

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
of the ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

DATE: April 18, 2001

TIME: 6:00pm

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Alice Tipp, David Donaldson, Vincent Dunn, Brian Hathaway,
Peter Loughran, Barbara Santoro and Robert Wilkins

OTHERS PRESENT: Terry Breitenstein, Veterans Agency
Kathryn Puglisi, Office for the Aging
Ellen Greczynski, Office for the Aging
Aleta Ellsworth and Viola Casper

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

TERRY BREITENSTEIN - Veterans Agency

Terry began with an update on his office. MaryJane Costa, a Senior Clerk in his office, is ill. He has been using a temp. from Manpower for a few weeks to do filing, answering phones and inputting client files on the computer. Terry would like to keep her for 8 weeks to get all the files posted. Brian asked how much money would be needed for this position. Terry said he did not know at this time but would know by next month there are factors to consider. There may be enough money in the budget to cover it. The committee members agreed to keep the temp..

Terry then discussed enrollment in the clinic. There are 1,800 Veterans enrolled. There will be another enrollment program in Ellenville in June. Staff from the VA hospital comes down for the program. Terry advised the committee that we have a contract clinic instead of a VA personnel clinic, which runs into problems. Terry asked the committee members to encourage people to use the clinics. He then stated that approximately 50% of the Vets enrolled are there for prescriptions only. Dave asked about the cost of the prescriptions. \$2 per a 30 day supply, Terry responded. Terry advised that the Veteran has to get the prescription from a VA doctor. They bring it to the clinic and the prescription is ordered from Albany. The prescription comes in a 90 day supply in the mail. Alice asked if they were generic. Some are and some aren't, Terry answered.

The VA Homeloan Guarantee Program was the next topic Terry discussed. A pamphlet was made up to hand out to Veterans showing a breakdown of the steps and procedure for applying for a VA mortgage and where to apply for one. The percentages are in the same range with other institutions. Dave asked what the advantage is. Terry discussed this. If you want to apply for a VA mortgage, you still need to go to a lending institution for the loan. The VA does not lend you money, they guarantee a portion of the money from the lender up to \$48,000. The benefit is if someone is borderline eligible, knowing the VA will guarantee a portion, they will get the mortgage. The other benefit is you can get 100% mortgage and get your closing costs and down payment in that mortgage.

Terry advised the committee that assuming a mortgage is not a good idea. You would be liable if the house was foreclosed. Make sure you have a satisfaction of your mortgage at the closing, he added.

Alice asked if there were any further questions for Terry. There were none. Terry was dismissed at 6:25pm

KATHRYN PUGLISI - Office for the Aging

Kathy began with Senior Games which will begin on May 7th. There are about 250 seniors signed up. Kathy invited all committee members to attend the games and the Awards Luncheon on June 11th at the Town of Ulster Park.

Live, Laugh and Learn was the next event discussed. Penny has this set up for August 15th at the BRC, all committee members are invited to attend. Things are being worked out for transportation with UCRT and the applications are almost ready.

The new Care-A-Van is ready to go on the road, Kathy announced. Dave and Brian asked when it would be going out. As soon as the driver is trained. The old Care-A-Van is still going out. Peter asked why the new van is being stored at UCRT. There is some difficulty parking it in and out of the garage. There is also 24 hour surveillance there. As far as supplies, Kathy said all supplies and equipment that could be affected by the weather is removed. Peter had some concerns regarding the cost and the use of the van, as the county agreed to use the van 3 days per week and Kingston Hospital could use it 4 days a week and they contributed \$53,000 towards the purchase price and \$25,000 in equipment while \$135,000 came from Public funding. Kathy informed the committee that they would be meeting with Attorney Mark Frering on Friday to discuss the contract. Peter asked who will be doing the maintenance. We will, Kathy replied, and they will pay the county \$13,000.

Discussion followed regarding the RN position on the Van. Kathy advised that they are in the process of hiring an RN as Kingston Hospital pulled their RN out. Peter mentioned an RN from the Health Department. Dave asked the cost of the Nurse. Salary would depend on the hours involved. Kathy suggested 12 hours per week. Kathy also said that they are presently applying for a CLIA license. Medical oversight of an RN over the LPN is required and then an MD needs to oversee the RN. Tests done on the van need to be done by this requirement. Discussion took place regarding the tests that are done on the van. The cost involved in processing these tests is a concern, Kathy expressed. Dave wanted to know the cost and frequency of a Guaiac test. Frequency depends on your risk factor, Kathy added and the cost to the office is \$30 per result. Dave questioned if the Health Department was used for the test results, possibly Medicare would cover them. Committee members had questions and concerns regarding the services on the van and if any changes would take place regarding same. Peter inquired if once the RN is back on the van, would the services stay the same or change. Kathy discussed the fact that the OFA is to provide education and outreach but not medical case management and that was what was happening with the office handling all of the tests. Since these tests need to go through a lab, the tests will cost the county, she advised. Tests will now be done depending on the necessity and the symptom, Alice stated. Kathy advised that this year the focus is on education. Robert asked if additional services would be put on the van. Yes, once the RN is on it, Kathy replied. Agencies will be going out on the van on different days to provide information. The van will also be on the road 3 days instead of 2 days per week, Kathy stated. The members questioned the medical oversight of the MD. Kathy advised that they are contracted with Kingston Hospital for an MD, and thus far Dr. Smith will be the doctor.

Dave questioned what we were gaining with the new contract and with Kingston Hospital. Discussion followed regarding this. Peter suggested hiring an RN from the Health Department and using our own MD for the oversight. Peter and Dave suggested the County having control over the van. Barbara asked if there was a signed contract yet. No, Kathy replied, it is still being worked on. Kathy asked if they should hold off on the contract. Peter agreed. He will talk to the Chairman. The members then agreed that they want to see the previous contract and a copy of the draft for the new one. Committee members also then suggested selling the old Care-A-Van to an outside source.

Kathy then told the committee about the status of the 2 small vans. One will be used for medical appointments

and the 2nd one will deliver food and pick people up to go to the meal sites. It will be leased to Community Action, she added.

Kathy informed the committee that a Law Day is planned in September at Hudson Valley Senior Residence with Lou Klein, Esq.

The Office for the Aging will be applying for a grant for \$200,00 for colo-rectal. The State Office for the Aging has advised her that Ulster County will receive \$61,000 for the Caregivers program. The County will have to match \$20,000 for a total of \$81,000. A grant was also received, Kathy added, from Helen Hayes Hospital regarding Osteoporosis.

Alice then presented the Resolutions.

The 1st one was for the fee for the CLIA license, lab fees and supplies for the van in the amount of \$14,100.

Bob made the 1st motion to accept, seconded by Dave. All were in favor.

The 2nd one was for leasing a radio for the Care-A-Van, for one year, in the amount of \$840. Bob made the 1st motion to accept, seconded by Dave. All were in favor.

Discussion then took place regarding the Care-A-Van services with the visitors, Aleta Ellsworth and Viola Casper.

Aleta told the committee that most of her questions and concerns were answered throughout the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned for Executive Session at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Tipp, Chairman
Community Services Committee