a statement on Monday, noted conference realignment was discussed, Deaton said he left the room while those discussions were under way and abstained from voting on all matters on the advice of legal counsel.

Deaton, upon being authorized on Oct. 4 by the MU Board of Curators to explore Missouri's conference options, resigned his position as chairman of the Big 12 Board of Directors.

Deaton said he and other Big 12 presidents and chancellors had "a professional understanding" at Monday's meeting, "if a bit cool," but added:

"It was more pleasant not to be chairing the meeting."

Deaton referenced the nostalgia felt by many for Missouri's traditions in the Big Six, Big Eight and Big 12 conferences. But he said Missouri's conference membership could not be decided by emotion.

"Our head has to outweigh our heart in achieving some of the objectives," Deaton said, "because the heart won't necessarily in this case lead to where the university is going and needs to be going."

Deaton indicated the timeline of Missouri's revealing its decision is complicated by the number of moving parts that include two conferences, two boards of directors, two sets of legal counsel and two sets of financial analyses.

"Three if you count the university separate from the Big 12," he said. And then, "you have a commissioner of whatever conference you're dealing with."

Time and again, Deaton referred to concerns of "future security, stability," as being more important than financial considerations.

"These issues, such as stability, take on very, very important long-term meaning," Deaton said. "We're trying to look ahead at where we're going as a university, and where the Big 12 is going, or the SEC is going, and where the world of sports entertainment is going."

"These are not decisions that can just be made at the press of a button."

Missourinet

Research: rural residents more likely to have deadliest type of breast cancer

October 25, 2011 By Jessica Machetta

A University of Missouri researcher says women living in rural areas are more likely to be diagnosed with the most deadly form of breast cancer.

The study says women who travel 50 to 75 miles to a healthcare facility are 10 percent more likely to be diagnosed with late-stage breast cancer. Research points to the fact that women who live farther away are less likely to seek preventative treatment and testing due to costs and time.

MU Health revamps its plan to boost patient satisfaction

By Janese Silvey

University of Missouri Health Care is again dangling a carrot in front of employees in hopes that a financial reward will boost patient satisfaction at UM hospitals and clinics.

Administrators want a total of 77 percent of patients to rate their stays at UM hospitals or clinics at a 9 or 10 on a 0-to-10 scale between now and next fiscal year, which starts July 1. That would be an increase from the 75 percent of patients who gave top scores when surveyed between July 1 and Sept. 13.

If workers meet the target, each employee gets up to an \$800 bonus, with part-time employees receiving a prorated portion of that amount, spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said.

The health system unveiled a similar incentive program a year ago using a different type of survey. Administrators under that survey tool had hoped to see patient satisfaction increase from 88.1 percent to 90 percent. Overall satisfaction fell short of the goal, hitting 89.1 percent by the July deadline.

The hospital's current patient satisfaction survey includes questions in nine different areas, including the overall rating that will be used in the new incentive plan.

Patients also are asked about their experiences in UM hospitals or clinics, the care they received from doctors and nurses and admissions and discharge processes.

All hospital patients are surveyed, and a percentage of clinic patients are given the survey, Jenkins said.

Paying out the incentives also depends on MU Health seeing at least \$31 million in profit during the fiscal year. That's up from this past year's goal of \$30 million, which the health care system met.

So far, though, revenue is down in the first quarter of this fiscal year, Hal Williamson, vice chancellor for health sciences, told the UM System Board of Curators in Kansas City last week.

"We're having lots of meetings between hospital leaders and physicians ... to understand what that means for our future and how we're going to make the adjustments over the year to come in" on budget, he said.

MU Health spent the first five months of this year under public scrutiny after failing to be in compliance with Medicare regulations, including maintenance and patient safety issues.

The health system has been in full compliance since early April.

Administrators a month earlier began posting its quality report information on the health care website. Since March, 6,000 people have visited the site, Williamson told the board.

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