

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: JOINT MEETING PERSONNEL AND HEALTH SERVICES (COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME)

DATE: JUNE 19, 2009

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS THOMAS
KENNY
VANNESS
BELDEN
STEC
SOKOL

OTHERS PRESENT:

BRENDA HAYES, DIRECTOR, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BENTLEY
MERLINO
SIMMES
TAYLOR

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEMBER

ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR TESSIER

TODD LUNT, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
RICH KELLY, PERSONNEL OFFICER

HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS SHEEHAN
CHAMPAGNE
O'CONNOR
STRAINER
PITKIN

FAYE PERRY, ACTIVITY DIRECTOR, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
DEANNA PARK, CASE MANAGER, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
WANDA OLDEN, RECREATION AIDE, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
BRIAN LAFLURE, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES/FIRE COORDINATOR
VICKY BARRETT, WARREN COUNTY RESIDENT
JOYCE MOUTON, WARREN COUNTY RESIDENT AND FORMER ACTIVITY DIRECTOR, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
JUDITH ROZELLE, WARREN COUNTY RESIDENT AND FORMER DIRECTOR, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
THOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
VARIOUS RESIDENTS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Sokol called the meeting of the Health Services Committee to order at 9:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Health Services Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Mr. Thomas called the meeting of the Personnel Committee to order at 9:01 a.m.

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

Mr. Sokol stated that there had been many discussions concerning the Countryside Adult Home including the possibility of either downsizing or closing the Facility. He said that for the last few years the Countryside Adult Home had an average of 44 residents, although they were certified for 60. He explained that the Health Services Committee had explored the concept of downsizing to a 48-bed facility. He added that if the Facility was downsized there were

positions that would no longer be required and could therefore be abolished. He advised that they had discovered an additional vacant position of Part-time Food Service Helper and would be requesting to abolish that position. He noted that the other positions which were being considered for abolishment were an Activity Director position, a Recreation Aide position, a Case Manager position and a Laundry Worker position that would become vacant, as of June 30, 2009, due to retirement. He advised that the Health Services Committee should delay the abolishment of the Activity Director position until it could be reviewed at the next Committee meeting. Mr. Belden asked how long the Part-time Food Service Helper position had been vacant and Mr. Sokol replied one year.

Mr. Kenny questioned the rationale for delaying the abolishment of the Activity Director position. He stated that the plan for the Countryside Adult Home seemed to be well thought out and noted that if the County kept backpedaling on decisions it would become impossible to close the budget gap. He advised that the abolishment of the positions at Countryside Adult Home had been approved by the Health Services Committee and the Personnel Committee. Mr. Sokol responded that the employee that was currently working in the Activity Director position was a 30-year employee and the Health Services Committee was requesting an additional month to reconsider the abolishment of the position. Mr. Kenny stated that it was difficult to eliminate positions that were currently filled; however, he added, it was necessary if the County was to close the budget gap.

Mr. Champagne questioned why the Part-time Food Service Helper position had not been presented for abolishment if it had been vacant for the last year. Brenda Hayes, Director of the Countryside Adult Home, responded that at one point they had considered reclassifying a Part-time Laborer position to that of Part-time Food Service Helper. She added that they had decided to leave the position as it was and she had assumed that the Part-time Food Service Helper had been deleted from the budget.

Chairman Monroe pointed out that there were employees of the Countryside Adult Home present and he recommended that they be given the opportunity to speak. Mr. Sokol extended privilege of the floor to the public.

Faye Perry, Activity Director at the Countryside Adult Home, introduced herself and distributed copies of a letter she had written to the Committee members. Ms. Perry read the letter to the Committee members; a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Chairman Monroe advised that part of the original proposal from Ms. Hayes for the abolishment of the Activity Director position had been for Ms. Hayes to assist with facilitating the activities and the case management at the Countryside Adult Home. He added that he had discussed the issue with the County Attorney and had been advised that such action could cause possible issues with the Union by taking positions that were in the bargaining unit and transferring those responsibilities to management.

Deanna Park, Case Manager for the Countryside Adult Home, introduced herself and distributed copies of a letter she had written to the Committee members. Ms. Park read the letter to the Committee members; a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Stec entered the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

Vicky Barrett, Warren County Resident, stated that her mother, Jean Simmons, was a resident of the Countryside Adult Home. She said that she had visited her mother a few days ago when she had first learned of the circumstances at the Facility. She added that her mother was upset and was concerned about her health, safety and well being. She apprised that her mother had been a resident for the last three years and enjoyed living there. Ms. Barrett voiced her concerns that the Director would be assuming the responsibilities of the Case Manager and that legal and liability issues might arise for the County.

Joyce Mouton, Warren County Resident and former Activity Director at the Countryside Adult Home, stated that she had worked at the Countryside Adult Home for 24 years and continued to volunteer when possible. She advised that it was important for the Facility to maintain an Activity Director and a Recreation Aide. She added that the job required two employees and even with two employees it was necessary to complete some of the work at home. She advised that the heart of the Countryside Adult Home was the Activity Department. She continued that it was important to retain a Case Manager, as well, and the County would be wrong to eliminate any of the three positions. She suggested that the Board look elsewhere within the County for positions to abolish.

Wanda Olden, Recreation Aide at the Countryside Adult Home, said that she had worked at the Facility for 18 years. She advised that she had returned from a two week absence, following a surgery that was necessary due to her second bout with breast cancer and was immediately informed that her position would be abolished. She said that two weeks prior, Ms. Hayes had been giving two Physicians Assistants (PA) from the Health Center a tour of the Facility and when Ms. Hayes showed the PA's the Activity Department, she stated that it was the backbone of the Facility.

Judith Rozelle, Warren County Resident and former Director of the Countryside Adult Home, said that she had worked at the Facility for over 30 years and added that they had started with 20 residents in the Facility and they had reached the full capacity of 60 beds. She advised that the Facility had always had an Activity Director and a Case Manager, although the position titles had been different. She stated that as well intentioned as Ms. Hayes may be, she would be unable to assume the responsibilities of the Activity Department and the Case Manager and still complete the responsibilities of Director.

Mr. Sokol thanked everyone for their comments. Mr. Pitkin suggested that the Activity Director position and the Case Manager position be retained until they could be reviewed further at the next Health Services Committee meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Pitkin, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to table the abolishment of the Activity Director position and the Case Manager position at the Countryside Adult Home for one month and to refer same to the Personnel Committee.

Motion was made by Mr. Pitkin, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to abolish the vacant position of Part-time Food Service Helper, base salary of \$18,318; thereby amending the Department's Table of Organization and to refer same to the Personnel Committee.

Mrs. Simmes questioned why the abolishment of the Recreation Aide position was not being

tabled for a month along with the Activity Director position and the Case Manager position. Mr. Pitkin responded that they were downsizing the Facility from a 60-bed facility to a 48-bed facility and fewer positions would be required. Ms. Hayes advised that according to the New York State Department of Health regulations, the Recreation Aide position was not required even for a 60-bed facility. She advised that the intention was to downsize the Facility and the abolishment of positions was a necessary part of the process. She pointed out that the residents were capable people and were able to do most activities on their own. She explained that a Case Manager position was only required for a facility in excess of 50 beds. She added that she was capable of filling out the required forms and noted that the current census of the Facility was 41.

Mr. Champagne stated that he was in support of Ms. Hayes request to abolish the unnecessary positions at the Countryside Adult Home. He said that the census of the Facility had remained below 48 beds for an extended period of time and the Committee should trust Ms. Hayes to retain the positions that were necessary for the operation of the Facility.

Ms. Perry agreed that the Facility would need fewer employees if it was certified as a 48-bed facility and added that the average census was approximately 45. She questioned why the entire Activity Department was considered for abolishment but the other Departments were not being reduced commensurate with a 48-bed facility.

Chairman Monroe advised that prior to the reduction of any staff at the Countryside Adult Home it was necessary to ensure that the certification as a 48-bed facility was approved by the New York State Department of Health. Ms. Hayes responded that she had received verbal approval and was awaiting the official documentation.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried by majority vote to table the abolishment of the Activity Director position and the Case Manager position at the Countryside Adult Home for one month, with Mr. Kenny voting in opposition and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next Board meeting.

Brief discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to abolish the vacant position of Part-time Food Service Helper, base salary of \$18,318; thereby amending the Department's Table of Organization and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next Board meeting.

Ms. Barrett asked why the County was considering downsizing the Countryside Adult Home when it was difficult to receive acceptance in a nursing home or assisted living facility. Mr. Champagne stated that the Countryside Adult Home had remained at approximately the same census level for many years and that maintaining the certification of a 60-bed facility was a waste of taxpayer money since the census had not reached full capacity in a long time. Ms. Barrett stated that the County needed to market the Countryside Adult Home to make more people aware of its existence and the service that it provided. She added that if the Facility was marketed properly they would eventually have a waiting list for potential residents. Ms. Hayes clarified that the Countryside Adult Home was an adult residential care facility and not an assisted living facility or a nursing home. She added that if a resident required more assistance

they were no longer eligible to be a resident of the Countryside Adult Home and needed to transfer to an assisted living facility or a nursing home.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. Strainer, Mr. Sokol adjourned the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

As there was no further business to come before the Personnel Committee, on motion made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. VanNess, Mr. Thomas adjourned the meeting at 9:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist