

**COUNTY HOME ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2003**

Roll Call

Chairman Chuck Hawley called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. at the County Home. The following Council members were present:

Present: Jo Becks, Randy Bing, Brian Feron, Chuck Hawley, Laura Kuhl, Emily Muscatello, Tanya Rodgers, Cheryl Scheck, Randy Schmidt, and Skip Sipos.

Absent: Ken Miller

The following Ex officio members were present: John Stricker, County Administrator, Joyce Farnsworth, County Home Administrator, and Lynn Remington, Assistant County Home Administrator. Also present was Carol Shockley from the Prosecutor's Office. A sign up sheet is attached as Exhibit A.

Approval of Minutes - March

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes from March that were approved by the Board.

Report on Progress – Admissions Policy Consultant

Carol Shockley from the Prosecutor's Office said that she has not put out the request for proposal for the consultant yet. John Stricker, County Administrator, said that they would need time to review it with Dean Holman and the Commissioners and then figure out how to pay for it.

Committee Reports

Facilities

Brian Feron reported that the 5-year plan was completed on April 15th so they will schedule a walk-thru in May with the Maintenance Superintendent, Tom Maupin.

Technical Update

John Stricker said that four state-of-the-art PC's will be ordered when they get the Purchase Order from the Finance Department. They will be networked together and have Windows XP software. He was happy to announce that the County Home will be the first test case for wireless access to the county backbone. This will allow them to access any office in county government plus have free high-speed Internet access.

Discussion – Ohio County Home Association Bulletin

John Stricker explained that the "Ohio County Home Association – Enhancing the Quality of Life" packet that Carol Shockley provided that was mailed out last month was an excerpt about County Homes from the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) Handbook. It is the CCAO interpretation of the Ohio Revised Code and was probably written by one of the County Home Administrators.

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Tanya Rodgers said Section 48.022 suggests that certified nurse aids from the state registry be hired at a County Home if they retain residents when their health deteriorates and they require some nursing care. She thought this was a good idea to reduce liability and perhaps the Medina County Home should consider that. The Home's salaries are similar to other facilities at this point. The Medina County Career Center offers a certification program at the Career Center for \$550 per person.

Joyce Farnsworth, County Home Administrator, said at one time they were going to have certified aids and they were all set up to have training. They were told they do not need them so it would be an unnecessary expense. No other County Homes use them to her knowledge either. They have 2 RN's and 3 LPN's on staff and they contract with a doctor.

John added that to maintain their license, an aid needs to work a number of hours in a licensed facility (which the County Home is not), so they would have to work somewhere else to meet the re-education requirements.

Tanya said that residents' rights requirements are discussed at length in the handout and suggested that they review the items and make sure the Medina County Home has what is listed and everything is posted.

Lynn Remington, Assistant County Home Administrator, said that they have everything that is required posted in the office.

Laura Kuhl reviewed some information about the care services that Lynn Remington had provided last winter. She gave the figures for residents needing medication, inhalation assistance, and injection assistance at that time. She said that these services meet the State of Ohio's definition of skilled nursing care per a state nursing home survey. The standards that are held for a non-County Home property are much higher than the standards for a County Home. Emily Muscatello arrived during this discussion. Laura said the state requires so much more and showed the group that a State Nursing Home Survey is more than an inch thick. She wanted to go on record saying she is not assured why Medina County Home residents are entitled to lesser standards of care than residents in any other facility. There are opportunities available for an outside firm to go through the facility to do a survey to evaluate how the County Home is doing to meet what the state requires as minimum standard, which would be proof.

Upon questioning by Chuck Hawley, County Home resident and Council member Randy Bing said that the care is great.

Tanya said the standards are just as high at the Home. The problem with those types of surveys is you get involved with a lot of peripheral things that the County Home is not required by law to do and that takes up a lot of time. This way they can concentrate on actually taking care of the people in the Home without having to worry about surveys and overwhelming paperwork.

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Chuck asked Randy Schmidt what the Veteran's perspective is at the County Home. Randy said that there is a very good relationship with the 8 veterans that live there and he hasn't heard any complaints. He also pointed out that sometimes the people that make up these rules and regulations to protect people live in Washington, D.C. or Columbus and are perhaps out of touch. He is a firm believer that "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". The workers should not be burdened with paperwork. The people that work at the County Home stay because they like what they do here and the people like them. If they are overburdened with more rules it might work as a detriment to the process. If the staff sees a need, they just do it – they do not need a piece of paper telling them they need to do it.

Carol Shockley said that thanks to Joyce's lead she has had several conversations about the proposal for policies and procedures with Marty Switerlich who is an attorney in Columbus. She is an expert and a long time advocate of the County Home Association. She is familiar with CH law and Fair Housing and is working on legislative reform. She strongly distinguishes County Homes as being outside the statutory scheme that governs residential care facilities. Marty also has access to another attorney that she works with that has a nursing and a Nursing Home background. It will be a part of their proposal that this attorney will spend some time at the County Home. They will look around and make suggestions for changes in protocol or how to better do things in compliance with the law while giving the residents the best level of care with what they have to offer. They should be able to come up with a good package that keeps residents happy with no legal issues. She feels that Council is heading down a good path in trying to do the right thing while maintaining the County Home's character.

There was a short discussion about getting assistance outside the Home when a resident had a grievance. Joyce said that there is an ombudsman that residents can call and the phone number is posted downstairs. Lynn Remington added that the Ohio Legal Rights group has been through the Home.

Laura Kuhl said that she has a difficult time accepting that a county facility or a government-run facility should hold itself to a different set of standards than the ones by private operators and non-profit operators. She has a hard time thinking that the County Home is not willing to meet what the state says is the minimum standard for personal care home or a Nursing Home.

Chuck Hawley asked Laura is she is satisfied that the County Home is not meeting those standards. Skip Sipos arrived during this discussion.

Laura said that she does not know. That is why she is suggesting some outside organization come in. She does not think that Mr. Stricker or the Commissioners know that either because they do not know what is in that manual. Administrators usually have someone come in and look to see that they are meeting those standards. If they don't they are saying that they think it is okay to hold all of the other facilities to that level but they do not apply to us, and she wonders why.

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John Stricker stated that what does not apply to the County Home is some of the testing and some of the written paperwork.

Laura asked how they know they are meeting those standards. She said she would not bring it up again but God forbid something happens.

Emily said that there is a second part to this issue. The one thing that they are going to have to look at next year by July 2004, there is going to be the Department of Health Rules and Regulations for Assisted Living. The Nursing Home industry might question why County Homes do not have to follow the same rules as Assisted Living does.

John said that they would have to change the law and Emily said that is already in the works. She suggested that they put something simple together to see where they are and she knows some people that would do it free of charge.

Joyce said that the Health Department, the doctors, and the pharmacy inspect them, but Emily said that is not the same as a mock survey.

Chuck asked her what would be involved and Emily said that a group would come in and show what was required for the Assisted Living laws. Joyce and Carol said that is what the attorneys would be doing – spending the day and making an assessment of improvements needed.

Laura said that she would not support a County Home levy renewal unless she knows in her heart with facts that they are meeting those state minimum standards. As a Council member she cannot say they are meeting those standards or not. They need to seriously consider the level of oversight and the level to which they hold themselves accountable.

Tanya asked Laura how she feels about Carol's suggestion about having the nurse/attorney do the walk-thru and give them assurance because what she thinks they are going to find is that the standard is just as high, and then they would have someone outside to confirm that.

Chuck asked if it would be good to add Emily to that committee. Emily said she has a lot of areas of free legal expertise to offer. She will do her best to see that the County Home stays open, but she is also going to make sure that it is legal. That is what she has done for the last 25 years and she has an excellent reputation in the state.

Laura said that they are not suggesting that the County Home is inadequate. They are asking for some sort of bar to be set that, if they are going to offer personal care and skilled care, there needs to a minimum standard of care. That does not make them an enemy of the County Home or its residents.

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Chuck said that if there are laws coming down the road they probably should look at it now and know where they are. He highly doubts that there is anything out there, but to put it to rest they could find out.

Emily said that she does not see spending a whole lot of money since she and Laura have the expertise to look over the policy and procedures.

Chuck and Carol pointed out that there are other things to address besides healthcare issues such as Fair Housing and they have to satisfy the County Prosecutor.

Chuck asked Carol and the Admissions Committee to consider Laura and Emily's concerns when putting together their policies and procedures in their proposal. Carol said that Prosecutor Dean Holman would be brought into it as well.

Financial Report

John Stricker, County Administrator, provided a written report from Chris Jakab, Finance Director. He explained that it shows how much is being spent at the County Home and how much revenue is coming in. The first property taxes receipts of \$354,022.99 were received in March. The unfortunate thing about property taxes is that they do not come in evenly, which make projections difficult. There are two property tax settlements throughout the year because the state pays 12-1/2% of the personal property settlements. The last check should come in November and it should be a large amount. The estimate of the property tax is \$733,700. At this time the County Home is still running at a deficit of \$85,297.21 from July 2002 through March 2003.

County Home Administrator's Report

Joyce Farnsworth reported that they currently have 52 residents in the Home. They have completed their HIPPA requirements. They will be having a demonstration on the new whirlpool. The restroom floors are in the process of being taken care of. They are getting information together about getting an Auxiliary started for the County Home. She will have Carol Shockley look it over. All of the fundraising money would be handled and reported through the Auxiliary. They are having a cookbook fundraiser and she passed around papers for Council members to contribute recipes to it. The proceeds would allow them money to do projects that they could otherwise not afford to do for the residents.

John Stricker added that it would be similar to the "Friends of the Library" and set up with the non-profit 501C3 status.

Lynn Remington, Assistant County Home Administrator, said that the 4-H Horse Show is this Sunday at the fairgrounds. A young lady named Rustee Clutter organized it, and last year they raised \$3,000 for the County Home. They hope to buy porch furniture with the proceeds from

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this year's show. The Horse Show coordinators actually go out and buy what they request and deliver it.

Joyce said they had an anonymous donation of three nice picnic tables recently. They hired one full time employee for the second shift. They had a farewell party for their maintenance man that had served them for 25 years. Their resident cat has had its check up and shots, which was donated.

Brian Feron asked if a new maintenance man was hired and Lynn said that there has been one there every day and she hopes he will be hired full time. Emily said that if he does not work out for them she knows of someone who would be interested.

Carol Shockley asked Lynn about the Old Fashioned Ball Game and she said that it would be in July. A volunteer is sending out brochures and putting it on the Internet.

Public Participation

Carole Feron, Montville Township resident, asked if the computers being purchased would be available for the residents to use.

Lynn said that they are looking into putting together leftover computers for the residents' use but they have an Internet issue. John added that the four new ones that will be hooked up to the county backbone would be just for the staff. He would have to go to the Data Board to see about hooking up the residents' computers to the county's Internet connection. They might have to use a paid Internet provider instead.

Rosie Collier commented about the County Home standards. Her mother passed away last August at age 90 and her father is 92. Her parents have lived with them for the past 6-1/2 years and she has done everything she can to keep them out of a nursing home. The reason for this has been her bad experiences with another relative's care and her parents' short-term stays in nursing homes. She said if they want to apply nursing home standards to this place, the County Home would have to drop its standards. She would bring her father to the County Home before she would take him to a nursing home if she were unable to care for him anymore. She feels that if more things are added on to justify the care, which she feels confident in, it would allow less time for the residents, which would result in lower standards.

Carole Feron asked Laura Kuhl if there were certain things that were not being done at the County Home that are minimum standards.

Laura said that she has no knowledge of that, but there are some housing procedure concerns that she has. The facility does not have an Admissions Policy and Procedures and that suggests to her that there are other things not in compliance. She said that if she saw anything that she thought was putting any resident at risk, she would be the first one to call in the state and ask for

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an inspection. She said she has never seen anything that gave her an indication to call. She is still requesting that they hold the County Home to minimum standards if they are not comfortable with state standards.

Al Junke, asked Laura if there was a law now that says the County Home has to comply with state nursing home standards.

Laura said that it is completely opposite. State law says that County Homes do not have to comply with those standards.

Al asked why they would want to burden the County Home with standards that they do not have to comply with.

Laura said she is not trying to burden them. Her request is that they make sure that the County Homes holds themselves to the same standards that we, as citizens, are holding every other operator to as minimum standards.

Al said that this is not a nursing home. It is a County Home that is governed by a different statute than these other homes. They need to focus on what they need to comply with and not off somewhere else, complying with standards they don't need to comply with. He asked her to back off because she is asking them to comply with something they are not required to do.

Tanya said that standards being discussed are primarily paperwork standards. She thinks the quality of care standards are being met. She can understand somewhat the viewpoint of needing proof of that. If someone outside the County Home did a walk-thru and said that care standards are topnotch then they would not have to worry about it.

Laura said that we could do the walk-thru voluntarily or we will see an increasing effort to want them to do it.

There were no further comments. Chuck said that they needed to go into Executive Session for legal purposes. Tanya Rodgers left at this time. Jo Becks moved to go into Executive Session and Skip Sipos seconded the motion. Roll Call showed Randy Bing, Randy Schmidt, Skip Sipos, Brian Feron, Laura Kuhl, Emily Muscatello, Cheryl Scheck, and Jo Becks voting AYE.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Vereb, Secretary