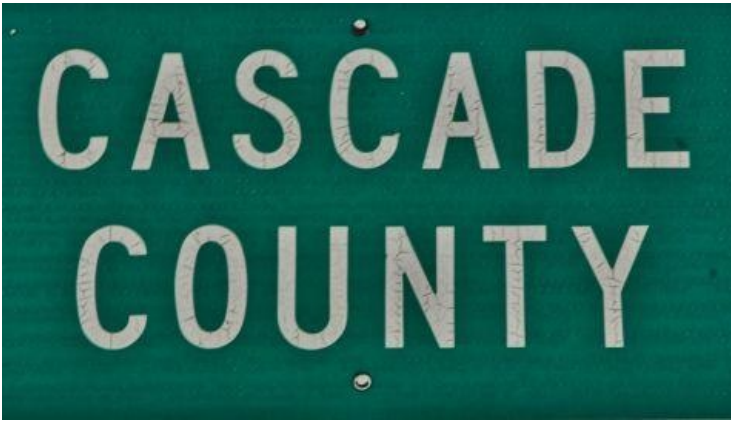


CEO OF CASCADE COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE CENTER RESIGNS



Russell Klinkenberg was the CEO of the Cascade Community Health Care Center. He recently resigned nearly a year after taking the job. Also inside the Health Center, Stacey Bird, the center's director of human resources, has been put on the leave of absence list. There has been no further explanation regarding the departures, according to the Great Falls Tribune. The pair were two of six department leaders who had a financial dispute last month with Commissioners Jane Weber and Bill Salina. However, Commissioner Joe Briggs was not included. Klinkenberg signed his resignation on November 16, the same as his final day with the CCHCC. Klinkenberg was originally brought on board in December of 2011 with his main responsibility to oversee the downtown health clinic. He was the clinic's initial year-round CEO. Before that, the county's health officer supervised the clinics at 115 4th Street South and the Cascade City-County Health Department. The latter involved numerous branches related to the environment, families, schools and healthcare. The clinic is a branch of the City-County Health Department. Klinkenberg has not been reached by the media for public comment. Brian Hopkins, the county's chief civil attorney, would not clarify the reason for Bird being placed on leave. Bird has not publicly commented either, stating that she was put on leave until further instruction. Commissioners Briggs, Weber and Salina met for nearly two hours on November 20 to chat about a staff issue with Hopkins, Deputy County Attorney Carey Ann Shannon as well as County Attorney John Parker. Commissioners did not allow the public to the closed-door meeting. It is unclear if the staff concerns included department leaders. Parker noted confidentiality and "litigation sensitive" concerns as a need for the closed meeting. Last month, Bird and Klinkenberg were two of six department leaders who wanted an alteration in pay as a result of the market fluctuation. They requested a conference with commissioners to chat about the problem as a whole. Other leaders included Lisa Bracco, the general manager of ExpoPark; Shanna Bulik-Chism, the Juvenile Detention administrator; Rob Run, the Director of Aging Services; and Tom Yashenko of information technology. A mid-October letter to the commissioners, the six claimed "disparity and unequal treatment based upon pay". Commissioners countered their argument by stating that pay was rewarded on performance. They proposed to conference with workers separately. The department leaders wanted to meet as a group and declined the offer. After the closed-door conference, Parker stated the commissioners have still left the door open to meet with the separate department leaders in reference to their pay allegations. No "public record" resolutions were recorded in the conference.