

Lexington Hotel to shutter its doors

Written by By Rick Abasta Sun Correspondent
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Care 66 cites lack of funding as reason

Community Area Resource Enterprise, also known as CARE 66, is closing the doors to the Lexington Hotel on Sept. 30.

Staff is currently meeting with residents one-on-one to transition tenants to other housing possibilities, according to executive director Sanjay Choudhrie.

Thirty tenants are affected by the closure, most of them disabled, recovering addicts and formerly homeless people getting their lives back in order. Most of them are Native American.

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“We hope to have everyone placed by the middle of September,” he said.

The annual budget for Care 66 is \$500,000 to provide case management, employment placement, administration and other services.

The source of funding was the Native American Housing and Self Determination Act grant funding from Navajo Housing Authority, he said, adding that the tribal housing entity no longer funds Care 66.

“They used to fund us, but NHA stopped funding us in 2011-2012. It would be great if they could fund us again, then we wouldn’t have to close,” he said. “They have effective barriers (today). We’ve tried calling them.”

He said a recent attempt to meet with the new CEO was not possible and instead he was told to try again next month.

Choudhrie said homeless services will suffer and that the need for assistance is great. He said the organization receives about 1,000 calls per month from people in search of housing.

While there is a great need for affordable housing in the community, partners are non-existent when it comes to investing or subsidizing such housing opportunities, he said.

“We are looking for a buyer for the Lexington Hotel,” he said.

The organization has been surviving without operating grants for over a year and CARE 66 reached out to the mayor’s office to inform them of the closure. He has not reached out for assistance from county.

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“I informed the city that we would be closing. They said they were looking at what they could do to help,” he said.

Gallup City Manager Maryann Ustick stated in an email Thursday, at this juncture, she doesn't want to comment as she's getting information on the closure from other sources.

“We are aware and are exploring options, but that is all I can say at this point,” she said.

Care 66 will continue providing services as an organization. And for people interested in contributing to the non-profit organization can donate through their blog.

“It will help us fix windows and pay our staff through the closeout,” he said.

Information: www.care66.org

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