

Public Health Committee Minutes  
April 9, 2012 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Wright; Supervisors Raymond, Kinowski Veitch, Southworth, Grattidge, Yepsen, and Wood; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Diane Brown, Maplewood Manor; Karen Levison, Public Health; Jack Kalinkewicz, Personnel; Bob Wilcox, County Attorney; George Martin, Treasurer; Hans Lehr, Mental Health; Press.

Chairman Wright called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**On a motion made by Mrs. Southworth, seconded by Mr. Veitch the minutes of the March 12, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mrs. Brown said the employee meal program has been in the process of being phased out since 1981. Any employees that were hired after January 1, 1981 are not eligible and, in addition, anyone who worked 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. is not eligible. At this point there are four employees that are qualified, with two employees that take the program. The current cost per meal is \$2.75. Mrs. Brown said she is requesting that the price remain at \$2.75 for the two employees.

**A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Ms. Raymond to continue the employee meal plan at Maplewood Manor at the rate of \$2.75 per meal for the two employees currently on the meal plan. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Brown announced May 13<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> as National Nursing Home Week. She requested a resolution to honor and recognize the residents and staff of all nursing homes in the county.

**A motion was made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to approve a resolution recognizing National Nursing Home Week May 13<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>, and acknowledging the services provided by all the Saratoga County Nursing Homes. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Brown said Royal Care has approached Maplewood Manor about the way they are paid for consultant pharmacist services. This was because the office of Inspector General had created a substantial uncertainty about the legality of pricing discounts for services to governmental entities.

Ms. Raymond suggested that the county write to the Office of Inspector General between now and September as we prepare our RFP, to clarify.

Mrs. Brown said in December the rate was \$5.50 per occupied bed and \$65/hr. if the services of the pharmacist were needed in addition to the usual activities. Mrs. Brown said after the meeting last month she received a letter stating that they had looked at their 2011 costs for the

consultants and based on that they felt that it needed to be \$6.10 per occupied bed, and that would begin April 1<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. Brown said she did an analysis and it appeared that it would be a \$3,000 savings if there was 100% occupancy in usual turnover. She said if she went from \$5.50 per bed from December 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> and went up the additional amount they still wouldn't spend as much this year as they did last year, so there would still be a savings of approximately \$1,000.

**A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to approve a contract amendment with Royal Care of \$5.50 per bed to the end of the contract. Unanimous.**

Ms. Levison gave a brief overview of the 2011 Annual Report as follows: She said this was the first year that there was no state aid available to support the Long Term Care and Certified Home Health Care Agencies. Grant applications were much more restrictive in paying for any type of administrative costs for programs, resulting in a number of budget modifications. The expectations for 2012 is that there will be a continued demand for services. As the economy recovers they have seen people in the immunization clinics that they never expected to see. Program evaluation is going to be the main focus for the year to make sure the programs are giving an investment and return on the investment that makes it worth keeping.

Ms. Levison said over the course of 2011 to 2012 the Robert Wood Foundation, the organization who does the rankings for New York State, noted that Saratoga County came in third under Health outcomes out of 62 counties.

Ms. Levison said the price of vaccines has risen quite a bit. The regular flu vaccine is still at \$12 a dose; however, there is a new high potent vaccine that is being recommended for anyone over the age of 65 that has specific low morbidity. This vaccine is \$26 a dose. Ms. Levison said the nurses would like to change how the flu clinics are done. She said they would still like to stay in the towns that have OFA shelters and areas where there is Senior Housing. With people over 65 the costs can easily be charged to Medicaid, she said. The problem is the billing of private insurance, where they are making it very difficult to bill. Ms. Levison suggested the possibility of doing what several other counties have done, which is to provide the patient that has private insurance a receipt that they would then take to their insurance carrier to be reimbursed. This year's cost for the flu vaccine will most likely be \$35, which is the same as last year, she said.

Mr. Wright said everyone should have received a letter that Chairman Wood sent to the President of the residents association of Maplewood Manor outlining where things stand right now with the consultant, trying to be as transparent as possible.

Mr. Grattidge said after sitting in on the Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting and hearing a presentation from the Mental Health Director he recommended that the Public Health Committee consider, before the county dives into building large facilities to handle all the services, to take a close look at the three separate services and see if there are areas of either streamlining or contracting. He said what he heard today was a very large investment by the county, when the county is not in a position at this time to make large investments. He said it is

going to be important that the county take a global position with regard to the programs to see, if in fact, these are programs that should be continued to be run by the county or are there opportunities for contracting.

Mr. Wright said an advisory committee was setup at the Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting and that could be taken into account when they meet.

Mr. Grattidge said this is something that needs to be kept as a consideration. He said if the county is going to invest in a long term building infrastructure, we have to make sure that these are programs that are going to be kept. With reimbursements changing, this is the time to really look to see where we should be. This is something that we should address in a timely manner.

Ms. Raymond said before we make any decisions for any program, we should know what all our alternatives are with any of the services that we have discretion to provide.

**On a motion made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Kinowski the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Sansom