

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: NOVEMBER 28, 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS MASON
SHEEHAN
F. THOMAS
TESSIER
CHAMPAGNE
SOKOL

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR HASKELL

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

PATRICIA AUER, DIRECTOR, HEALTH SERVICES
GINELLE JONES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH
SHARON SCHALDONE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, HOME CARE
TAWN DRISCOLL, FISCAL MANAGER

REPRESENTING DPW FLEET MANAGEMENT:

WILLIAM LAMY, SUPERINTENDENT
BRUCE BELDEN, AUTO MECHANIC SUPERVISOR

JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD

DAVID STRAINER, QUEENSBURY AT-LARGE SUPERVISOR ELECT
AMANDA ALLEN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the October 31, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Patricia Auer, Director of Health Services, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer began by noting that the agenda included a listing of the usual pandemic flu planning efforts. She asked the Committee members to review the listing at their convenience and contact her if they should have any questions.

Mrs. Auer advised that, as per discussion at the previous Committee meeting, the informational Transfat presentation was to be postponed until the meeting agenda allowed for sufficient time to discuss the subject.

Moving along, Mrs. Auer stated that the next agenda item referred to Health Services fleet management and she reminded the Committee that at their last meeting, they had requested that Bruce Belden, Auto Mechanic Supervisor, and William Lamy, DPW Superintendent, be present to discuss fleet management issues. She noted that both Mr. B. Belden and Mr. Lamy were present and she thanked them both for their attendance. Mrs. Auer advised that because Mr. Champagne had been the primary proponent for increased fleet management measures, she would defer privilege of the floor to him for discussion of this item.

Mr. Champagne stated that during the prior year the Committee had determined that definitive tracking policies were required for fleet management and it was determined that upgraded software was required to appropriately time replacement of fleet vehicles according to mileage and condition. He added that at that time it had also been proven fiscally prudent to utilize County resources to repair and maintain fleet vehicles, rather than to have the services provided commercially. Mr. Champagne advised that since the change in maintenance arrangements, there had been issues with the length of the time that fleet vehicles were out of services for repairs.

Mr. Champagne asked Mr. Lamy and Mr. B. Belden if they had any suggestions for improvement to the current system in order to decrease the amount of time that vehicles were unavailable to the nurses which

were required for them to perform their jobs. Mr. B. Belden replied that they had recently restructured personnel to add employees to their mechanic staff so there were more employees working on fleet vehicles. He explained that one of the mechanics previously involved in fleet vehicle maintenance had left the position in September and they had been working short handed since that time. Mr. Lamy added that there had also been a retirement during the prior summer and in working with the DPW Committee they had restructured the Department to allow for a second mechanic devoted solely to maintenance of fleet vehicles. He said that the Committee should keep in mind that Health Services was not the only Department experiencing difficulty with the turnaround time for vehicle repairs. Mr. Lamy apprised that the DPW Department required repairs to their snow and ice removal equipment, due to the fact that the equipment was in severe disrepair and he noted that the DPW Committee had recently authorized the issuance of a bond to purchase new DPW equipment over the next two years to replace these old items. Mr. Lamy stated that he wanted the Committee to be aware that this was not an issue specific to the Health Services Department, but rather was present in his own Department as well; however, he pointed out, they attempted to schedule appropriately to allow sufficient time for repairs while affecting the progress of the Department as little as possible. Mr. Lamy said that through the efforts of the increased staff and the replacement of DPW equipment that constantly required repairs, he felt the fleet management issues would tremendously improve over the course of 2008.

Mr. B. Belden noted that the newer fleet vehicles received dealership maintenance while under warranty; however, he added they were at the mercy of the dealership for scheduling such maintenance at their availability. Mr. Champagne pointed out that alignment procedures could not be performed by fleet maintenance because they did not have the appropriate equipment and he asked if these services should be provided commercially when new tires were purchased. Mr. B. Belden replied that such services were already provided by a company in Warrensburg.

Mr. Champagne said that the explanations given by Mr. Lamy and Mr. B. Belden were acceptable and he advised that the Committee would continue to monitor these issues to be sure that they improved. He noted that Mrs. Auer should report back at a future Committee meeting to advise if her Department was seeing better results.

Mrs. Auer advised that during the winter months the vehicles in the Health Services fleet frequently required new windshield wipers and fluid and she asked if these items could be replaced at the garage located at the Municipal Center, rather than transporting the vehicle to the Warrensburg Shop. Mr. B. Belden replied affirmatively and he added that Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, had already been supplied with such items, specifically for this purpose.

Mr. Champagne noted that he had been advised that oil would be changed in the fleet vehicles every 6,000 miles, rather than 3,000, and he asked if this was correct. Mr. B. Belden affirmed this statement, adding that it was possible to change the oil less frequently through the use of a synthetic oil blend. He added that the oil would be changed every six months or 6,000 miles, whichever came first, and the new arrangement would begin as of January 1, 2008. Mr. Mason pointed out that the specifications for newer vehicles allowed for the oil to be changed every 20,000 miles and Mr. B. Belden advised that this was correct, but only through the use of a full synthetic oil which was very expensive. Mr. B. Belden stated that by increasing the oil change mileage they would cut the service time in half for these vehicle. In addition, he noted, he had reviewed the annual usage for the fleet vehicles and found that of the 51 Health Services fleet vehicles, 18 surpassed the 6,000 mile mark annually, and only five of those exceeded 12,000 miles.

Mr. Champagne stated that he had always been bothered by the fact that some of the highest paid County employees, those being nurses, were required to perform the menial tasks of pumping their own gas and he

asked if there might be a way to relieve the nurses from performing this job themselves. He said that he did not know how this position could be created but it seemed to him that there should be one employee in charge of checking gas, oil, tire pressure and such in order to preserve the life of the fleet vehicles, while at the same time presenting the nurses with additional time to perform the more important duties required of them. Mr. Lamy replied that all County staff using fleet vehicles were required to pump their own gas and it was not likely that a position could be created as suggested by Mr. Champagne as he was currently experiencing difficulty in gaining positions for a Safety Officer, a Recycling Coordinator and a Stormwater Officer added to the DPW staff, regardless of the fact that all three were required for compliance with State agencies.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. F. Thomas asked if it would be more cost effective to utilize a bay of the garage located at the Municipal Center for oil changes and maintenance on a 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift to save the costs and time required to transport the vehicles to the Warrensburg Shop and to keep the cars in services during normal business hours. Mr. Lamy replied that this would have been a good idea if it had been considered when the garage at either the Municipal Center or the Safety Building was built; however, he said, neither included the lift necessary for oil changes and maintenance. In addition, he noted, he would have to review the plans for both buildings to determine if an oil and water separator had been included in either, as this was a prerequisite for oil change services. Mr. Lamy stated that in addition to the costs of the equipment needed to implement a second site for oil changes and repairs, they would have to consider the costs of staffing two separate shops, while recognizing that major repairs would still have to be done at the Warrensburg Shop. He noted that the Committee should keep in mind that DPW equipment requests were cut from the Budget each year and it was not likely that sufficient funding would be granted to support two garages.

Mr. Tessier noted that the Town of Lake George had only 10 fleet vehicles and employed two Auto Mechanics to care for them. He noted that they should consider the total number of County vehicles as compared to the Auto Mechanic staff and garage space to determine if additional staff and possibly another garage were necessary to adequately care for all of the fleet vehicles. Mr. B. Belden apprised that there were 217 DPW fleet vehicles and 51 Health Services fleet vehicles, as well as both the Social Services and Veterans' Services fleet vehicles, all requiring maintenance from the minimal Automotive Mechanic staff. Mr. Lamy pointed out that rather than incurring the costs of additional staffing and space, they might consider bidding out some of the services required as there might be a cost savings. He added that regardless of the options chosen, he suggested that the vehicle inspections continue to be performed by DPW staff because in the past there had been issues with inspections not being thoroughly completed by commercial garages. Mr. Lamy stated that although it might be less time consuming to have oil changes done commercially, the benefit of using trained County mechanics was that they inspected other areas of the vehicle while performing the duties required. He said that in this situation they would have to decide whether they preferred the convenience of a commercial garage or the full service given by the Auto Mechanic staff.

Mr. Champagne recalled that in the past when the oil changes were performed commercially, it had not been cost effective for the County because the Nurses were required to take their fleet vehicle for an oil change and wait for it to be completed before returning to work, meaning that their services were lost for a portion of the day. In light of this past experience, he said, it was his opinion that they should continue to have the fleet vehicles maintained by DPW. Mr. Champagne then asked if each Nurse was assigned to a specific fleet vehicle and Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director of Home Care, replied affirmatively, noting that when their vehicle was being maintained the nurse was give another vehicle in replacement.

Ms. Schaldone apprised that some of the complaints were the result of a changing procedure, which was difficult for some employees to accept. She said that she felt the improved records and maintenance schedules being kept by Mr. B. Belden, along with the ability to express their concerns directly to him, were helping the Nursing staff to become more comfortable with the procedures. Ms. Schaldone added that she thought increased communication concerning problems found with the vehicles, and the reasons why they had to be kept for service longer than anticipated, would alleviate the majority of fleet management issues. Mr. Lamy and Mr. B. Belden both agreed that they could certainly inform their staff to verbally communicate these issues with the Nursing staff. Mr. B. Belden added that this had not been done in the past because an account of the repairs made were always noted on the service order developed at the completion of the work.

Mr. Champagne commended Mr. Lamy, Mr. B. Belden and the DPW staff for their efforts and the improvements made to the fleet maintenance procedures, which now needed only some fine tuning. Mr. Lamy responded that they also wanted the arrangement to work and it was their goal to avoid fleet vehicles being out of service unnecessarily. However, he noted, as the winter season was just beginning, it was important to keep in mind that when snow and ice removal equipment required repair it would take precedence over other fleet vehicles requiring service.

Mr. Mason thanked Mr. Lamy and Mr. B. Belden for their attendance and for answering the Committee's questions. He said that it was his hope that the dialogue between the Committee and DPW would continue to further improve fleet management issues.

Mr. Lamy and Mr. B. Belden left the meeting at 9:56 a.m.

Returning to the agenda review, Mrs. Auer reminded the Committee that during their prior meeting Mr. Haskell had asked if the Tobacco Survey was gender specific. She apprised that not only was it gender specific, it was also age and grade specific and provided the age of first tobacco and alcohol use. Mrs. Auer added that she had recently received a copy of the Tobacco Survey for the 2007 - 2008 school year, but had not included it in the agenda. Mrs. Auer advised that she would present the Survey at the next Committee meeting.

Mrs. Auer apprised that the next agenda item referred to the proposed development of the Division of Fiscal and Information Services and she noted that the agenda included a request to create the new position of Clinical and Fiscal Information Coordinator to head this division. She explained that in continuing the discussion from last month's meeting, and at the request of the Committee members, she had met with Richard Kelly, Personnel Officer, to discuss the classification of the title for the position and was informed that the title of Clinical and Fiscal Information Coordinator had been developed and classified by Civil Service. Mrs. Auer added that copies of the proposed job description and associated funding proposal were included in the agenda as well. She noted that the position was vital to the continued growth and success of the Health Services Department from both a fiscal and technological perspective.

Mr. Sokol asked if the salary associated with the position (\$57,975) was competitive and Mrs. Auer replied affirmatively, adding that she felt that they stood a good chance of attracting a capable person to fill this position. Mr. Champagne asked if there was a need for additional equipment to facilitate this position and Mrs. Auer replied in the negative, advising that the person would be working with the existing equipment. She added that this position would give the expertise needed to gain the best results from the new Point of Care system.

Mr. Mason advised that with the implementation of the new Point of Care program impending for 2008, it was very important to get the position in place as quickly as possible.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to create the new position of Clinical and Fiscal Information Coordinator with a base salary of \$57,975 and refer same to the Personnel/Human Resources and Finance Committees. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Proceeding to the New Business section of the agenda, Mrs. Auer apprised that the first item listed referred to a request to authorize a new contract with Donna Sauer-Jones to provide Medical Social Work Services. She explained that this service was included in the Health Department's operating certificate for the LTHHCP (Long Term Home Health Care Program), and must be provided. Mrs. Auer added that these visits would serve as a billable service.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request for a new contract with Donna Sauer-Jones for Medical Social Work Services, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer advised that the next New Business item was a request to amend the contract with NYSDOH (New York State Division of Health) to authorize the receipt of COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) funds for the WIC (Women, Infants & Children) Program for the fiscal year 2007-2008. She explained that the funds received would be in the amount of 5.16% of the executed contract value for the current contract year (*Contract amount: \$477,497.00. COLA amount: 24,638.84*).

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the contract with NYSDOH to authorize the receipt of COLA funds in the amount of \$24,638.84 for the WIC program, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

The next agenda item, Mrs. Auer apprised, was a request to fill the vacant position of part-time WIC Program Aide, which included no health benefits. She noted that the position was funded in the 2008 Budget and the salary was covered by grant funding received from NYSDOH.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant part-time position of WIC Program Aide with a base salary of \$11,494 and refer same to the Personnel/Human Resources Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing, Mrs. Auer advised that the final request listed in the agenda was to authorize setting per-diem hourly rates for nurses to reflect the salary increases in the newly adopted 4-year CSEA contract. She noted that the rates reflect a 3.5% increase each year based on the current rates paid to nurses working on a per-diem basis, *as reflected by the following chart:*

Title	2008	2009	2010	2011
Nurse Technician	\$15.83	\$16.38	\$16.95	\$17.54
Registered Nurse	\$20.17	\$20.88	\$21.61	\$22.37
Community Health Nurse	\$20.60	\$21.32	\$22.07	\$22.84
Public Health Nurse	\$21.54	\$22.29	\$23.07	\$23.88

Mrs. Auer explained that the use of per-diem nurses saved on overtime costs and provided great assistance in meeting patient care demands, as well as covering vacations and lengthy disability leaves.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the

request to authorizing setting per-diem hourly rates to reflect the salary increases, as outline above, and refer same to the Personnel/Human Resources and Finance Committees.

Mrs. Auer informed the Committee that in anticipation of the coming Point of Care Electronic Medical Record Project, she'd had conversations with Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, on how to begin the procedure. She explained that he had advised that they should work with Julie Pacyna, Purchasing Agent, to develop an RFP (Request for Proposal) for future vendors. Mrs. Auer said that they would begin this process and would advise the Committee when bids were received and once the total amount needed for the project was known, they would begin the procedure for bonding those costs. She noted that they had already spent a considerable amount of time speaking with a number of vendors discussing the available products. Mrs. Auer stated that although a lot of work would be required to get the Point of Care program in place, they were excited about the project and very eager to begin.

The next agenda item, Mrs. Auer advised, referred to a Budget transfer which she asked Tawn Driscoll, Fiscal Manager, to explain to the Committee. Ms. Driscoll stated that several transfers were required and she detailed them as follows:

<u>From Code:</u>	<u>To Code:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
A.2680 Insurance Recoveries	A.4010.441 Health - CHHA Auto Repairs	\$1,681.75
A.4013.418 WIC - Insurance - General Liab.	A.4013.220 WIC - Office Equipment	90.00
A.4189.130 Bioterrorism - Part Time Salaries	A.4189.110 Bioterrorism - Regular Salaries	1,000.00
A.4189.130 Bioterrorism - Part Time Salaries	A.4189.120 Bioterrorism - Overtime Salaries	18.00
A.4016.470 Long Term Health Care - Contract	A.4010.470 Health Services - Contract	150,000.00
A .4018.0030.442 Disease Control Pgm. - Auto Gas & Oil	A.4018.0020.442 Family Health Pgm. Auto Gas & Oil	500.00

Ms. Driscoll explained that the transfers were necessary to move funds recently received from an auto accident, cover the cost of a portable copier purchase in the WIC Department, cover regular and overtime salary costs for Bioterrorism call pay through the end of 2007, cover therapy contract costs in the CHHA (Certified Home Health Aide) programs and gas and oil costs in the Family Health Program.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve all of the transfers as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer advised that a copy of both the Report of Free and Reduced Care and the Revenues and Expenditures Report were included in the agenda for the Committee members to review at their leisure. She noted that the actual revenues received would not be known for fact until the beginning of 2008 as the State was behind in forwarding reimbursement. However, Mrs. Auer added, it was their estimation that the revenues anticipated would be received.

Mr. Mason reminded the Committee that the WIC funding previously in question of receipt was going to be received and this was due primarily to Mrs. Auer's efforts. Mrs. Auer recanted that she had simply asked that a State representative attend a Health Services Committee meeting to explain the lack of promised funding and it was restored.

Mrs. Auer advised that the final agenda item referred to the need for an executive session to discuss the hiring of a particular accounting firm.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously that executive session be declared to discuss matters leading to the employment of a particular firm, pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session ensued from 10:06 a.m. to 10:13 a.m.

Upon reconvening, Mrs. Auer advised that she recommended the use of Whittemore, Downen and Ricciardelli to develop their Medicare/Medicaid cost reports. She said that although they were the second lowest bidder, she recommended them due to their experience level.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to contract with Whittemore, Downen & Ricciardelli as the accounting firm to provide Medicare/Medicaid cost reports, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

As it would be his last Committee meeting, Mrs. Auer thanked Mr. Mason for all his past support of her Department and for his efforts as Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Mason thanked Mrs. Auer for her sentiment and he stated that he was very proud to say that Warren County was one of the leading agencies in the State of New York for the programs in use. He said that he was also very happy to see that the Point of Care Program was coming to fruition.

Mr. Champagne stated that he had received services from the Health Services Department during his recent illness and he noted that the staff attending him had done so with the highest level of professionalism and he commended them for the services they provided on a daily basis. Mr. Mason agreed with this statement, noting that his wife had also received such services during her illness and he was very happy with the care she had received.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Sokol and seconded by Mr. F. Thomas, Mr. Mason adjourned the meeting at 10:16 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist