

his brother, Mario, grew up in the area and have worked there for three decades.

MWN has selected a Long Beach resident, Virg Narbutas, as the hospital's CEO. Narbutas previously served as CEO of La Palma Intercommunity Hospital, according to Molina. The company also intends to work with Pacific Gateway, the city's workforce development organization, to hire back Community Hospital employees who have expressed interest, Molina noted.

Molina explained that, while AHMC and

Network Medical Management are primarily focused in acute care hospital operations in the heritage building, he and his brother are looking at new uses for the surrounding site. These could include outpatient behavioral health, a nursing education partnership with Long Beach City College and California State University, Long Beach, and perhaps even senior programs, he said.

"I think we have an opportunity to create a new model for health care," Molina said. "We have the opportunity keep the emer-

gency room open, which is the number one priority. But then also [to] have a full-service health and wellness campus where there are ancillary programs that would provide programs that promote quality of life and wellbeing on one site."

Reslock confirmed that the surrounding buildings could be used for such services, depending upon the licenses associated with those uses. "Non-acute care services, like skilled nursing . . . those buildings do not have to have the same seismic stan-

dard as an inpatient acute care facility," he said. "That could be a possibility for those noncompliant buildings."

Hussain Bhatia, supervisor of OSHPD's seismic compliance unit, said that having different rules for such uses doesn't mean that the state-run organization does not care about people utilizing those services. "That is something the city or the new operators need to evaluate – the risks of putting any other persons in those buildings," he said.

Molina hopes to reopen the hospital and emergency room within the next four to six months. Bhatia said that the hospital's new operator would be eligible to apply for a seismic compliance extension to January 12, 2020.

While relocating the acute care hospital services into the heritage building could be feasible to meet seismic compliance, Reslock pointed out that the building would be disconnected from its onsite power plant, which is located on the other side of an active fault. "The building itself is compliant, but part of its compliance is that it have access to central power, also in the event of a strong earthquake," he explained. Molina said this was something MWN was looking into.

"At the end of the day, we are just really concerned about the safety of patients, staff and visitors," Reslock said. "With acute care, there are a lot of folks who are incapable of self-preservation. So we see our mission as being very important. So other considerations that people apart from us might have, financial or whatever, those aren't our considerations. For us, it's just safety." ■

## Councilmember Pearce

(Continued From Page 1)

office found the petition to recall Pearce was insufficient, as a significant number of the signatures were from people who lived outside the district or who were not registered to vote.

"They say you can really only forgive a process or a person when you can say thank

smaller entrepreneurs as well. In December 2016, Pearce brought an agenda item before the Long Beach City Council to streamline the city's conditional use permit (CUP) process. A CUP allows a business to operate in an area not necessarily zoned for that use, provided it meets certain special conditions. "[The item] came back through the planning commission last week," she said. "We're going to bring back the committee that worked on it, and look at it before it comes back to council."

According to Pearce, it costs Long Beach businesses between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to obtain a CUP. "When I was campaigning, we talked to a lot of small businesses that [expressed] how expensive it was to open their doors," Pearce said. "They talked about how tedious the process was. . . . Hopefully, we can reduce the cost to the \$1,000 range." Another one of Pearce's goals is ensuring Long Beach is a thriving city for entertainment. This includes loosening the regulations regarding street performers.

In the following year, the councilmember would like to work with the health department to provide training to city employees in dealing with trauma. "The majority of calls I get outside of city hall are people who've experienced some kind of trauma," Pearce commented. "And we're not equipped.

There's no orientation binder of how to deal with constituents who might've gone through a traumatic experience, whether it's their car being towed, or rape."

That said, Pearce expressed her approval on crime prevention in the city. "I found out yesterday that, in the 2nd District, this is the first time in over 30 years that we haven't had a murder in 12 months," she said. "Our crime rate is extremely low, which is creating safer

streets for people to feel like they can thrive."

Pearce said she will continue to work towards other quality of life issues, such as classifying truck drivers operating within the Port of Long Beach as employees rather than as independent contractors, and pushing for cleaner air.

"We've got two different life expectancies in my district," Pearce explained. "On 10th Street, the life expectancy is six years less than those who live on Ocean Boulevard. When you see a six-year difference in life expectancy within two miles as a result of poverty, crime, poor air quality and asthma rates, these are problems I'll continue to deliver on."

Overall, the recall effort has reaffirmed the councilmember's connection with her district. "When you have people spend this kind of money, when you have the old guard in Long Beach fight you tooth and nail to try to unseat you and they can't even get the signatures, I think it really demonstrates that the 2nd District has made their choice. Not for the first time, but for the second time, that I'm the person they want in this seat." ■



Second District Councilmember Jeannine Pearce is pictured in front of her "integrity wall" at her home. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Anne Arley)

you," Pearce reflected. "It's taken a lot for me to say, 'thank you for the process,' but I learned a lot about myself and my community. I've also learned about resilience, about courage and governing. Since none of us get into office by ourselves, everybody has an opinion on what you should do."

Pearce said one of her main goals is ensuring Long Beach is a business-friendly city, not only for big businesses but for

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