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Statement regarding Flagler County Sheriff's Operation Center:

Flagler County on Tuesday received a letter from Flagler County Sheriff Rick Staly addressed to County Administrator Craig Coffey about the Sheriff's Operation Center, and health concerns raised by members of the Sheriff's staff.

We are as concerned as the Sheriff about the health and well-being of everyone who works in the Sheriff's Operation Center, as well as any other Flagler County facility. Flagler County takes seriously any, and all, potentially harmful conditions at the Sheriff's Operation Center and has done so from the time of the acquisition of the former hospital to the present.

A Phase I Environmental Site assessment was completed in 2013 by Universal Engineering Sciences before the building was purchased, as well as follow-up. Prior to County owning the property, the Environmental Protection Agency oversaw the remediation of a fuel spill on the property.

Both demonstrated a clear site/building with only minor remediation that was handled during reconstruction. The structure was originally built in 1978 (after EPA began regulation of building materials) and was occupied by the hospital from 1979 until 2002. It was redeveloped by the County and reoccupied by the Sheriff's Office in September 2015.

Additionally, after more than 2 years in the building, Flagler County was made aware in November 2017 of three (3) Sheriff employees who reported illnesses they believed to be related to the building. The County – through an emergency procurement – hired H2H, ServPro and Mold-Spec to test, remediate, and retest areas of the building where the employees worked.

The County also contacted the Florida Department of Health Flagler to conduct an investigation using their Epidemiologist. The Epidemiologist works within Flagler Schools to investigate outbreaks.

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District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Nate McLaughlin
District 4

Donald O'Brien, Jr.
District 5

To date, with about \$15,000 in testing and \$14,000 in remediation, we have found no evidence of environmental or any other issues that would pose a health risk to anyone using the building.

As a second round of precautionary measures, the County engaged an environmental engineer earlier this month out of an abundance of caution to address new issues raised by employees at the Sheriff's Operation Center. This was done working with the Sheriff's Office more than a week before he chose to issue a letter.

Flagler County on Wednesday held a kick-off meeting with Zdenek Hejzlar, Ph.D., CSP, and Senior Managing Consultant with ESI (Engineering Systems Inc.). He has more than 27 years of experience in premises/occupational safety and various aspects of the environmental and toxic health fields.

Dr. Hejzlar will perform a broader and more scientific scope of analysis to address the evolving set of concerns raised.

Flagler County asked Dr. Hejzlar to meet with the Board of County Commissioners at a workshop in the near future, and Sheriff Staly will be invited to attend. Further testing of the Sheriff's Operation Center will begin this month (June).

It is unfortunate that the Sheriff's Workers Comp carrier simply denied the claims submitted by the employees and provided no medical evaluation, nor did the Sheriff engage a doctor on his own over the past seven months. Fortunately, Flagler County's Workers Comp was able to refer a doctor for the sheriff to use. We provided the information to the Sheriff's Office to allow for a systematic evaluation of his employees' health.

It has been communicated to the Sheriff on many occasions that if there is a problem, we want to identify it and do what is necessary to correct the matter.

Flagler County has started exploring options to accommodate the sheriff's request for alternative office space.

A formal response to the Sheriff's letter will be forthcoming sometime next week.