

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING

**July 2, 2007 – 3:30 p.m.
(at Maplewood Manor)**

PRESENT: Chairman Sausville; Supervisors Callanan, Connors, Janik, Yepsen; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Hans Lehr, Mental Health; Diane Brown, Maplewood Manor, Janet Glenn, Public Health Nursing; Steve Williams, Daily Gazette

Chairman Sausville called the meeting to order.

Mr. Callanan moved to approve the minutes of the June 6th meeting. Mr. Janik seconded. Unanimous.

Mrs. Glenn distributed copies of a list of six amendments to Public Health's Policies & Procedures Manual for approval, and she reviewed them. She said these were made since last July from recommendations from their last survey. **Ms. Yepsen moved to approve these amendments. Mr. Callanan seconded. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Brown said last month there was a resolution for this Committee to be able to approve contract revenue rates without going to the full Board. She said after the last meeting, they were still in the process of getting the contract for Senior Whole Health Insurance signed. She said she will be adding a fourth level of care that is custodial. She said that would cover Medicaid clients in addition to Medicare. At this point, I would like to add this fourth level of care for custodial at \$150/day, she said. **Mr. Connors moved to approve this fourth level of care. Mr. Callanan seconded. Unanimous.**

Chairman Sausville said by a vote of 135 – 2, the Assembly passed a bill that would prohibit health care employers from requiring that nurses continue on after their eight consecutive hours of duty. He said this severely ties the hands of health care providers. It is in the Rules Committee of the Senate, he said. Mr. Hellwig said this dates back a few years ago when there was a problem due to shortages in the nursing field. He stated the County came up with a scholarship program, and we graduated quite a few and solved the immediate problems with the staffing. He said the State is attempting to deal with the symptoms of the nursing shortage as opposed to the problem. For the State to consider this is frightening, he said. He said we will

set up a meeting with Alan Grattidge, the Chairman of the Legislative and Research Committee, to come up with some plan of action. We have to find a solution to find adequate staffing levels to prevent the need for holding staff over, he added. Mrs. Brown said they have been doing well with the scholarship program. She said she is concerned that with retirements, we will be back to where we were. Mr. Janik said in the bigger cities, they are probably getting a lot of feedback from their unions and putting a burden on those people. It is not uncommon for some of the inner city nurses to be working double shift, he said.

Mrs. Brown said they occasionally have a problem. We have very few vacancies, she said. She said on a nice day like today, some people may call in. We need 10 nurses on the 3 to 11 shift, she said. If nobody volunteers to stay, we have to mandate somebody to stay until someone can come in, she said. She said this legislation (A.1898-B) will allow them to leave, and we will have a problem with staffing for the residents, and that is not safe for the facility. Mr. Connors asked what would happen if this legislation passes, and there is a shortage here with the 3 to 11 shift, and there is a full facility of patients? Mrs. Brown said at least one time, she would hope the nurses would come together and not leave the facility. The Director of Nursing and I would have to stay, she said. She said long term, she could see some hospitals closing beds.

Mrs. Brown said they have some vacancies right now. Contracting with agency staff helps, but then everybody is pulling from that same group of nurses, she said. She stated it's a supply and demand issue. Mr. Callanan said hopefully, our people are dedicated enough, and nothing will happen right away. Mr. Hellwig said Mr. Grattidge agreed to sit with Chairman Sausville and formulate a letter to the State to try to get them to understand the consequences of this legislation. Mrs. Brown said they look at who can be trained to replace supervisory people who retire. She stated the scholarship program and TANF grant have helped support this facility to replace nurses or fill vacancies.

Mr. Connors moved to support the opinion of Mrs. Brown that if adopted, this legislation would be hazardous to the delivery of service to our residents of the County, and that the Chairman of the Legislative and Research Committee draft a response from the Board to the State on this matter. Mr. Callanan seconded. Unanimous.

Mr. Lehr requested a **resolution to amend the current contract with The Workshop, Inc. T/A Northeast Career Planning, to add wording for four additional "Slots" effective October 1, 2006. Paragraph 1 would be amended to read: Northeast will provide ten (10) Ongoing Integrated (extended) Supported Employment Opportunities ("Slots"). Effective October 1, 2006, four (4) additional "Slots" will be provided. Mr. Connors moved to approve this amendment. Mr. Callanan seconded. Unanimous.**

Mr. Lehr requested a **resolution to amend the budget and contracts with: Franklin Community Center - \$695; 820 River St., Inc. - \$1,277; Family and Children's Services of the Capital Region - \$1,553; Transitional Services Assoc., Inc. - \$3,581; and The Alcohol & Substance Abuse Prevention Council - \$11,925.** Mr. Lehr stated these are routine COLA's of 2.3%. One-quarter was advanced in 2006, and this is the remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ of the COLA. This is 100% State aid, he added. He mentioned for Transitional Services Assoc., Inc., the only item under that that is impacted is the NYS OASAS line. **Ms. Yepsen moved to approve these amendments. Mr. Janik seconded. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Brown advised Chairman Sausville that the Pharmacy Q/A will be Tuesday, July 10th at 8:00 a.m.

On a motion by Mr. Janik, seconded by Mr. Callanan, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann