

Public Health Committee Minutes
March 12, 2012 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Wright; Supervisors Raymond, Kinowski, Veitch, Southworth, Grattidge, Yepsen, and Wood; Sam Pitcherale, Treasurer; Carol Lyte, Peter Lacy, Mental Health; Diane Brown, Maplewood Manor; Karen Levison, Public Health; Bob Wilcox, County Attorney; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Carl Slate, Harris Beach; League of Women Voters; Press.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Veitch the minutes of the February 13, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Hellwig said earlier in the year the Chairman appointed a subcommittee to deal with some options for the long-standing financial problems that the county is faced with relative to the Maplewood Manor Nursing Home. The subcommittee has had several meetings over the past couple of months, meeting with other county officials who are facing similar challenges as well as meeting with representatives from NYSAC. There were meetings with several consultants that have dealt with or are currently providing services to other counties; i.e. identification of other options for future ownership or in some cases the disposition of those operations. As a result of that process, the subcommittee prepared an RFP for the purpose of soliciting proposals from the firms that were interested in providing those services to us. They were sent out approximately a month ago, returned and distributed amongst the subcommittee members for their review. A couple of meetings have been held to discuss the information that was contained in the proposals. There were initially five firms that had records or a history of doing this type of work, with three responding. On Friday the subcommittee met to make the final decision of Harris Beach as the provider of the services.

Mrs. Southworth asked who the other respondents were. Mr. Hellwig said (CGR) Center for Government Research, consolidating their proposal with Hiscock Barclay, and Nextwave, Inc.

Ms. Yepsen asked for an explanation of what the services were that were described in the RFP. Mr. Hellwig said they have asked all the firms that submitted proposals to come in and analyze the operation; analyze the financial records and take a look at everything that is related to the way the operations are currently run. Based on a review of that information they have been requested to come up with some options for either continued ownership, sale or other options.

Ms. Raymond said she would like to know, in terms of any recommendations, the costs associated with it and a timeline with regard to a particular recommendation. She said she would also like to see an analysis of what would be required in salary cuts, change of

patient mix, whatever it would take to leave the facility open and break even. Mr. Wright said they have been asked to determine if that is possible.

Mr. Hellwig said the contract amount is for \$50,000 to cover the services.

Mr. Hellwig said at this point there is an adequate surplus in Maplewood Manor's fund to cover this expense. He requested that the resolution include an authorization to amend their budget and appropriate \$50,000 to cover this expense.

Mr. Wright said this is only phase 1. It is realized that more funds may be needed down the road.

Mrs. Southworth said that she would, in the future, like to see the proposal before being requested to vote on it.

A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to move forward with Harris Beach as consultants for Maplewood Manor at a cost not to exceed \$50,000 and to amend the Maplewood Manor budget to cover the expense. Unanimous.

Mrs. Brown requested approval of a contract with Blue Shield of Northeastern New York. She said the provider contract guidelines have been revised to comply with changes in regulations. There are some affiliate language updates to the New York standard clause and an addition of a certification regarding lobbying. We must complete the certification as we have billed in excess of \$400,000 with Blue Shield, she said. This would require committee approval only.

A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Veitch to approve a revenue contract with Blue Shield of Northeastern New York. Unanimous. (Committee approval only)

Mrs. Brown requested approval of a contract with Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield whom also has certification regarding lobbying if over the life of the agreement the county were to receive more than \$100,000 from them. Mrs. Brown said they have not billed in excess of \$100,000 at this point, but they feel that they will be in a short period of time; therefore, they feel that they should be completing a certification.

A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Veitch to approve a revenue contract with Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Unanimous. (Committee approval only)

Mrs. Brown requested approval of a contract with CDPHP. She said they have been trying to get an increase from CDPHP annually, and they have come back with a 4% increase beginning March 1, 2012 to February 28, 2013, and another 4% that would go from March 1, 2013 to February 28, 2014. There are four levels with the first level at \$207 to \$215 and \$224; second level \$239 to \$249 and \$259; third level \$318 to \$331

and \$344; level four would be the current Medicaid rate. Some of these are less than private pay rates; however, they are more than the Medicaid rate with the exception of level four. Most of the residents currently in CDPHP are at a level two, she said.

A motion was made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mr. Veitch to approve a revenue contract with CDPHP. Unanimous. (Committee approval only)

Mrs. Brown said they currently have thirteen empty beds and because the beds are scattered throughout the building she has not been able to reduce the per diem staff. She said there hasn't been anyone new added to the bad debt list.

Mrs. Brown said she was approached by Royal Care asking if the mechanism in which pharmacist fees are paid could be changed. At that point in time it was decided to leave it the same. They have now approached again, as their concern is that they could get into an issue with The Office of the Inspector General as well as Maplewood Manor. This has to do with the Office of the Inspector General creating a substantial uncertainty about the legality in pricing discounts for consultant pharmacist services to governmental entities. Currently Maplewood is paying \$60/hr and they were proposing \$550 per bed and converting it to an occupied bed charge. It was said that you would not pay more, and potentially would pay less. Mrs. Brown said last year they spent approximately \$22,000 on pharmacist fees. If it is changed to the occupied bed charge, even if we were 100% occupied and a ten bed turnover, the pharmacist would see an average of 287 residents monthly for a total of \$19,000 showing a savings of approximately \$3,000/yr. by changing to the per bed charge. Mrs. Brown said there was an issue of changing in the middle of the contract and their renewal of the contract doesn't take place until September at which time it will go out to bid.

Mrs. Southworth asked if anything had been verified with the Office of the Inspector General? Mrs. Brown said all they have are letters from Royal Care.

Mr. Hellwig suggested a follow up at next month's meeting with everything that is needed.

Mr. Hellwig said it was discovered that Maplewood Manor's budget expenses are \$767,000 over budget. The good news is that at this time last year it was \$5.2 million. The year-end revenues are approximately \$2.2 million over what was budgeted. The Board has already assigned \$1 million to balance the budget, leaving \$1.2 million unappropriated. Mr. Hellwig said what is being proposed is to take \$767,000 of the unappropriated amount and appropriate it to cover the excess expenses, leaving approximately \$500,000 of unappropriated fund balance.

A motion was made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Ms. Raymond to approve a budget amendment to the Maplewood Manor budget. Unanimous.

Ms. Levison requested a resolution to approve agreements with accredited schools of public health to accept students in need of public health internship placements. She said

she has been approached by students from both SUNY Albany School of Public Health and Harvard School of Health to do internships in the Public Health Department. These are very high-level graduate students who are very independent where projects are created for them.

A motion was made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Grattidge to approve MPH Internships. Unanimous.

Ms. Levison said she was able to negotiate an agreement to increase skilled nursing visits from \$135 to \$160 per visit with MVP. She said this would only need committee approval.

A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Veitch to approve an increase in skilled nursing visits with MVP from \$135 to \$160 per visit. Unanimous.
(Committee approval only)

Ms. Levison requested approval for a change in the maternal child billing practice. The agency will be billing Medicaid Products only to MCH patients that will require only one or two visits. If more than one or two visits were required they would move immediately into home care. This will require only committee approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to approve a change in the (MCH) Maternal Child billing practice as stated above. Unanimous.
(Committee approval only)

Ms. Levison requested a resolution to approve an Early Intervention Administration Grant for the current term of October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012 in the amount of \$127,333 per year for five years. This grant is used to support salaries, fringe and OTPS for Early Intervention staff. There will be no budget impact, as it is already included in the 2012 budget.

A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mrs. Southworth to approve an Early Intervention Administration Grant for the term October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012 in the amount of \$127,333 per year for five years. Unanimous.

Mr. Lacey said the Office of Mental Health will be losing their lease with Cramer House, and will be looking for another location. He said it would be most cost effective if all their programs were located together. A spreadsheet was presented to show the current costs of each one of the Mental Health treatment facilities.

Mr. Veitch said meetings have been held with some local people in Saratoga Springs to discuss the feasibility of other locations. He said there are some possibilities to keep it close to the hospital.

Ms. Yepsen said discussions have taken place about existing buildings and opportunity for a build to suite that would be financially feasible.

Mr. Wright said this item should be moved to the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Mr. Grattidge said he was in support of forwarding this on to the Buildings and Grounds Committee, but he said this committee should still retain the concept of looking at services being contracted out, privatized or some other form of delivering these services as an option.

On a motion made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Veitch the meeting was adjourned. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom