

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
November 13, 2007
Kenosha County Administration Building

Committee Members Present: Judy Rossow, Ruth Booth, Ed Kubicki, Bill Grady, David Arrington, Ariana Gillmore

Committee Members Absent: Virginia Jones (excused)

Staff Present: Dennis Schultz, Laurie Staves, Bob Riedl, Dr. Mary Mainland, Gina Carver

Others Present: Co. Bd. Supr. Anita Faraone

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Judy Rossow, Chairperson.

2. Citizen's Comments - None

3. Approval of Minutes - 8/7/07, Jt. 8/14/07, 8/21/07, Jt. Budget Mtg 10/17/07, Jt. Mtgs on 1/30/07 and 3/8/07

MOTION to approve minutes by Bill Grady, seconded by David Arrington. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Resolution to Approve the County Executive Appointment of LaVerne Jaros to serve as Director of the newly created Division of Aging & Disability Services

Judy Rossow informed the committee members that this is a formality, as everyone voted to approve LaVerne's appointment as part of the 2008 County budget at the County Board meeting (except Ruth Booth who was excused).

MOTION to approve by David Arrington, seconded by Ed Kubicki. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Discussion: Medical Examiner's Office

Dr. Mainland introduced Gina Carver, her Office Manager, and respectfully requested that the committee reconsider the addition of a full-time deputy medical examiner (FT DME) position to their 2008 budget. They presented their case at the Joint HSB/HSC/PWC budget meeting on 10/17/07 and again at Finance. Dr. Mainland's duties include autopsies, medical examinations, signing death certificates, etc. Their current FT DME has been out on A&S since Monday and doesn't know when she will be coming back. They also have part-time DME's (PT DME's) that are paid \$5.70/hour who take calls in the evenings and on weekends when their FT DME can't. Their hours are set according to their schedules. But they have a hard time retaining PT DME's. The workload is heavier than anticipated. To relieve some pressure, they thought if they eliminated the autopsy assistant (-\$20,651) and some PT DME hours (-\$14,309), they could add the new position of FT DME (\$58,456) for a total net increase of \$23,496. They feel this new position is justified. Dave Geertsen thinks they can find a vacancy rate to cover this \$23,496 amount.

Dr. Mainland distributed a handout on 2007 vs. 2003 Statistics. 2003 was the last full year the Medical Examiner's office operated under the old structure of two FT DME positions. There were 705 deaths in 2007, compared to 607 in 2003, and a total of 179 autopsies/exams in 2007 as compared to 87 in 2003. They investigate in a lot more detail now than in 2003.

Gina Carver stated that they are down to five PT DME's now (as one just left).

At the request of Bill Grady, Laurie Staves had prepared some data on the types of cases, number of hours expended, and guidelines for performing autopsies. She distributed this info. On the "Caseload" handout, they estimated 815 deaths for year-end 2007 and 207 performed autopsies and external exams. On the "Hours" handout, the contracted position - Autopsy Assistant - performs an average of 11 hours per week. The Chief Investigator (also known as the FT DME) performs 64 hours/week. She is working more hours than the scheduled 40-hour week to cover the hours not covered by the PT DME's who work 104 hours/week. Dr. Mainland averages 58 hours/week. The "Jurisdiction" handout explains the Wis. State Statutes governing when to perform autopsies. There are gray areas in jurisdiction for performing autopsies. A medical examiner or coroner may do more autopsies than a lay person because they recognize nuances learned from their training and experience. Kenosha's autopsy rate is similar to Waukesha, Milwaukee and Fond du Lac.

Dr. Mainland stated that if you end up in court, you need to be prepared. Judy Rossow added that Dr. Mainland is our expert and we don't have to hire out for this, so it saves court costs. Ms. Staves said that it saved the DA's office over \$78,000, if they had hired out for the 262 hours performed by Dr. Mainland @ \$300 per hour.

Ruth Booth inquired why the PT DME's leave. Ms. Carver explained that most of them have a full-time job, or two jobs, or are going to school during the day. They are then on call at night. They tell us what hours they want to be scheduled for. A few thought they could handle it and found out they couldn't. It's a death investigation, transporting bodies, telling families their loved one has just died. Not everyone can handle that. Others moved on to a different job.

Ms. Staves distributed a "Part-time Deputy Report" which showed that each new hire averages 32 hours of training, including death scene investigation training. This report also listed the reasons for recommending a FT DME: to provide additional on-call hours during the week and weekend; to provide backup when Chief Investigator not available; to be trained to perform death investigations, sign death certificates and cremation permits, and release bodies to funeral homes; to provide quicker response time to death scenes; to assist in tissue harvesting, etc. Total additional levy is \$23,496.

Anita Faraone noted that the salary for this position is recommended at the "C" level. She suggested keeping it at the "D" level, so that we don't have to come back requesting an increase. She also commented that maybe we should not have put the Medical Examiner under the Health Division.

Dr. Mainland responded that their office researched other counties and their pay ranges. Waukesha was \$40,000 - \$51,000; Milwaukee was \$33,000 - \$37,000. Kenosha is high, which is the reason for the downgrade from a "D" to a "C" pay level. Bob Riedl said that it will take 10 years to get to the top range of \$64,200 under the "C" level.

Ms. Staves confirmed to Mr. Grady that a vacancy allowance is when a person leaves and the position is not filled right away. Mr. Grady said he would prefer to see the 2008 budget close out, evaluate, and then make a decision. He recommended putting this on the agenda for the next meeting in January as a resolution. Bob Riedl stated that this needs to go to a December Administration Committee meeting for the change in pay grade first. Discussion ensued. The Committee members were reminded that the current FT DME was out on an indefinite A&S leave, which left the Medical Examiner's office very short-handed. It was decided that the resolution would go to Admin on 12/3, to a Joint Human Services/Finance Committee Mtg on 12/4. Judy Rossow will contact Terry Rose for approval to go to the County Board with this resolution on 12/4/07. Ms. Rossow directed Dennis Schultz to work with the Finance Committee members about the joint meeting.

6. Such Other Business as Authorized by Law - None

7. Committee Members Comments

Bill Grady thanked Laurie Staves and others for preparing these documents in a short period of time.

8. Adjournment

It was moved to adjourn by Ed Kubicki, seconded by David Arrington. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Davis
KCDHS Secretary

F:Sharon/HSCmin11