

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: APRIL 24, 2015

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: SOKOL  
CONOVER  
FRASIER  
MCDEVITT

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: WESTCOTT

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION:

GINELLE JONES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION  
TAMMIE DELORENZO, CLINICAL & FISCAL INFORMATICS COORDINATOR  
TAWN DRISCOLL, FISCAL MANAGER

REPRESENTING WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY:

LLOYD COTE, ADMINISTRATOR  
BETSEY HENKEL, COMPTROLLER

AMANDA ALLEN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

SUPERVISORS BROCK  
SIMPSON  
SEEBER  
STROUGH  
TAYLOR  
WOOD

MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER

ROBERT LYNCH, DEPUTY COUNTY TREASURER

DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*

THOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*

DAVID STRAINER, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT

SARAH MCLENITHAN, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

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Mr. Sokol called the meeting of the Health Services Committee to order at 10:16 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier 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 Ginelle Jones, Assistant Director of Public Health Division, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Jones thanked Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, for the assistance she had provided to Public Health Division over the years and wished her well in her retirement. She also congratulated Amanda Allen on her promotion to Clerk of the Board upon Mrs. Sady's retirement.

Commencing the Agenda review, Ms. Jones presented a request for a new contract with Emblem Health to allow for provision of various health services and receipt of reimbursement, in a form approved by the County Attorney. She explained this was another managed long term health care plan that would be offered to Warren County residents; therefore, she stated they did not have a contract with Emblem Health, they could not receive referrals or reimbursements from them.

Mr. Conover questioned what types of services would be provided and Ms. Jones replied they would be providing physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 15, 2015 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Jones requested to amend the current contract with North Country Home Services, Inc. to reflect an increase in the hourly rate for Home Health Aide Services from \$26.12 per hour to \$26.52 per hour. She explained that since the current rate was set forth by Resolution No. 637 of 2013, an amending resolution was necessary to increase the rate. She pointed out this particular agency provided services to three patients in the northern portion of the County. She commented it was challenging to locate home health aides willing to provide services in the northern portion of the County; therefore, she recommended approving the increase. She added the Financial Director of North County Home Services, Inc. was requesting that the Committee consider making the increase retroactive to January 1, 2015, which would incur an additional cost of only \$5.60. Mrs. Frasier stated because it was such a miniscule amount, she was in favor of the increase being retroactive to the beginning of the year.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to Amend Resolution No. 637 of 2013 to increase the hourly rate to \$26.52 per hour retroactive to January 1, 2015 and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 15, 2015 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Jones requested a referral to the Personnel Committee for consideration of allowing specific COLA (Cost of living Adjustment) funding offered by the WIC (Women, Infant and Children) Program to employees who provide "direct care" to clients. She noted this opportunity had never occurred before. She said that Pat Auer, Director of Public Health/Patient Services, had discussed the matter with the County Administrator and was awaiting a response from the County Attorney regarding the issue. She said more information would be available at the May 6, 2015 Personnel Committee meeting.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the matter be referred to the Personnel Committee for further discussion.

Ms. Jones apprised there were no pending items to discuss this month. She stated Attachment #1 referred to the Emergency Response and Preparedness Activities Report, which listed the activities taking place from April 1, 2015 to June 30, 2015. She acknowledged Angela Meade's 25 years of service with the County, 13 of which was with the Public Health Department, and commended her for a job well done in providing dedicated service to the Emergency Response Program. She wished Ms. Meade well with her retirement, which would be effective at the end of the month.

Referring to the Warren County Health Services Patient Evaluation Charts, Ms. Jones advised that the number of referrals they received had remained steady. She added they would continue to monitor and compare these figures to their competitor's.

With regards to the reporting for the rabies program, Ms. Jones commented they were at a standstill until they had an agreement in place with the Town of Queensbury; however, she said, the Animal Control Officer for the Town of Queensbury had been responding to their requests to examine animals after confinement. She noted an Animal Control Officer for one of the Town's located in Warren County had resigned; therefore; she stated, they would be contracting with the Warren County Humane Society for those services. She said their concern from the Public Health perspective, was with respect to

assistance from the local municipalities in following up at the end of the confinement period to ensure rabies was not an issue for the County.

Mr. Sokol questioned whether a meeting was scheduled with the Town of Queensbury to discuss an agreement and Ms. Jones replied in the negative. She explained they were awaiting approval from the Town of Queensbury on the reporting form. Mr. Strough apprised he had reviewed the terms and provided a verbal agreement, as he did not believe a written agreement was required.

Mr. Conover commended the Town of Queensbury for the leadership role they had undertaken for the region in relation to animal control. He thanked Jim Fitzgerald, Animal Control Officer for the Town of Queensbury, for providing the municipalities of Warren County with assistance in animal control including aiding them with purchasing certain specific pieces of equipment. Mr. Strough thanked Mr. Conover for his comments and advised he would convey them to Mr. Fitzgerald.

Tawn Driscoll, Fiscal Manager, advised Attachment #2 in the agenda packet was a Budget analysis of the Health Services Department as of April 20, 2015. She said the CHHA, LTC and MCH billing was closed as of yesterday for the month of March; therefore, she stated, she would be adding an additional \$315,000 to revenue for an estimated total of \$1 million. She apprised the year-to-date salaries reflected a decrease of \$14,340.18 or 25.19% of the salary to budget, which was a decrease from last year's percentage at the same time period of 26.45%.

Ms. Driscoll apprised Attachment #3 referred to the Revenue and Expense Comparison of 2015 versus 2014 as of today. She noted the reduction in salaries and employee benefits was due to vacant nursing positions.

Mr. Conover commented it may be necessary to address the challenge of filling vacant nursing positions before staffing shortages became an issue. Tammie DeLorenzo, Clinical & Fiscal Informatics Coordinator, mentioned they had received interest in the positions from previous employees. She pointed out a recent vacancy had been filled with a former employee. She added due to the implementation of Managed Long Term Care Plans, they would be closely monitoring the positions within the Long Term Home Health Care Program. She explained in anticipation of a decrease in participation within the Long Term Health Care Program they had reorganized some of their staff.

Mr. McDevitt stated he had attended a meeting this morning in Hudson Falls regarding heroin. He said the discussion revolved around ensuring the proper components were in place to deal with neonatal syndrome. He explained that neonatal syndrome was the term used for babies that were born addicted to heroin because their birth mothers had been users during their pregnancy.

This concluded the Health Services portion of the meeting and the Westmount Health Facility portion of the meeting commenced at 10:28 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Lloyd Coté, 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.*

Betsey Henkel, Comptroller, presented a request to appropriate funding in the amount of \$811,794 from the Westmount Health Facility Fund Balance to the Westmount Health Facility Operating Budget.

She explained that the fund balance was higher than they had originally anticipated due to IGT (Intergovernmental Transfer) funding, the Universal Settlement and Co-Gen Rate Appeals.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to appropriate funding in the amount of \$811,794 from the Westmount Health Facility Fund Balance as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Henkel requested to Amend the 2015 County Budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$811,794 to reflect the receipt of funding from the Westmount Health Facility fund balance to meet the future needs of the facility. She advised that the current budget only supported the facility through the end of May of this year; therefore, she said, it was necessary to increase their revenue accounts to support the increase in their expenses. She noted the funding would permit them to operate through the end of October of 2015. She pointed out she had doubled the majority of their revenues with the exception of the private pay, IGT and Medicaid revenues. She explained that since the private pay rate had been increased in February of 2015, she doubled the figure and added an additional \$30,000 to the revenue to account for the rate increase. She stated the additional increase to Medicaid revenue related to the receipt of interest and depreciation costs from the Co-Gen. She added she had not budgeted for Workers' Compensation or Liability Insurance premiums, as the premiums has already been paid for the year.

Mr. Conover questioned what Ms. Henkel estimated the total amount of revenues and expenses for the Westmount Health Facility would be through the end of October of 2015. Ms. Henkel apprised she estimated the total revenue to be \$2,875,790 and the total expenses to be \$3,687,584; therefore, she stated, an appropriation in the amount of \$811,794 from the Westmount Health Facility Fund Balance was required to ensure they had a sufficient amount of funding to cover their operating expenses.

Mr. Conover asked how much money the County had loaned to the Westmount Health Facility thus far and Robert Lynch, Deputy County Treasurer, replied that the total amount due to the County from the Westmount Health Facility was \$1.8 million, \$400,000 of which was due from a previous loan from the County. He stated they were optimistic that they would receive a sufficient amount of IGT funding to cover the balance of the loans. Mr. Conover suggested that the Finance Committee Meeting Agenda include discussion regarding what additional appropriations would be required and when they would occur to continue the operation of the facility.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request to Amend the 2015 County Budget as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request to Amend the County Budget form is on file with the minutes.*

With regards to Staffing, Mr. Cote advised it continued to be a challenge for them, as they had difficulty filling vacant LPN (Licensed Practical Nursing) positions and a Nursing Unit Manager for the Southwest Unit of the facility. He reminded the Committee the vacant shifts were covered with overtime, per diem

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employees and Agency Nurses. He noted two employees were currently out of work on disability and he did not anticipate they would be returning.

Mr. Cote apprised he was working with the County Attorney and the County Administrator to ensure they had contracts in place with the two agencies that would be providing Medicaid Managed Care prior to the effective date of July 1, 2015 for in order to be eligible for reimbursement of the services provided. He said this meant patients eligible for Medicaid who were admitted to the nursing home after June 30, 2015 would be required to select one of the agencies that provided Medicaid Managed Care Coverage. He added any current residents of the facility that were Medicaid recipients would be eligible to remain on their current plan for a maximum of 3 years.

In regards to the census, Mr. Cote stated as of today 77 out of the 80 beds available at the facility were filled. He said the census had been running rather steady lately, which he felt would assist them with generating revenue.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mrs. Frasier and seconded by Mr. Conover, Mr. Sokol adjourned the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah McLenithan, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board