

## **Challenging Times Ahead for the Clinic**

By Sue Knapp

The ballots are in and the votes counted. The White River Health District suffered another blow with the failure of the option tax levy to continue.

Elections have consequences and the consequences for our local clinic with this outcome will affect the clinic's ability to continue keeping its doors open full time, providing its current services, and expanding its services over time. The Board and staff will be working to rebalance the budget given the diminished tax revenue the clinic will receive. Budget rebalancing will entail difficult cuts and curtailment of hours and hiring, among other changes, affecting the community members who seek care. But we will seek to ensure our patients are taken care of, to the best of our ability.

The Health District will hold a Board and Budget meeting on Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm. Additional budget and meeting information can be found on the White River Health District website (<https://alara980.wixsite.com/wrhd>) after June 1st.

We are grateful for the support we do have within the community. And hopeful that support will grow. The Board and staff are committed to keeping health care viable in South Wasco County no matter the challenges we face, and we have faced many.

There are two vacant positions on the District Board of Directors for community members to step into and provide the assistance and feedback this clinic needs. Those who might be interested and can share their ideas for improvement, please contact the clinic office at 541-395-2911. This Board is necessarily a 'working' Board, filling in where needed to accomplish what needs to be done in running a health clinic with the shortage of staff. It is a great opportunity to learn, grow, connect and be a part of something important to this community.

Our new District Manager, Jeff Biesenthal, will begin full-time in August. As with the Board and other staff, Jeff will be wearing many hats and rolling up his sleeves to tackle myriad projects and issues. It is a tremendous relief to finally have a District Manager after 4 ½ years without one.

Our part-time medical and dental providers, Dr. Maile Anslinger and Dr. Margaret Anderson, continue to build up their patient bases and provide excellent care. If you are in need of care, please contact the clinic office to schedule an appointment.