

**MINUTES  
SPECIAL MEETING  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2009, 6:30 PM  
160 GENESEE ST., 6<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, CHAMBERS**

**CALLED TO ORDER:** By Chairman Peter Tortorici at 6:00PM.

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:** Evacuation statement read by Clerk of the Legislature, Mary Jones

**ROLL CALL:** Clerk of the Legislature, Mary Jones, Legislator's present, except Michael Chapman who was excused.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**MOMENT OF PRAYER:**

**TOPIC:** Cayuga County Home Health Care Agency

**Presenter:**

**St Joseph's Home Health Care Agency:  
Mark Murphy – Vice President St. Josephs Home Health Care**

**Informative power point presentation regarding the St. Joseph's Home Health Care Agency, which was established in 1998, handout attached to original minutes.**

**Questions and Answer session:**

**David Axton:** "What kind of guarantees can you make to us as a legislature and more importantly to members of our community that they will be able to receive equal or better care then they are from the Southern most tip to the Northern most tip?"

**Mark Murphy:** "I think this is a great question. I am a nurse and nurse practitioner so the difficulty of making guarantees in area like this is what really matters is what happens outside these walls, what happens to the patients. I would ask you to look at our track record for a county like Cayuga County. Oswego County is a rural county with a pretty extensive geographic area and some areas are very sparsely populated. In our ability to provide that level of 24/7 coverage and provide the skill level of nurses and to have the ability to bring nurses from one area to another as needed to cover patients.

**Francis Mitchell:** "Five groups within three counties, those counties are near us, how many more groups will be added for Cayuga County?"

**Mark Murphy:** "Each team has a Supervisor, Nurses, Therapists, LPN's and Home Health Aides. A team will be put in place for Cayuga County and then increased by the volume needed."

**George Fearon:** “Auburn Memorial Hospital- Will patients stay in Cayuga County or go to Onondaga County?”

**Mark Murphy:** When I first received the RFP, my first visit was to Auburn Memorial Hospital to ask if they wanted to partner with us. One thing I have learned is that you need to partner with the provider within that geographical area. Again I would ask you to look at our track record. Our preferred provider is University Hospital in Syracuse. We are here to provide Homecare Services, we are not here to steer patients.

**Roger Mills:** “Sixty people currently working at CHHA, what kind of commitment can you give to them”.

**Mark Murphy:** “I would like to say that there is an overabundance of Home Care qualified training staff, but I can’t. We have a full time recruiter on our staff to recruit qualified individuals. There will be a need for in home care workers in Cayuga County and we be looking at hiring people for those positions. We have a presence in counties contiguous with Cayuga County; some of those individuals would be willing to cross those lines, and be able to see people in different counties. Five open positions currently open in Onondaga County. Matched trained skilled Home Care providers to other positions in our network.”

**Daniel Sincebaugh:** “What is your pay scale?”

**Mark Murphy:** “Paying them well- on call payment- weekend pay- different scales depending on what they need to do. Home Health Aides receive the same benefits and pay scales as St Joseph’s Hospital.”

**Daniel Sincebaugh:** “Can you guarantee that all sixty employees would be safe and not lose their jobs?”

**Mark Murphy:** “There is no guarantee. I can’t blindly hire individuals and guarantee a position. Flexibility- what comes first is the need of the patients. Will not guarantee placement, but will guarantee patients needs.”

**Daniel Sincebaugh:** “Where did you come up with the purchase price?”

**Mark Murphy:** “Three to five year transition period- computerize- medical records- training- transition period- loss assumed by operations. We felt the price was appropriate with all the changes we would have to make.”

**Christopher Palermo:** “Commend for your turnover since 1999. In 1989, you were operating at a loss, why didn’t you sell it? What did you see in this industry that made you decide to continue?”

**Mark Murphy:** “Great question. What we saw was that the need for Home Care Services was going to increase. We needed to move from limited Home Care Agency to a larger Home Care Agency that would be able to distribute some of the administrative overhead for a higher patient volume. All nurses have laptops- cell phones. We feel we have the resources to make this work.”

**Daniel Schuster:** “Four vacancies currently- what is the turnover- average annual basis?”

**Mark Murphy:** “First quarter is 4%- varies and flocculates- 12 to 18 to 20% turnover in some years. The ability to hire trained Health Care Providers is sometimes difficult.”

**Francis Mitchell:** “Certificate of Need application for Cayuga County- Can you explain why?”

**Mark Murphy:** “Original St. Joseph’s Home Care was one of a four hospital partnership in Onondaga County. Three hospitals dropped out in 1982-83, an adjustment was made from a five county CON to a one county CON. We have had the CON since 1995, the idea was to look at our discharge distribution of a Syracuse Hospital, and this was a way of looking after our patients.”

**Peter Tortorici:** “Concern of pre-natal care and long term care. Elane Daly can fill this in”

**Elane Daly:** “Public health would have to lose licenses.”

**Mark Murphy:** “Willing to partner with Cayuga County to provide these services- Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements. Another program we provide is working with license agencies. We work to meet the patient’s needs.

**Roger Mills:** “Describe services in other counties. Could you provide this service for Cayuga County if we decide not to sell?”

**Mark Murphy:** “One thing we do provide is an overall operations assessment. You have your direct provider cost and your indirect provider cost, some benchmarks you might want to be aware of. Look at the different options and models for Home Care Agencies. This is where you are today and these are some of your options.”

**Roger Mills:** “Is this on a contract basis?”

**Mark Murphy:** “Yes, depending on what services people want, other people have asked will you be willing to be our billing provider, to provide information management systems. We would make recommendations.

**Recess: 10 minutes**

**Presenter:**

**Lifetime Care:**

**Pat Heffernan – President**

**Informative power point presentation regarding Lifetime Care, handout attached to original minutes**

**Questions and Answer session:**

**George Fearon:** “Digital camera and wound nurse.”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Picture can be uploaded to the laptop in real time and our clinicians could be talking to the wound care therapist in Rochester and looking at the same photo, it’s a great program.”

**Daniel Schuster:** “How successful?”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Our turnover, given the size and volume of our agency, the people leaving our agency because they couldn’t do it has been cut by three-quarters.”

**Roger Mills:** “In your proposal it says you are will to operate the business from the current location.”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Yes, Utilize existing office. We would not guarantee all sixty employees. We could guarantee hiring the clinicians and Home Health Aides. We would then take a look at all other positions.”

**Daniel Sincebaugh:** “County can not afford to lose jobs, guaranteeing employees?”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Not about qualifications. Specifically billing or payroll, we can absorb those. We would look at every person and try to place them.”

**Daniel Sincebaugh:** “As far as patients, would the same employee go to the same patient each time?”

**Pat Heffernan:** “This is what we strive for. Continuity of care is most important first and foremost.”

**Daniel Sincebaugh:** “Where did you come up with this price?”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Price was formulated by geographic area, size or agency, location.”

**Roger Mills:** “When an aide goes out to a home, how is the time allocated?”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Level of care based on doctor’s instruction, depends on what is written for care.

**David Axton:** “Based on scores how can you think you can do better than what we currently have?”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Convinced we would be able to do that- excellent staff- excellent skills.”

**Peter Tortorici:** “On your Governing, Not-For-Profit Organization, you have a 13 member Board of Directors, is there an opportunity for someone from our area to be appointed to the board?”

**Pat Heffernan:** “Yes. We would want representation from your community at least one or two.”

**Motion to adjourn at 8:35 pm by Axton, seconded by Palermo. All in favor.**

**Minutes of 4-20-09 approved on 6-23-09, Motion by Palermo, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Petrus, all in favor.**