

HEALTH COMMITTEE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

MINUTES

October 23, 2006

Present:

R. Parete
J. Roberti
P. Terpening

C. Busick
P. Liepmann

Excused: M. Sheeley

Absent: J. Stoeckeler

UCMHD: M. Beckman
E. Brown

The Mental Health portion meeting was called to order by Chairman Parete at 6:06 PM.

1. The Committee approved a resolution authorizing an amendment to the 2006 County budget to accept State Aid increases for the contract agencies. The resolution was moved by C. Busick, seconded by P. Terpening and passed unanimously.
2. The Committee approved a resolution authorizing an amendment to the 2006 County budget to accept State Aid increases for the OMH Forensic grant. The resolution was moved by P. Terpening, seconded by C. Busick and passed unanimously.
3. The Committee approved a resolution authorizing a transfer of funds from personnel accounts to temporary services to pay for temp services to fill in for vacant positions. The resolution was moved by C. Busick, seconded by P. Terpening and passed unanimously.
4. The Committee approved temp services requests for five positions including one senior typist, one typist, and 3 account clerk/typists. The requests were moved by C. Busick, seconded by P. Terpening and passed unanimously. The Committee approved three conference requests including one for the Forensic Grant, one for the Chemical Dependency Day Treatment Program Annual Giving of Thanks for Recovery and one for the Chemical Dependency Evening Intensive Program Annual Giving of Thanks for Recovery. The requests were moved by C. Busick, seconded by P. Terpening and passed unanimously. The Committee approved requests to fill vacancies for three positions including the Medical Billing Coordinator and 2 Account Clerk/Typists. The requests were moved by P. Terpening, seconded by C. Busick and passed unanimously.

R. Parete asked that the Committee members be notified of the dates of the Annual Giving of Thanks events. M. Beckman assured the Committee members that they would receive invitations as soon as the events are approved. The Committee also engaged in a discussion with the Department regarding any issues that have come up around the procedures instituted by the Auditor. Chairman Parete asked the Department to prepare a memo to the Committee outlining issues and problems encountered to date.

5. M. Beckman circulated a letter from Kristin Wiles, a former UCMHD employee, which had been sent to legislators and the CSB. Ms. Wiles raised a number of concerns in her letter regarding the changes introduced at UCMHD over the past several years. Mr. Beckman said that the concerns raised by Ms. Wiles were evidence that the changes toward a more recovery oriented system were working. He reported that data from client surveys have revealed that the consumers are happy with the changes and that they are not complaining of a diminution in quality of care. Mr. Beckman reported that the letter was circulated to the senior staff of the agency and openly discussed in a meeting. (Letter attached)
6. Mr. Beckman reported that he has been informed that the County will transition to mandatory managed care for Medicaid in January of 2007. He reminded the Committee that he has sent three memos to DSS and legislators outlining the problems UCMHD will face with the shift to mandatory managed care, and his expectation that UCMHD will lose revenues, resulting in a larger county contribution. He explained that UCMHD is not adequately staffed or technologically resourced to effectively and efficiently handle a large increase in managed care clients. R. Parete asked if Mr. Beckman was suggesting that the County not make the switch to mandatory managed care. Mr. Beckman replied that the decision should be made on the basis of what is best for the County, overall, but that it is probable that UCMHD will experience revenue

shortfalls until we have implemented new software to aid us in tracking visits and ensuring authorizations for visits are in place.

7. Mr. Beckman reported that the department has resumed efforts to upgrade our billing and medical records software. The software upgrade, PROfiler, is being reviewed and evaluated with the UC IS Department. This is an upgrade to the current software used by the department. If the project goes forward, the development and implementation will take between 18 and 24 months before the software is operational and deployed throughout the agency. The software is anticipated to improve our ability to track visits and authorizations for visits. This project is also dependent upon renovations to the Golden Hill Building.
8. Mr. Beckman reported that Harvey Sleight, Commissioner, UC Buildings and Grounds Department, has informed him that a representative of the B & G Department would meet with him next week to discuss designing a minimal renovation for the Golden Hill Building. The renovation is needed to accommodate the work flow changes resulting from the implementation of PROfiler. Mr. Beckman added that he has discussed this matter with Chairman Donaldson and Chairman Parete, including the possibility of access to Federal Revenue Sharing dollars to pay for a minimal renovation.
9. Mr. Beckman reported that the UCMHD staff and administration received the President's Award from NYAPRS for adopting a policy of transformation aimed at a more person-centered mental hygiene system. (Letter from ARC attached)
10. Mr. Beckman reported that the Substance Abuse Prevention Board has been constituted and held its first meeting in September. They are in the development phase.
11. Mr. Beckman reported that a planning group to examine the viability of establishing a Child and Family Services Center has begun meeting. The planning group was created at the direction of Legislators Robert Parete and Peter Kraft (memo attached). Two meetings have been held. The planning group includes County agencies and related service providers. The planning group is currently considering piloting the concept in Ellenville at the Trudy Resnick Farber Center. This is being considered because most of the services being considered for inclusion in the Child and Family Services Center already have offices in this Ellenville location.

The Mental Health portion of the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward J. Brown, Ph. D.
Deputy Director