

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: JANUARY 23, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS SOKOL
SHEEHAN
THOMAS
O'CONNOR
STRAINER
PITKIN

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR CHAMPAGNE

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT:
PAT AUER, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH
SHARON SCHALDONE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE
HOME CARE DIVISION
GINELLE JONES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE PUBLIC
HEALTH DIVISION
TAMMIE DELORENZO, CLINICAL & FISCAL INFORMATICS
COORDINATOR
TAWN DRISCOLL, FISCAL MANAGER
REPRESENTING WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY:
BARBARA TAGGART, ADMINISTRATOR
REPRESENTING COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME:
BRENDA HAYES, DIRECTOR
TRISH NENNINGER, SECOND ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
TODD LUNT, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Sokol called the meeting of the Health Services Committee to order at 9:33 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

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.*

Ms. Hayes stated that there was one pending item which pertained to the possibility of contracting with one company for the maintenance of the fire extinguishing systems at Countryside Adult Home, Westmount Health Facility and the Public Safety Building. As a result of her research, she added, she had determined that it would not be possible to contract with one company for all three buildings. She noted that she had made an inquiry with New York Fire and Signal and had discovered that they only serviced the ANSEL System and not the Kitchen Knight II System which was in place at Countryside Adult Home. She said that she had also made an inquiry with Albany Fire Extinguishers, who service the Kitchen Knight II System; however, she added, they do not service the Warrensburg area. She advised that ABC Fire no longer

handled the Kitchen Knight II System. She apprised that Sanders Fire & Safety had been servicing and maintaining the system at Countryside for some time with no contract in place. She requested a contract with Sanders Fire & Safety for inspection and maintenance of the Kitchen Knight II Fire Extinguishing System, at a cost of \$125 per inspection to be performed twice a year.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with Sanders Fire & Safety, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Hayes requested authorization to attend the Toxic Anger Seminar at the Albany Marriott in Albany, New York on February 13, 2009, at a cost of \$184, using her personal vehicle at no cost to the County. She added that she would earn 6.3 of the required 60 credits by attending the seminar.

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to authorize Ms. Hayes to attend the Toxic Anger Seminar, as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Hayes exited the meeting at 9:36 a.m.

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 apprised that the New York State Department of Health had performed an unannounced survey of Westmount Health Facility on Tuesday, January 20, 2009. She added that only minor deficiencies had been found. She said that a full report would be available within ten days. Mr. Sokol mentioned that the Facility had received four out of five stars. Ms. Taggart stated that in the exit conference the inspector had noted that based on his observations, as well as conversations with the residents, Westmount Health Facility's residents were happy and well taken care of.

Mr. Pitkin asked what the average rating was and Ms. Taggart responded that she did not have the statistics with her; however, she added, the majority of facilities received three or four stars out of five.

Ms. Taggart apprised that Capital Project No. H280.9550 280 - Electronic Medical Records Documentation, had been established for the purchase of a software system to maintain patient medical records. She added that P&NP Computer System, Inc. had a Resident Observation software module available that would help improve accuracy and resident care, as well as increase the efficiency of the reimbursement process. She noted that the software was currently \$5,800 plus an additional \$400 fee for the server upgrade; however, she added, the cost would increase to \$7,000 at the end of January. She said that the software could be operated on touch screen monitors or the

current computers. She requested authorization to amend the agreement with P&NP Computer Systems, Inc. to include the purchase of a Resident Observation software module, for a total amount not to exceed \$6,200, said funds to be expended from Capital Project No. H280.9550 280 - Electronic Medical Records Documentation.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Strainer questioned the amount listed as a maintenance fee and Ms. Taggart replied that it was a percentage of the cost of the equipment. Mr. Strainer asked if the Information Technology (IT) Department would continue to be called on for maintenance and Ms. Taggart responded that they would assist as needed. Mr. Strainer asked if a representative of the IT Department would participate in the training for the module and Ms. Taggart replied that arrangements could be made to include members of the IT Department in the training. Mr. Pitkin asked if the use of the software module would open the possibility for a reduction in staff and Ms. Taggart responded that the benefit would be in time saved.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to amend the current contract with P&NP Computer Systems, Inc. to include the purchase of a Resident Observation software module, for a total amount not to exceed \$6,200, said funds to be expended from Capital Project No. H280.9550 280 - Electronic Medical Records Documentation, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Taggart informed the Committee that there had been an automobile accident on January 1, 2009 in the employee parking lot, which had involved two employee vehicles. She explained that the first vehicle had slid into the light pole, which in turn fell onto the second vehicle. She noted that no one had been injured in the incident, and added that an estimate for the cost of repair to the light pole was included in the agenda packet. She advised that the County Attorney was working on the matter to determine if the employee's personal automobile insurance would cover the cost of the repairs.

Ms. Taggart advised that the five-star nursing home rating system was explained in the agenda packet. She added that the rating was comprised of scores from an overall rating, health inspections, quality measures and staffing. She explained that a four-star rating, such as that received by Westmount Health Facility, meant that the Facility was above average. Mr. O'Connor questioned how many facilities had achieved a five-star, much above average, rating and Ms. Taggart replied that less than 10% of the facilities were awarded a five-star rating.

Continuing with the agenda review, Ms. Taggart requested to amend Resolution No. 591 of 2007 to reflect a name change from High Peaks Hospice, Inc. to High Peaks Hospice Palliative Care, Inc.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Pitkin and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 591 of 2007, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Taggart requested approval for Maura Mellon, Senior Account Clerk at Westmount Health Facility, to enroll in a Financial Accounting course at Adirondack Community College, from January 27, 2009 to May 14, 2009, at a cost of \$569.50. Mr. Strainer asked if the funds were available in the budget and Ms. Taggart replied affirmatively. She added that the employee had been at Westmount Health Facility for five years and was new to the position of Senior Account Clerk and she felt the course would be beneficial to the employee, as well as the Facility.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to enroll in a job-related course, as outlined above and to refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Taggart requested to fill the vacant position of Physical Therapist Assistant, base salary of \$34,178, Employee No. 11415, due to resignation. She added that the employee would be resigning at the end of the month to start work at another nursing home. Mr. Thomas asked if this was the only Physical Therapist Assistant position in the Facility. Ms. Taggart responded that the Facility contracted with Glens Falls Hospital for Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech Therapists; however, she added, the Physical Therapist Assistant was an employee of Westmount Health Facility. Mr. O'Connor suggested that due to the hiring freeze, he recommended that Ms. Taggart attend the Personnel Committee meeting on February 11, 2009 to explain the necessity of the position.

Motion was made Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the filling of the vacant position, as outlined above and to refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Taggart said that reports on staffing and overtime levels had been included in the agenda packet. She stated that there were a couple of vacant CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) positions. Mr. Pitkin noted the high number of overtime hours for CNA's. Mr. O'Connor referred to a recent article in *The Post Star* about a CNA who was receiving Welfare benefits and asked if the person had applied for employment at Westmount Health Facility. Ms. Taggart replied in the negative and added that she was not aware of the employment history of the person. Mr. Strainer suggested that a memo should be sent to Sheila Weaver, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, to determine why the person had not been referred to Westmount Health Facility for possible employment. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, noted that Temporary Assistance should have referred this person to Westmount.

Ms. Taggart said that there was an obituary of a resident included in the agenda

packet. Mr. Pitkin noted that favorable comments pertaining to Westmount Health Facility were mentioned in the obituary.

Ms. Taggart stated that a Valentine's Day Party would be held on February 11, 2009 for the residents of Westmount and she invited the Committee members to attend. She added that one of the residents would turn 100 years old today and they would have a birthday party that afternoon.

Trish Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney, entered the meeting and Ms. Taggart exited the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Pat Auer, Director of Public Health, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer introduced her staff for the benefit of Mr. Pitkin and Mr. Strainer, who were new members of the Committee.

Ms. Auer noted that an Emergency Response and Preparedness Activities Report had been included in the agenda packet. She said that reductions were anticipated in Bioterrorism Grant funding, although the amount was still unknown. She added that the County had received \$85,000 per year for the last several years.

Ms. Auer stated that Dr. Schutze had been unable to attend the meeting; therefore, the Fluoride Presentation would be postponed until the next Committee meeting.

Ms. Auer said that Tammie DeLorenzo, Clinical & Fiscal Informatics Coordinator, would update the Committee on the Point of Care (POC) Initiative. Ms. DeLorenzo apprised that the first round of training had begun last week. She added that the new technology had been used in the field and the employees were becoming more familiar with the use of the system. She noted that they would train staff every other week and support newly trained staff on the alternate weeks. She added that they would train ten staff members every other week and all staff should be trained by the end of February. She advised that they had billed Medicaid for November and the bills had been sent approximately 17 days sooner as compared to the old system. She said that they planned to bill every other week.

Trish Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney, apprised that the County Attorney's Office had been reviewing the legality of independent contract therapist using the Department's laptops, which were programmed for Public Health patient records management purposes. She said that following the review, it was the opinion of the County Attorney's Office that the independent contractors could use the laptops provided that the therapists independent contractor status was consistently maintained and that the Department maintained supervision and control of the laptops. She noted that it would be necessary to amend the contracts with the independent contractors to update the terms relating to the condition of and the responsibilities for the laptops,

as well as other terms and conditions which had been reviewed.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to amend the agreements with all therapists to include language relating to assignment/loan of laptop computers and other related contract protocols in a form approved by the County Attorney. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Auer thanked Mrs. Nenninger for all of the effort she had put into reviewing this issue.

Ms. Auer requested a contract with Aspire Programs, PLLC for the provision of services for Preschool Children with Special Needs, commencing February 16, 2009 and terminating with 30 days written notice by either party, with payment to be made upon receipt of required documentation provided for each service at the NYSED (New York State Education Department) approved rates. She added that Aspire Programs, PLLC was a new business that had recently received approval from the NYSED and the facility was located in the former Glens Falls Home for Women.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with Aspire Programs, PLLC, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Auer requested a resolution to set Certified Home Health Agency and Long Term Home Health Care Programs charges for 2009. She explained that Skilled Nursing would be increased from \$150 to \$160 per visit and Speech Therapy would be increased from \$110 to \$120 per visit.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Pitkin and carried unanimously to approve the request to set the program charges for 2009, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Auer requested to amend Resolution No. 144 of 2008 to update charges for immunizations administered to private pay individuals in the Division of Public Health.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 144 of 2008, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Auer requested authorization to renew agreements with Interim Health Care of New York; Visiting Nurse Association of Albany Home Care Corporation; and North Country Home Services, Inc. to provide paraprofessional care services for patients in

the Certified Home Health Agency and Long Term Program and to authorize rate changes, commencing January 1, 2009 and terminating December 31, 2009, to be paid monthly upon receipt of completed documentation for each individual service provided to each patient at the established contract rate. She noted that North County Home Services, Inc. had requested a 3% rate increase, even though she had made an effort to dissuade them from requesting an increase in their rates.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Pitkin and carried unanimously to renew the agreements with various agencies and to authorize a 3% rate increase, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Auer requested authorization to renew the agreement with Upper Hudson Primary Care Consortium to allow continued participation in the Community Health Assessment Project, commencing January 1, 2009 and terminating December 31, 2009, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 to be payable upon receipt of project documentation. She noted that the program was not mandated; however, she added, if Warren County did not participate, they would be the only county in the Adirondack Rural Health Network that was not involved.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to renew the agreement with Upper Hudson Primary Care Consortium, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Auer requested to amend Resolution No. 658 of 2007, which authorized the Director of Health Services to fill open positions as either Registered Nurse, Public Health Nurse or Community Health Nurse depending upon the candidates education and experience, to include language as follows:

- ▶ when a Registered Professional Nurse (RPN) completed two years of full-time Home Care/Public Health experience, he/she may be promoted to the Community Health Nurse (CHN) position; and
- ▶ if an RPN or CHN completed his/her Bachelor's Degree for Nursing, the pay level grade may increase to reflect the change in title to Public Health Nurse (PHN).

She noted that Resolution No. 658 of 2007 addressed newly hired nurses and the amended language was to allow for the same provision for employees already on staff.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Pitkin and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 658 of 2007, as outlined above and to refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer requested authorization for Sheryl Havens, Supervising Nurse, to attend the Essential Skills for the First-Time Manager or Supervisor Seminar at the Best Western Airport Inn in Albany, New York on March 6, 2009. She also requested authorization for Marietta Anderson, Supervising Nurse and Ms. Havens to attend the Home Care

Association of New York State Program entitled 'The Starring Role of Clinician Decisions and Documentation on Agency Success' at the Hilton Garden Inn in Albany, New York on February 11, 2009, using a Health Services Fleet vehicle.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Pitkin and carried unanimously to authorize attendance at the seminars, as outlined above. *Copies of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention forms are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer requested to amend Resolution No. 374 of 1999 to reflect a name change from High Peaks Hospice, Inc. to High Peaks Hospice Palliative Care, Inc.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 374 of 1999, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Auer stated that a report from the Council for Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Survey results had been emailed to the Committee members and was included in the agenda packet. She said that the survey was performed every couple of years and a downward trend in the use of tobacco by students was apparent.

Ms. Auer questioned if it was the Committee members preference to receive this type of report in electronic form, paper form or both. It was the consensus of the Committee that informational reports, such as the one previously presented, should be provided to the Committee members in electronic form and that Ms. Auer should bring one copy of the report in paper form to the Committee meeting in case it was needed for reference purposes.

Ms. Auer advised that reports on Free and Reduced Care and Revenue and Expenditures for 2008 were included in the agenda packet. Tawn Driscoll, Fiscal Manager of the Health Services Department, noted that the Revenue and Expenditures report represented expenses through December 31, 2008. She said that there were WIC (Women, Infants and Children's Program) Food Vouchers which were anticipated to be in excess of \$1 million. She added that the Preschool year which started in July would be billed in March and was anticipated to be in excess in \$1 million. Ms. Auer apprised that due to the billing procedures currently in place, actual 2008 figures were not available at this time.

Ms. Auer apprised that the last page of the agenda packet represented the estimated impact of the 2% reduction based on the State budget. She noted that although the State had indicated that reductions would be 2%, the reduction for Early Intervention Administration had been 7%. She added that the Bioterrorism Grant was anticipated to be reduced by 35% and since \$85,000 had been received in previous years, the reduction would be significant. She advised that although no reduction had been shown for the Rabies Program on the document, notification of a reduction had been received that morning.

Ms. Auer stated that a report on the Department Goals and Objectives for 2008 had been included in the agenda packet and those that would be continued in 2009 were noted within the report.

Mr. Sokol advised that the Committee would need to enter into an executive session to discuss labor management issues.

Motion was made by Mr. Pitkin, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously that executive session be declared pursuant to Section 105 (e) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was declared from 10:34 a.m. to 10:42 a.m.

The Committee reconvened and Mr. Sokol noted that no action was necessary pursuant to the executive session.

Ms. Auer apprised that the County had a contract with Prospect School, who provided services for Early Intervention and Preschool Programs. She added that they would need to meet with representatives from the school about concerns that they would be unable to claim some funding due to the teacher being unavailable. She noted that the County had to pay tuition to the school even on the days that the teacher was unavailable; however, she added, they could not bill for the programs or transportation on those days.

Mr. Geraghty questioned if there would be reductions in services based on the reductions in funding received from the State and if Ms. Auer had formulated a plan for the programs based on the reductions. Ms. Auer responded that the services would need to be reduced in line with the funding reductions; however, she added, it was difficult to conceive a plan when she was unsure what to plan for.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Pitkin, Mr. Sokol adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist