

HEALTH COMMITTEE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

MINUTES February 9, 2006

Present:

J. Stoeckeler R. Parete
C. Busick M. Sheeley
P. Liepmann P. Terpening

Excused:

J. Roberti

GHHCC:

S. Cross C. Beisel

The meeting was held at the Trudy Resnick Farber Center in Ellenville. Chairman Stoeckeler called the GHHCC portion of the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

1. Staffing was discussed – see item 2. The needed positions at this time are 1010 Supervising Nurse, 1064 Supervising Nurse PD, 1070 Head Nurse, RPNs- 1098, 1102, 1118, 1142, 1150, 1522 Leisure Time Activities Aide, 1668 Food Service Helper, Housekeeping Aides – 1817 (FT), 1840 (PT), 1842 (PT) 1844 (PT), 1880 (PD), Laundry Worker 1866, 1916 Senior Account Clerk, 1946 Clerk (PT). We are holding 8 other vacancies until future need arises. Reminder – these are not all the vacancies – there are blanket vacancies open. A short explanation was given as to how GHHCC incorporates a vacancy factor in personnel funding. Legislator Liepmann noted two issues relating to vacancies -1. Since a Senior Account clerk in the fiscal office was vacant the question arose as to why the Medicaid billing could not be done at DSS thus combining services? Ms. Cross will investigate and will inform the committee of her findings at the next meeting. 2. Housekeeping vacancies: the question was posed as to why those sentenced to community service could not serve as Housekeepers? The facility has worked with Community Service individuals in the past and have delegated them primarily to Laundry services –.
2. J. Stoeckeler addressed the “New Procedures for Various Approvals” memorandum issued by D. Donaldson on January 23, 2006. Stoeckeler proposed that the committee co-chairs sign off on requests by the departments on an as-needed basis. He said the departments reporting to this committee provided consumer driven health services and needed timely responses to requests to fill vacancies and other items covered in the memo. R. Parete said that he had proposed the new procedures in the Leadership Committee to give committees more input and information about decisions impacting departments for which they had oversight. Parete agreed that the departments reporting to the Health Committee needed timely response and were qualitatively different in this regard than other departments. The following protocol was proposed by Stoeckeler to apply to all departments reporting to the Health Committee of the Legislature:
 - Department heads or their designees will discuss requests with the Committee Chair. (Stoeckeler for the Mental Health and Parete for the Health Department and the Golden Hill Health Care Center).
 - The Chairs will approve or deny requests. In this process the Chairs will seek input from Committee members as the Chairs deem necessary.
 - Each department will provide a written summary of all transactions approved at the monthly Committee meetings. The listing will cover all transactions since the last meeting of the Committee.
 - The effectiveness of the process will be reviewed at the June 2006 meeting of the Committee.

The protocol was unanimously approved on a motion by R. Parete, seconded by P. Liepmann. (As originated in the Mental Health minutes and inserted here)

3. Budget considerations: Reimbursement and the Medicaid Rate with the Trend Factor changes. The net effect of combining the published trend factor for 2006 of 2.5 with the average banking adjustment of 0.028 is a 4.4 percent increase in the average statewide roll factor for 2006. What that means to GHHCC is a possible revenue increase of approx. \$3.13 per diem in the rate. Multiply that by 2006 Medicaid days – 74,551 for a total of \$233,334.63 less the 6% assessment

equals approx. \$219,000 in additional revenue. Additionally, we received in 2006 for 2005, for financially disadvantaged nursing homes, an increase in the per diem of \$5.47. So far we received \$380,500 and another \$20,000 should be received as well. The 6% assessment applies; so there will be a net of \$376,000 received. The same should hold true for 2006, depending on the financially disadvantaged legislation.

Reminder for reimbursement issues: the facility Medicaid rate is based on a 1983 base year with 116% added (23 year inflation factor). There are proposals in the Governor's budget to change this rate year, but with this change there are many givebacks such as no trend factor. There is some opposition by the Nursing Home organizations (NYAHS, CNFNY) to the plan. They have a proposal to develop a new Medicaid reimbursement methodology that they are advocating. This methodology would (based on a 2002 base year) increase revenues by \$1,378,000.

IGT – the Intergovernmental Transfer program, though it has been phased out, there is some revenue expected. This program has had to be signed at the federal government level and it was to be signed along with other state items. There is every expectation that the monies will be forthcoming but there is not a definitive amount set yet, nor is there a date.

Legislator Liepmann inquired as to what mandates New York State has that Massachusetts does not that makes the costs in New York Nursing Homes so high. Ms. Cross will contact the nursing home organization, NYAHS, for information and will report at the next meeting.

4. Mailbox: Since April 2003 the facility has been non-compliant with HIPAA as far as the facility does not have a locked mailbox system. The facility has investigated several options during this time. The facility thought that if there was construction a mail room could be built within a janitor's closet. Since construction is not in the near future a second option was proposed. This option is a \$4,000 locked modular stationary mailbox system. No decision was reached. This will be re-visited at the next meeting.
5. Medicare Part D – no information received on any savings to be realized by the facility. The pharmacy has had complications in this area. Will continue to report on this issue.
6. Residents have concerns about a South side gazebo and a resident van. Discussion was held on the Resident Council issues. Legislator Robert Parete is to inquire from the County Attorney's office the legalities about the possibility of fundraising for these items.
7. Corporate Compliance In-Service Packets were distributed and signed for, as per NYS regulations. Legislator Busick volunteered to attend quarterly Quality Assessment and Assurance meetings as he has done so for several years. Ms. Cross and Ms. Beisel acknowledged and thanked Legislator Terpening for attending the Resident Council Inauguration at the facility.
8. Chairman Stoeckler discussed the possible investigation by the committee in regards to the Critical Access status of Ellenville hospital and Medicare rates as it may relate to GHHCC.
9. A handout was given with regards to the Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century.
10. A short discussion was held about the Center Elevator of the building. Once the construction project of last year is closed out, it is hoped that the facility can use the remaining savings from the project to replace at least the Center Elevator. The Center Elevator is currently repaired at least twice weekly, sometimes more. We are approaching the time when the elevator may have to remain closed until the 'overhaul' can take place.

Next month's meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2006 at Golden Hill Health Care Center. A tour will be provided.

The GHHCC portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Beisel
Deputy Director