

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY & COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME

DATE: JULY 27, 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS HASKELL
TESSIER
O'CONNOR
MASON
GERAGHTY
SOKOL

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY:
BARBARA TAGGART, ADMINISTRATOR
ROSEMARY DUERS, DIRECTOR OF NURSES
PATTI FIORE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF NURSES
REPRESENTING COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME:
BRENDA HAYES, DIRECTOR
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND
FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
TODD LUNT, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
CHARLENE DIRESTA, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR CHAMPAGNE

Mr. Haskell called the meeting of the Westmount Health Facility & Countryside Adult Home Committee (Held at Westmount Health Facility) to order at 11:05 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Barbara Taggart, Administrator of Westmount Health Facility, who distributed copies of the Agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the Agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Taggart stated that Item No. 1 on the Agenda pertained to the air handling units at Westmount. She said that the facility needed to purchase two air handling units, for a total cost of approximately \$129,640. She noted that a copy of the voucher for this purchase was included in the Agenda packet. She apprised she had spoken with Wayne Allison of Rist-Frost Associates who anticipated that the certified drawings from the manufacturers would be available by August 3, 2007. She added that the installation of the air handling units should begin in October.

Ms. Taggart apprised that Item No. 2 on the Agenda pertained to two requests for Transfer of Funds, as well as a request for authorization to Attend a Meeting or Conference. She said that the first request to transfer funds was needed to replace two dietary menu boards, which were used to record menus, at a cost of \$68. She

added that the funds would be transferred from the Dietary- Supplies code (EF.82100.5906 410) to the Dietary-Furniture/Furnishings code (EF.82100.5802 210). She explained that the second request to transfer funds was to cover the costs of a conference. She noted that the request was to transfer \$339 from the Maintenance-Repair & Maint. Bldg. & Property code (EF.82200.6101 413) to the Activities-Travel/Education/Conference code (EF.72600.8800 444). In connection with the aforementioned request, she added that she was requesting authorization for Dolores Truax to attend the Foundation for Long Term Care Conference at the Queensbury Hotel in Glens Falls, New York on August 23-24, 2007, at a cost of \$339.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to forward the two requests for Transfer of Funds to the Finance Committee and to authorize Dolores Truax to attend the conference as outlined above. *Copies of the requests for Transfer of Funds and the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Taggart apprised that Item No. 3 on the Agenda pertained to two requests for new contracts, the first of which was with Tejas R. Pandya, DPM, to serve as the Podiatrist for the Westmount Health Facility patients. She added that there would be no cost to the County, as Dr. Pandya would bill the patients directly.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to authorize the new contract as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Ms. Taggart stated that the second request for a new contract was with High Peaks Hospice, Inc. Mr. Haskell questioned if the contract would be for the same amount as the previous contract and Ms. Taggart replied that Westmount Health Facility would bill Hospice, as needed.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to authorize the new contract as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Ms. Taggart stated that Item No. 4 on the Agenda pertained to a 'bouncing bounce' that would be rented by the Resident Council for the annual Country Fair on August 10, 2007. She added that Bounce Around, Inc. had forwarded a Certificate of Liability Insurance, a copy of which was included in the Agenda packet.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to authorize the Resident Council to rent a 'bouncing bounce' from Bounce Around, Inc., for Westmount Health Facility's annual Country Fair on August 10, 2007. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Ms. Taggart apprised that Item No. 5 on the Agenda was a request to increase the room rate at Westmount Health Facility for private and semi-private rooms. She explained that the rate would increase from \$225 per day to \$235.85 per day plus the applicable 6% assessment tax, which would bring the total to \$250 per day. She further added that a comparison of room rates for other local nursing facilities was included in the Agenda packet for the Committee's review. Mr. Haskell asked how many of the current residents were private pay and Ms. Taggart responded that there were not many. Mr. O'Connor questioned if the increased rate pertained to medicaid patients or just the private pay patients and Ms. Taggart replied that it was just for private pay patients.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to authorize the increased room rate for Westmount Health Facility as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Ms. Taggart said that Item No. 6 on the Agenda was a discussion on salary comparisons. She added that included in the Agenda packet was a salary comparison sheet of other facilities in the area.

Ms. Taggart apprised that the facility still had a vacant Registered Nurse (RN) Supervisor position on the 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. shift, as well as a vacant RN Relief position that alternated between the 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. shift and the 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. shift.

Ms. Taggart apprised that the Westmount Health Facility had recently advertised in the NYAHS (New York Association of Homes and Services for the Aging) *Advisor*, Job Mart section, which was free of charge. She added that she had spoken with Todd Lunt, Director of Human Resources, about the possibility of hiring a 'headhunter'. She said that 'headhunters' charged a fee for services; however, she stated, she was hoping that would be negotiable. Mr. Lunt said that he knew of a company in Albany that could provide this service; however, he noted, it would cost \$2,000 to \$3,000 if they found a candidate for the position. He added that these companies offered a 90 day guarantee, which meant that the candidate would have to work at Westmount for 90 days before the company was paid the fee.

Rosemary Duers, Director of Nursing, stated that these two positions had been vacant for a long period of time and she added, a lot of funds had been spent on advertising to fill these positions. She said that she thought working in a nursing home was too much responsibility for some nurses to handle.

Mr. Geraghty questioned if the inability to fill these positions was mostly attributable to the salary that was offered and Ms. Duers replied affirmatively. She added that the benefits package offered by the County was wonderful. She further stated that another problem with filling the vacant positions was that most nurses wanted a daytime position.

Mr. Sokol questioned if the positions held that much responsibility, would an increase in salary actually help to fill the positions. Ms. Duers responded that for some nurses the increased salary would make a difference. Patti Fiore, Assistant Director of Nurses, apprised that the Facility needed to be more competitive with salaries. Mr. Geraghty stated that Hudson Headwaters Health Network had similar issues.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Haskell questioned if it was possible during union negotiations to set up two rates of pay, one for those who took the benefits package and one for those who did not. Ms. Duers stated that a lot of the nurses at the Facility were covered by their spouses benefits and did not need those offered by the County. Mr. Haskell said that he felt that this could increase the hourly rate substantially. Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, suggested a stipend, such as, if employees did not take the health insurance the County would give them \$1,000. He added that it would be a significant savings to the County if the employees chose this option. Ms. Taggart stated that Montgomery County had done something similar. Mr. Tessier said that he would recommend paying an additional \$200 per month to employees who did not take the health insurance with the condition that they must provide proof of other coverage. Mr. Haskell apprised that they could not discuss salaries until after the negotiations.

Ms. Duers said that another problem in the nursing home was that a lot of the nurses were single mothers, which made working the night shifts difficult. Mr. Haskell suggested checking into the possibility of setting up a day care program for those departments that had night shifts. Mr. Haskell asked Mr. Payne to check into the costs of starting a day care program for shift workers. Mr. O'Connor stated that a day care program would also create a few more County positions. Ms. Taggart apprised that Item No. 7 on the Agenda was to report on staffing levels and overtime. She added that in addition to the RN Supervisor and the RN

Relief positions that had been discussed previously, there were also two vacant Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) positions. Mr. Haskell questioned why the County could not train their own CNA's. Ms. Fiore stated that the County had done this in the past; however, she said, it was difficult to find someone to run the program and many CNA's would take the training offered and apply it elsewhere.

Ms. Taggart stated that the Physical Therapist Aide (PTA) position was also vacant. She added that the position was temporarily being filled by the Rehab Aide; however, she noted, that arrangement would end on August 14, 2007. She further added that due to the fact that the salary offered was not competitive, she was having difficulties filling the position. Mr. Payne stated that the Stanton Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Glens Falls, New York was paying their Physical Therapist Assistants at the same rate as the Glens Falls Hospital.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Haskell reiterated that the Committee could consider increases in salary after the union negotiations were completed. Mr. Geraghty asked if a per diem employee could be used to fill the position. Mr. Payne responded that the position was being filled; however, he said, it was not at the level that it should be.

Ms. Taggart stated that Item No. 8 on the Agenda pertained to the Facilities new Emergency Code Cards and added that Westmount was in the process of updating their disaster manual. She further added that they had come up with the Emergency Code Cards that were the same size as and would be attached to the back of the employee identification cards. She said that it was a very good quick reference for the employees.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Taggart expounded that Item No. 9 on the Agenda was to officially inform the Committee of her legal name change from Barbara Clements to Barbara Taggart. She added that she was returning to her maiden name.

Ms. Taggart invited the Committee members to attend the Westmount Health Facility Holiday Party, to be held at the Holiday Inn Turf at Lake George on December 1, 2007, at a cost of \$35 per person. She added that an information sheet regarding the party was included in the Agenda packet. She apprised that Westmount was currently hosting the 2007 NYAHSAs Art Competition & Exhibit and she added that there were booklets about the event for anyone who was interested. *A copy of the 2007 NYAHSAs Art Competition & Exhibit booklet is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Sokol stated that he was concerned about the amount of overtime usage and added if the base salary was increased it would cut down on the amount of overtime. Mr. Haskell reiterated that after negotiations the subject could be brought before the full Board with the explanation that the overtime was for coverage of the vacant positions. He added that if the hourly salary was more attractive for incoming employees, the facility would not need to use overtime in order to cover the shifts. Mr. Payne stated that part of the overtime problem was with the change of shifts. He added that when the new shift came on duty, they had to count all of the medications and go over a report with the staff on the prior shift. He further added that this process gave a half hour of overtime to each nurse per day. Mr. Sokol suggested an 8 ½ hour shift with a half hour unpaid lunch to cut down on the overtime. Ms. Fiore stated that she did not feel that this idea would be well accepted due to the fact that the majority of County employees received an hour paid lunch and Westmount employees only received a half hour paid lunch.

Ms. Duers and Ms. Fiore exited the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Brenda Hayes, Director of the Countryside Adult Home, who distributed copies of the Agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the Agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Hayes distributed copies of the Countryside Adult Home color brochure to the Committee members for their review. *A copy of the brochure is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Hayes apprised that Item No. 1 on the Agenda was a request to renew the existing contract with Mahoney Notify-Plus, Inc., for inspection of the Facilities fire and security alarm system. She added that the contract would commence on August 1, 2007 and terminate on July 31, 2008. Mr. Haskell asked if there had been any increase in the cost since the last contract and Mrs. Hayes replied that it was an additional \$21. Mr. Geraghty stated that the amount of the contract seemed high and he asked Mrs. Hayes if she had checked with other companies. Mrs. Hayes replied that Mahoney Notify-Plus was the company that had installed the system. Mr. Payne stated that they were the cheapest available.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to authorize the extension of the contract with Mahoney Notify-Plus, Inc. as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mrs. Hayes expounded that Item No. 2 on the Agenda was a request for a Transfer of Funds in the amount of \$12,018 from the Insurance Recoveries code (2680.01) to the Auto Equipment code (A6030 230), to pay for the new truck purchase. She said that this was the insurance payment from the truck that had been in the accident a few months ago.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to forward the request for Transfer of Funds as outlined above, to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request for Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Hayes apprised that Item No. 3 on the Agenda was an Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention. She added that she would be attending the Financial Statement Analysis Seminar at the Best Western Sovereign Hotel in Albany, New York on August 22, 2007, at a cost of \$199. She further added that the funds were available within the budget and that she would be using her own vehicle at no additional cost to the County.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to authorize Brenda Hayes to attend the Financial Statement Analysis as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Hayes stated that Item No. 4 on the Agenda was a request to rescind Resolution No. 445 of 2007, which had authorized Countryside Adult Home to apply for grant funding from the New York State Office of the Aging for a Social Adult Day Care Program. She added that after reviewing the required needs for the Social Adult Day Care Program, she was unable to substantiate the \$35,000 of financial need that was required in order to apply for the grant.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to rescind Resolution No. 445 of 2007 as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mrs. Hayes expounded that Item No. 5 on the Agenda was to discuss the budget analysis that had been performed regarding the Social Adult Day Care Program. She added that it was necessary to provide \$35,000 of need in order to apply for the grant. She said that she had accounted for an estimated expense of approximately \$67,457 to operate the Social Day Care unit; however, she noted, the majority of the expenses had been for items that the facility had accounted for

already, such as electricity, heat, phone and linen.

Mrs. Hayes stated that Item No. 6 on the Agenda was a request to operate a Social Day Care Program utilizing six beds. She added that she had researched the fees charged for this type of service in the community and had discovered that the average fee charged was \$5 to \$6 per hour. She explained that if she charged \$5 or \$6 per hour, the income from the Social Adult Day Care Program would be more than the expenses, which is why she was unable to apply for the grant. She added that she still wanted to run the program and that she would be able to without the need for additional staff. She requested to apply to New York State for permission to operate a Social Adult Day Care Program. She said that if the program was approved by New York State, they would send her a letter stating that she was free to begin the program.

Mr. Haskell asked which rate Mrs. Hayes intended to charge for the service and Mrs. Hayes replied that the charge would be \$5 per hour. She added that it was not her intention to make a profit with the program; however, she said, participants in the program could become future residents. Mr. O'Connor questioned the lounge chairs that were listed on the budget analysis as \$1,100 each. Mrs. Hayes replied that the lounge chairs, which were expensive because they were waterproof, would only have been purchased if they had been awarded the grant. She added that she would not be purchasing any new furniture to run the program.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to authorize the Countryside Adult Home to apply to the New York State Department of Health for approval to operate a Social Adult Day Care Program. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mr. Mason stated that at one point this Committee had discussed downsizing the occupancy level of the facility and cutting back on the staff and Mrs. Hayes responded that nothing had been decided and she was trying to increase the occupancy of the facility. Mr. Mason said that they had discussed vacating 15 rooms and reducing the licensed capacity of the facility from 60 people to 40 people. Mrs. Hayes said that the facility was licensed for 60 people; therefore, she stated, additional staff was not needed to operate the Social Adult Day Care Program.

Discussion ensued.

Mrs. Hayes apprised that Item No. 7 on the Agenda was a request to apply for

Respite Care Services utilizing four beds. She stated that she had been working with Patricia Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney, on an admission agreement for Respite Care Services.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to authorize Countryside Adult Home to apply to the New York State Department of Health for Respite Care Services. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mrs. Hayes stated that she had authorized Siemens Building Technologies to repair the generator at Countryside Adult Home. She added that she had been unaware that Countryside Adult Home had a contract with another company. She said that Siemens had already been in the building working on the air conditioning when an emergency issue arose with the generator. She apprised that she had asked Siemens to look at the generator which they had repaired successfully and she was now requesting that the invoice be paid. She acknowledged that she had made a mistake by not using the company that was under contract.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to authorize the payment to Siemens Building Technologies for the repair of the generator at the Countryside Adult Home in the amount of \$717. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes.*

As there was no further business to come before the Westmount Health Facility & Countryside Adult Home Committee, on motion made by Mr. O'Connor and seconded by Mr. Sokol, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Legislative Office Specialist