

**COUNTY HOME ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2005**

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. at the County Home with the following Council members present:

Present: Ken Miller, Brian Feron, Randy Bing, Cheryl Scheck, Phebe Simpson, Craig Enoch, Randy Schmidt, and Emily Muscatello

Absent: Jo Becks and Skip Sipos

The following Ex-officio members were present: Lynn Remington – County Home Superintendent, Commissioner Steve Hambley, and John Stricker – County Administrator

Review and Approval of Minutes for 3/30 & 4/13

Ken asked if there were any additions or changes to the minutes from March 30th. He said in the middle of Page 6 it should be “an Advisory Council” instead of “and”. Craig Enoch moved to approve the minutes with that correction and Brian Feron seconded the motion. All voted AYE and the minutes were approved. Steve Hambley arrived at this time. The April 13th minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

Review of 4/15/05 Letter Sent to Commissioners on Rate Suggestion

Ken Miller discussed the 4/15/05 letter he sent to Commissioner Hambley on behalf of the County Home Advisory Council. As a result of the last meeting and the motion made, the recommendation was that the Commissioners establish one rate of \$1,580 for all residents of the County Home effective July 1, 2005. The letter advised Steve that the Finance Committee would be reviewing finances in order to come up with a rate to recommend to the Commissioners for the 2006 budget. The Marketing Committee is also doing extensive marketing in order to have a population of 55 residents by January 2006 which would further reduce the current cost per resident. The Finance Committee met last evening to begin the review process.

Committee Reports

Marketing and Technology

Ken Miller said they met briefly before this meeting. They reviewed the new computer system, and there are some glitches to be worked out. They still need speed in the Internet connection. The Committee will meet in August to discuss if there is equipment that they should recommend be put in the budget.

Facilities and Finance

Brian Feron said they had their first work session last night and came up with four key points that they felt were significant to address long term:

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1. Use a simple classification for each resident (low, medium, high) without using names showing potential costs to the Home to operate. This will help them with their trend lines and identifying any care or capacity constraints in the future.
2. Research possible donations of pharmaceuticals. There is a network of unused pharmacy drugs that might be available to the Home to cut down medical costs.
3. Log volunteer donation hours and activities to gauge the value of those services.
4. Verify farm lease payments. They were uncertain about the land swap/donation for the Technology Center Park.

John Stricker said they are down to 28.8 acres for annual lease payments for an annual income of \$1,600.

In the draft agreement with the Port Authority, Steve said there is a provision for continuing the payment to the County Home fund of \$3,000 for 10 years. The idea is that once the Technology Park is built out they would have taxpaying entities with buildings that are paying property taxes that are more than making up that loss in revenue by the taxes they are paying into the County Home levy fund. If it is not built, they get the land back.

Brian said the Finance Committee is on the right track looking at opportunities to decrease expenses and increase revenues. The big unknown is what is going to happen at the county level next year for assessments to the budget such as healthcare, fuel, etc. They are somewhat amateurs at this, but certainly will offer whatever advice they can.

John Stricker added that one of the best things the County Home has going for it is free natural gas.

Policies and Procedures – to meet following Council meeting

Ken said the Policies and Procedures Committee is meeting after this meeting.

Finance Report

John Stricker provided two reports from Chris Jakab, Finance Director. One was the standard report that shows where the County Home stands in the month of March. The other one shows how much was spent year to date; how much was spent month to date; how much was in purchase orders that have been issued; and what is left. Lynn provided a detailed transaction history of every bill paid out of the supply account, which ties back into the month to date figure.

Brian asked if the next tax levy receipt was expected on the April report.

John said yes, Commissioners approved the transfer of funds in the amount of \$299,115.62 on April 18th. It goes to the County Auditor who makes the cash transfer. Upon questioning, he said they are

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close to breaking even. That was intended because the levy was sized to pay for 5-1/2 years, but that first six months no money went in – just out. It was not expected to be made up until right at the very end.

Administrator's Report

Lynn Remington reported that there was one new admission and no releases so they had 51 residents at the end of April. There were five inquiries. Their state audit has been completed. They had a good food inspection. The fire extinguishers have been checked and updated. Two tours of the Home were by the Job & Family Services caseworkers and Coleman Professional Services who will be working with Lynn on admissions criteria. The cook attended a diabetic nutrition show at the Lodi Community Hospital. All of the employees are going to CPR and blood pathogens training. The registered nurse attended mental health and wellness training, "Thinking with a Clear Mind" and "Observation of Medication". They are working on setting up their five computers. A person doing community service painted the letters on the block sign out front and the metal porch chairs. There is a new sign being made that will match the Park District's sign. The Chevy pickup had to have a new brake line put in. The dishwasher is now chemical instead of booster heat. Other repairs were an exhaust fan motor in the attic and a whirlpool seal. The filter on the intake vent was replaced as well as a pneumatic relay for the boiler. The copula is being painted and the wallpaper in the office is up. New programs this month are with the Career Center for a Medical Assistant Training Program for a student to work 40 hours with the LPN, and the other with Lorain Community College and the Career Center for a practical nursing student externship to shadow the LPN's for 60 hours this summer. The LPN's will receive continuing education units for this time. The Probate Juvenile Crew works once a month to do yard work. Also, the person doing community service was to work 48 hours, but worked 64 hours and did an excellent job. Donation were two dozen hand quilted chest aprons, two cases of spinach, 20 cases of a variety of tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers, 100 latch hook rug kits, nine dozen eggs to be continued weekly, one case large size Chux, and \$1,300 from Medina Moose. They also received a male peacock from the Friends of the County Home, and the Boy Scouts will be repairing his pen and doing some work around the Home. Lynn made the connection to the HANDS Foundation, and they are preparing an ad. And finally, the letter of increase will be mailed out tomorrow.

Ken asked Lynn if they were going to be doing the free blood pressure testing at the County Home that they discussed for public relations and Lynn said they would be giving them at the Home soon. She also asked the Park District for a schedule of events at their building that is across the street so they can plan something at the same time. May 1st is the Kids Care 4-H Show at the Fairgrounds.

Public Input – none

Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matter - cancelled

Steve Hambley said the Executive Session to discuss personnel matters regarding allegations of abuse of a County Home resident is not necessary. They need to address it publicly because the memo from Commissioner Pat Geissman last month is public record and the press has received copies of it, and it

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is under public scrutiny. He passed out and reviewed an April 27, 2005 memo he sent to Ken Miller, an April 22, 2005 letter from the Prosecutor's Office, and an August 19, 2004 letter to John Stricker from Mike Jenks, the Director of the ADAMH Board. Steve said the allegations of abuse were not reported to the staff. John Stricker received the complaint directly from the client's legal guardian and informed the Board of Commissioners. He and Commissioner Ray remember being informed of the complaint and the subsequent investigation, but Mrs. Geissman apparently did not. With the advice of Mike Jenks and Steve, John Stricker oversaw the matter on behalf of the Commissioners. At the same time, Debra Beckstett, Director of Alternative Paths, informed the ADAMH Board staff about the allegations.

Steve asked Council to understand the chronology of events. Between the time of the alleged incidents and the completion of the investigation in August, County Home Superintendent, Joyce Farnsworth, had been placed on medical leave and had scheduled her retirement. She was no longer overseeing the operations of the County Home, nor was she present on site. Her last day in the office was July 9, 2004 – two days after Alternative Paths had made their first complaint to the ADAMH Board staff. Lynn Remington was appointed the interim superintendent on July 12, 2004.

Upon conducting a thorough investigation of the matter, the ADAMH Board staff issued a report with some recommendations for the County Home staff, which has since been implemented. It is their understanding that the guardian was satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and the report recommendations. County Home records show that the complainant had been generally unruly in violation of County Home rules of conduct on several occasions. His departure from the County Home was mutually agreed upon, but did not occur until October 1, 2004 – six weeks after the ADAMH Board report was issued. He was fine with Mrs. Remington and felt safe. The employee involved has since left. The allegations of Mrs. Geissman and Ms. Beckstett that the guardian, upon learning of the incident, removed the client from the Home are not supported by the report, nor do the County Home records support them.

The issue of whether the County Home Advisory Council should have been advised or involved in the investigation of the allegations may be subject for future discussion. While he agrees that all the Commissioners should have been informed of these allegations and investigations at the time, he does not agree with Mrs. Geissman's assertion that the Advisory Council members should be automatically included. At one point she is trying to bypass the Council when they talk about rates, but says they should be included on these types of issues.

Steve said he believes the Board of Commissioners will best decide Council's involvement on these types of complaints on a case-by-case basis. In this particular incident there was no abuse and the client and guardian did not wish to involve anyone else in the matter. If there had been an abuse and County Home policies and procedures needed to be addressed, he would have brought the matter to their attention and asked for their assistance.

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Steve stated that Council could review the County Home investigation report. The letter from the Prosecutor's Office indicated they could not divulge certain confidential information so that has been redacted. They can see that the action plan that was recommended has since been implemented.

Craig Enoch said that as a manager of an office he thinks something like this should go to the administrator and her hierarchy. He does not think the Advisory Council should be involved except for being informed when the situation is resolved just so they wouldn't be "blind sided" by it. There is no reason to be involved while the investigation is going on.

Brian said he agrees that none of them are trained in this area and certainly respect that some of those issues are confidential and should be as such. If they saw a record of a pattern month after month, they should look into it.

Steve said the ultimate oversight is in the elected officials. The ADAMH Board did an independent investigation. Half of their Board comes from State Department of Mental Health appointees that represent the broader constituency. There is considerable amount of public oversight in those kinds of issues, and that is why it is treated very seriously.

Ken stated that these cases needed to be investigated by the people who are in control at the time with the appropriate action taken. If that is done then the best that Council needs to know is if there is something that really impacts upon them other than an unfounded allegation. Where he works they do an annual report about the number of allegations that they investigate and those are substantiated. He would hope there would not be a large number of allegations coming from the County Home staff. If there were, it might be indicative of a need for sensitivity training for example. Just an annual summary would be in keeping for Council to keep in mind as they look at the overall operation.

Lynn added that they had the Mental Health Education and Awareness Training for personnel and it is also scheduled for July and November.

John said complaints about the County Home are very rare. The Board of Commissioners takes every complaint seriously and every one of them is addressed by the Department head involved or by the appropriate legal authority, and due diligence is taken.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

The next County Home Advisory Council meeting will be June 29th at 6:30 at the County Home and there will be a walk-through of the facility.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Vereb, Secretary