

SPECIAL HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE (cont'd)

Minutes of Meeting

October 23, 2008

Kenosha County Administration Building

Committee Members Present: Ed Kubicki, Jeff Gentz, Dick Kessler, Terry Rose, Jennifer Jackson

Staff Present: John Jansen, Bob Riedl, Dave Geertsen, Jennie Tunkieicz, Co. Exec. Jim Kreuser

Others Present: Joe Potente (Kenosha News), Bob Pitts
Co. Bd. Supervisors Anita Faraone, Gabe Nudo

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ed Kubicki, Chairperson. Mr. Kubicki thanked everyone for coming and apologized for not allocating enough time for this discussion at the previous meeting.

2. Citizen's Comments

Bob Pitts said that he is very concerned. In 1988 Brookside went out of compliance and the County had to hire a Management Team at the cost of \$800,000. We need to have a very qualified director. That position is so complex. A person has to be on top of the current laws and state regulations, and manage 175 employees and 154 residents. That's very important. Someone said we are losing money. Five years ago, we had a budget of \$2.8 million. Today it's \$1.3 million. We are doing a good job. We could do a better job if the State would reimburse us our total losses. Money goes from the federal government to the state. The state uses some of it for Family Care and other purposes. Then the remaining is distributed to the county-run nursing homes. Two years ago we had revenue in our budget of \$2 million in reserves. \$1 million was taken and put towards the budget. This year we had \$400,000 in the reserves and that was taken too. We need a strong leader, someone who understands. We don't want to be out of compliance with the State again because there is a big fine. The other night you received information on other county nursing homes and private nursing homes. What the private nursing homes' pay does not show is bonuses they receive. I hope you move on with this issue. With the bad publicity surrounding this issue, you won't get someone wanting to take this job.

Jennifer Jackson said that her reason for not voting for this increase was that we are constantly losing CNA's. Mr. Pitts responded that when we hire CNA's, they think it's something different until they start the job. They are dealing with sick patients. It's too much for some of them. It doesn't pay enough. They can go any other place with much better wages. CNA's leave because they just can't cut it. We need to look at the pay scale and try to entice people to work at Brookside. It's important to teach these CNA's the responsibilities they have to face. We have a waiting list of over 400 people and we have a good reputation.

Bob Riedl stated that we are the best in pay around Kenosha. This is an entry level job for those wanting a career in nursing care. It takes only a few weeks of training for this position. We deal with very young people and people who are not prepared. They 'think' they are prepared but find out it's different than they expected. It's a lot of hard work. We

are not understaffed. We are always taking applications and hiring to be sure we have a ready list of people.

3. Approval of 2009 DHS Budget

Ms. Jackson said that she did not want to see our county become top heavy, which is another reason she voted against this raise. However, after looking into this a little bit more and talking to everyone here about the CNA's, she realizes this is not where the problem is. She doesn't ever want to see our nursing home privatized. If a more qualified director will help, she will switch her vote.

Terry Rose said he always thought Brookside was a very well-run institution. It was a big surprise to learn there was a problem, which came out during the pay raise issue. The Brookside Board of Trustees should have brought this to our attention. This is a financial issue. Brookside was running in red ink year after year. Any private nursing home running this way would be out of business. The State is not going to pay us more. If you are going to retain Brookside, how are you going to finance this? Why are we running a deficit? The letter from Grande Prairie states they receive more money than we do. Laurie Staves said she will be meeting with the Grande Prairie administrator about this next week. But our Trustees should have been on top of this.

Mr. Rose also reminded the committee members about the approval on Oct. 7th of John Jansen's appointment with an annual salary of \$96,729. The Brookside director will make more than Mr. Jansen. If we are going to go from 'J' to 'K', we need to amend this resolution to require as a condition of employment that one of the goals of the new administrator should be deficit reduction. We need this as a condition of employment.

Mr. Pitts addressed the Grande Prairie letter. The rate is based on the level of care. They get more money for different levels of care. It always depends on the resident. Reducing the budget is a good thing but we lose \$100 a day on Title 19 patients. How can we recoup that? This is one of the Brookside problems we are facing. We also have to pay the total hospital cost for our Title 19 residents.

Mr. Kubicki said that it took him a few days to digest all of this information. He also spoke to administrators in this state and the neighboring state. The Brookside increased wage range is comparable to their wages. He will support the budget for Brookside this evening.

Jeff Gentz moved to approve the 2009 DHS Budget, with the Brookside administrator increase; Dick Kessler seconded.

Terry Rose moved to amend the budget resolution to require, as a condition of employment, that one of the goals of the new administrator be deficit reduction. Ed Kubicki seconded.

Mr. Gentz said he likes the idea of deficit reduction being a goal but not a condition. Will they be fired if they don't reach it?

Mr. Rose replied, "Yes, the person could be discharged if they didn't meet the deficit reduction".

Anita Faraone commented that Mr. Rose was setting policy, but that is Administration's responsibility. You can't do this with the budget. It can be a goal but you can't set policy. You can't give patient care up to reduce the deficit. She does not want to see patient care sacrificed to reduce this deficit. We just gave up 2 CNA positions to help reduce the deficit.

Mr. Pitts suggested a compromise. He will be happy to bring this to the Board of Trustees, which is the policy-making committee for Brookside.

Mr. Rose stated that he does not want to jeopardize patient care, but he still wants this in the resolution - to require, as a condition of employment, that one of the goals of the new administrator be deficit reduction and high patient care.

Gabe Nudo said he would like to see the deficit reduced but no reduction in patient care. He had his mother at a private nursing home, but the care was not there. His family had to be sure they were there at least 14 hours a day. His mother is now at Brookside. She has good care and they aren't afraid to leave her there.

Dick Kessler commented that Brookside is the county home. Kenosha County is responsible for its citizenry. There are many private nursing homes in the city and county who refuse people because of the amount of care they need. Brookside will take the sickest of the sick. It **is** a county home and we are responsible for the people. As far as IGT, he doesn't think the State money will be going away. We have to foot the bill for the people.

Jeff Gentz called the question. Dick Kessler seconded.

Members voted on the final amended resolution: **To amend the budget resolution to require, as a condition of employment, that one of the goals of the new administrator be deficit reduction and high patient care. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Members then voted on the original resolution as amended: **To approve the 2009 DHS Budget, with the Brookside administrator increase, amended to require, as a condition of employment, that one of the goals of the new administrator be deficit reduction and high patient care. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. Such Other Business as Authorized by Law - None
5. Committee Members Comments - None
6. Adjournment

It was moved to adjourn by Terry Rose, seconded by Jeff Gentz. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Davis
KCDHS Secretary

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