

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: APRIL 2, 2007

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Mason  
Sheehan  
Haskell  
F. Thomas  
Tessier  
Champagne  
Sokol

Others Present:

Representing Health Services Department:

Patricia Auer, Director  
Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director, Home Care  
Ginelle Jones, Assistant Director, Public Health  
Services  
Tawn Driscoll, Provisional Fiscal Manager  
William Thomas, Chairman  
Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative and  
Fiscal Services  
Joan Sady, Clerk, Board of Supervisors  
Supervisor Caimano, Budget Officer  
Supervisor Kenny  
Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk

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Mr. Mason called the Health Services Committee meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Patricia Auer, Director of Health Services, and she distributed copies of her Agenda packet for the meeting. A copy of the packet is on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Auer commenced with review of the Pending Items as outlined on the agenda. She spoke on an issue that had occurred with the monitors for the Telemedicine Program. Mrs. Auer explained the monitors had not been programmed for the earlier commencement of Daylight Savings Time this year. As a result, she noted, they had not transmitted the patients' data to the Department at the right time. However, Mrs. Auer reported, the nurses were able to change the chips in the equipment and the problems had only lasted a few days. She stated things were now back to normal with the monitors.

Relative to the Update on the Pandemic Flu Planning Efforts, Mrs. Auer referred the Committee members to a Report on the ongoing planning activities that were held in March that was included in the agenda packet. She recalled at last month's meeting, Mr. Haskell had raised concerns about establishing priorities for who would be inoculated in the event of a Pandemic Flu. Mrs. Auer advised she had spoken with other Counties about that issue. However, she stated, there was not a way to establish such priorities because they did not know what type of flu they would have to deal with. She noted they had spoken to the other Counties because they wanted

to make sure they were not behind the curve relative to this issue and they were not.

Concluding the Pending Items, Mrs. Auer stated as a result of discussions at the last couple of Committee meetings, she would like to request approval of a resolution to rescind Resolution Nos. 142 of 1987 and 166 of 1987 which had established guidelines for a County policy to provide free and reduced care (to the Department's patients). She noted the guidelines had included the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to administer the free and reduced care. However, Mrs. Auer advised, during the discussion it was concluded that to their knowledge the Ad Hoc Committee had never been formed. In addition, she explained the Department did not need such a Committee because as a County Health Services Department, it was required by State Law to provide at least 3.33% of its care as charity care. Mrs. Auer advised from now on they would be providing the Committee members with a monthly report that would show the type, amount and rationale for the free and reduced fee care that was provided throughout the year. She stated the first Report on the free care was attached to the agenda and it was entitled, "Free Care Patients". Mrs. Auer noted Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director of the Home Care Division, had prepared the Report and the Committee members were invited to contact her with any questions they might have about the information.

Mr. Champagne entered the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve a resolution to rescind Resolution Nos. 142 of 1987 and 166 of 1987. Copies of a resolution request form and attachments are on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Auer proceeded with review of the New Business items on the agenda. First, she said Mr. Mason would report on a recent meeting with United States Congresswoman, Kirsten Gillibrand.

Mr. Mason reported the meeting was held at the Hyde Museum in Glens Falls and that a majority of the Supervisors attended the meeting. He commented the meeting was interesting, although he was not sure whether or not it would be too effective. Mr. Mason advised everyone in attendance was asked what issues they would like to have the Congresswoman pursue. He stated on behalf of the Committee, he had asked that funding be considered for the equipment for the Point of Care Program. As a result of the meeting, Mr. Mason advised Congresswoman Gillibrand, was going to have one of her representatives come to the County to visit the Health Services Department. He remarked he hoped as a result of the visit, the County would be able to receive some additional funding for this equipment.

General discussion ensued. Regarding the schedule for the Congresswoman's representative's visit, Mrs. Auer advised it had been scheduled for last week on the day the Municipal Center was closed due to an electrical problem; therefore it needed to be rescheduled. She said she hoped the meeting would be held before the next Committee meeting and they would keep the Committee members posted on the status of the aforementioned meeting.

The next item Mrs. Auer noted, was a request for the Committee's authorization for Dana Hall, a Registered Nurse (RN) in the Department, to travel to the 2007 New York State Immunization Meeting in Cooperstown, New York from April 23 through 25, 2007. She stated according to the County's new Travel Policy regulations, a resolution was not needed to approve the travel; however, the Committee's authorization was required. Joan Sady, Clerk, Board of Supervisors, confirmed that was the correct procedure for the request.

Mrs. Auer explained that NYSACHO (New York State Association of County Health Officials) would cover the entire cost of the Meeting, lodging and food. She noted if the Committee approved the request, Mrs. Hall would use one of the Department's fleet vehicles to drive to the Meeting. Mrs. Auer apprised she would be paid her salary for the days she attended the conference.

It was the consensus of the Committee members to authorize the travel request, as presented. A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention for Overnight Travel form and copies of the agenda for the Meeting are on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Auer requested approval to authorize a contract with Achievements to provide Evaluations and Related Services for children enrolled in the Early Intervention (EI) and Preschool Special Education Programs. She stated Achievements, was an educational institution based in Latham, New York, and if the agency's services were needed for evaluations or other services, such as speech therapy, they would come to the County to provide them. Mrs. Auer noted they currently had a shortage of speech therapists and the State Education Department had a new plan for declassifying children from these services under which they had to be reevaluated. That would increase the number of evaluations they would have to provide, she added.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. Tessier to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. Following brief discussion, the motion was carried unanimously. A copy of a resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Next, Mrs. Auer requested approval to amend the Department's current contract with MVP Health Care to include CIGNA Health Care. She explained the two companies had formed an alliance in order to offer companies who had employees residing in multiple states, including New York, full health benefit plans. Mrs. Auer stated according to the terms of the Department's Ancillary Provider Agreement with MVP Health Care they were required to amend the contract to reflect the new alliance.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. A copy of a resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Auer requested approval to amend Resolution No. 603 of 2006 which had authorized a

contract with Outcome Concept Systems (OCS) to include the Benchmark Business Intelligence (BBI) and Electronic Performance Improvement Consultant Services (EPIC) for the Homecare Net Billing System in the amount of \$5,000.

Mrs. Auer explained that last fall they did not renew part of this contract for this year because they had anticipated they might move to the Point of Care Program and that would have involved another type of billing system from what was currently used. However, she stated, since they were not using the Point of Care Program yet, another contract was needed in order to obtain the necessary patient data for the Medicare billings. Mrs. Auer advised the contract would be up for renewal in October of this year and they would evaluate the situation again at that time.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. A copy of a resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Auer stated the County Attorney had asked her to request approval to authorize a technical amendment to the language in the current contracts with several Business Associates of the Department to standardize the language pertaining to Regions One and Two within the County. She advised the request concerned rate increases that were approved last month for physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech therapists (Resolution No. 199 of 2007). Mrs. Auer apprised there would be no further rate increases for these contracts. The contracts were with the following business associates: 1) Joseph Hickey, Respiratory Therapist; 2) Celeste Mangiardi, Medical Social Worker; 3) Patricia Adams, Medical Social Worker, 4) Elizabeth Caples, Registered Dietician, and 5) Geraldine Torrence, Registered Dietician.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. A copy of a resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Auer spoke on an issue concerning the Early Intervention (EI) Program. She said she thought the issue should be forwarded to the Legislative Committee, and she asked for guidance in that regard. Mrs. Auer noted the issue seemed to be a call for insurance reform for the EI Program which involved the way the State was billing for the Program. However, she explained, the actual issue was that there was proposed State legislation that would allow the Counties to be able to recoup more of the Program's costs. Mrs. Auer advised that currently the private insurance companies did not contribute anywhere near the amount of the costs of the services that were being provided. She noted when the EI Program began it was billed as an entitlement program, but it had grown considerably since then.

Mrs. Auer advised the proposed legislation would permit the County to join the bandwagon that the State supported. She said she had called last week when it appeared the State budget would be passed on time to see if it would be "too little too late" for the legislation. Mrs. Auer advised it was not too late because the proposed legislation could be legislative reform after the budget that

would help to obtain more funds from the private insurance companies. She referred the Committee members to copies of draft letters to Senator Elizabeth Little and Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward and a draft resolution in support of the legislation that were attached to the agenda.

Dialogue ensued between Mrs. Auer and Mrs. Sady on how to handle the letters and draft resolution. Mrs. Sady noted the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors could sign the letters and they could be sent out. However, she advised the Legislative Committee would be meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup>, so they might want the resolution to come from that Committee.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to refer the letters and the draft resolution to the Legislative Committee.

Review of the agenda continued, and Mrs. Auer requested approval to authorize a contract with Glens Falls Hospital Information Services for "Remote Access Services and Confidentiality". She noted they had been trying to obtain these services for some time. Mrs. Auer explained the services would provide them with more accurate information on the patients that were referred to the agency, particularly with regard to treatments and discharge medications. She stated the contract would include a policy and procedure that would provide for restricted access and that would assure the patients' confidentiality. Brief discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. A copy of a resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. W. Thomas and Mr. Caimano entered the meeting at 9:52 a.m.

Mrs. Auer outlined a request for approval of a referral to the Personnel Committee. She asked that a Registered Nurse (RN) position, Grade 19, base salary of \$38,308, be reclassified to a Public Health Nurse (PHN) position, Grade 21, base salary of \$40,962, and that the Department's Table of Organization be amended accordingly. Mrs. Auer noted the RN position had been reclassified from a Community Health Nurse (CHN) position last month due to a retirement because they had not felt they would be able to find a qualified CHN to fill the vacancy. However, she stated, as a result of the required posting of the position within the County, a qualified PHN had applied for the position and they would like to be able to hire her. Mrs. Auer noted the vacancy had not yet been advertised in the local area.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request, and to refer it to the Personnel Committee. *(Note: Subsequent to the meeting, Mrs. Auer advised the Clerk of the Board's Office that the candidate for the position had withdrawn her application.)* The aforementioned request was referred to the Personnel Committee in case someone had applied before the Personnel Committee meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Auer spoke on an issue relative to attendance at several immunization clinics that the Department had offered for many years in various communities throughout the County. However, she explained, over time they had been providing more clinics at the Department's Office in the Municipal Center and now they were holding three clinics there each month. In the meantime, Mrs. Auer reported, the clinics that were held every other month in the Warrensburg Town Hall, the Lake Luzerne Court House, the North Creek Firehouse, the Horicon Community Center and the McEchron House in Glens Falls saw no attendance in 2006. She advised as a result they had discussed the situation with the Department's Professional Advisory Committee and everyone felt that was not a good situation.

Mrs. Auer continued, and she advised they did provide secondary distribution of vaccines from the NYSDOH (New York State Department of Health's) Vaccine for Children's (VFC) Program to all of the health care providers in the County, so that even children who were uninsured or underinsured were not charged for vaccinations when they were taken to a physician's office. She reported the statistics they received on immunizations did show that children who were entering school had been immunized properly. Mrs. Auer stated they did not have a lot of nursing time to have staff just waiting for someone to come to the clinics. Although, she said, they did not want to disband the clinics without getting the Committee's input first.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell and seconded by Mr. Champagne that the aforementioned clinics should be discontinued. Mrs. Auer stated if there was a hardship situation in any of the Towns they could be contacted and they would arrange to provide the services. She concurred the Department also felt the clinics should be discontinued. The motion was carried unanimously.

Concluding the agenda, Mrs. Auer noted that Tawn Driscoll, the Department's Provisional Fiscal Manager, would review the Expenditures and Revenues Report and a Transfer of Funds. She noted the Report of Free/Reduced Fee Care had already been discussed. A copy of the Expenditures and Revenues Report was attached to the agenda.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Driscoll, and she stated the Expenditures and Revenues were up to date as of February 28<sup>th</sup>. She apprised the December 2006 figures were completed last week because there had been a problem with a batch of invoices and those numbers would be in by the end of March. Ms. Driscoll explained the 2007 Revenues were so low because the figures were usually two months behind. The Revenues would begin to show by March, she added.

Mr. Kenny entered the meeting at 9:59 a.m.

Ms. Driscoll requested approval of a Transfer of Funds. She apprised the first three items in the request totalled \$4,600 and the transfers were needed to move funds from the Health Services - Part Time Salary code (A.4010 130) into other Program codes in order to cover the salary of Sandra Watson, a Nutritionist in the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program, who had also provided services in the Long Term Care Program, the Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA),

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the EI and Preschool Program and in WIC.

Ms. Driscoll apprised the second part of the Request for Transfer of Funds was for a total amount of \$9,000 and it was to cover overtime costs in the Physically Handicapped/EI Children's Program, WIC and the Preventative - Disease Program.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried uananimously to approve the Request for Transfer of Funds, as presented, and to refer it to the Finance Committee. A copy of the Request for Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. Tessier, Mr. Mason adjourned the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk