

By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Chase County Hospital District board members adopted a resolution June 25 to dissolve the district. The resolution has been turned over to the Chase County Commissioners, who will accept it at their meeting July 10.

Chairman Eddie Nichols of Wauneta said a few loose ends need to be tied up, such as paying bills, before the board is disbanded.

Randy Vlasin of the Chase County Hospital Foundation, who has studied the statutes pertaining to hospital districts, said, "It's my understanding that once bills are paid, if there's any money left, it goes back to the county treasury."

The hospital district was approved to be established by voters in May 2010, following a petition drive to create the district.

The goal of the petition circulators, Sue Kinner and Penny Teply, was to establish an elected hospital board of trustees. In the past, the board members had been appointed by the county commissioners.

The only method allowed by state statute to establish an elected board was to create a hospital district.

Following the 629-566 vote in the May 2010 primary, the commissioners appointed a five-member district board in September.

That board then began researching the ramifications if the district were to take over the hospital operation.

Research indicated that it would cost an estimated \$200,000 to \$400,000 to transfer the hospital into the district.

Following a series of public meetings by the board last summer outlining those options, a group of citizens started another petition drive to instead dissolve the district.

That petition drive was also successful, allowing the issue to be placed on the May 2012 Primary ballot.

This time, voters dissolved the Chase County Hospital District by a 727-175 vote.

Following the district board action June 25, the issue is now in the hands of the commissioners, who will accept the resolution at their upcoming regular meeting.