

Health and Human Services Committee

Minutes

July 11, 2005

The Health and Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, July 11, 2005 @ 5:30p.m. in the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Robert Rosemier called the meeting to order. Members present were Marlene Allen, Sally DeFauw, Eileen Dubin, Eric Johnson and Ruth Anne Tobias. Ms. Fullerton was absent. Others present were Ray Bockman, Karen Grush, Shirlie Richmond and Cindy Graves.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Tobias said that she would like to speak under Old Business about the River Valley Workforce Investment Board Seminar that she went to recently.

Moved by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Dubin, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

Chairman Rosemier said that he will be on vacation next month during the the August meeting and that Ms. Allen, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, will be covering the meeting that evening. He will be inviting Mr. Gil Morrison, Regional Superintendent of Schools to the August meeting.

PRESENTATION OF THE TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER BY MS. SHIRLEY RICHMOND, DEAN OF NIU'S COLLEGE OF HEALTH & SCIENCES DEPARTMENT

Chairman Rosemier said that he invited three individuals this evening, Ms. Shirley Richmond, Executive Director of the Tri-County Clinic, Cindy Graves, Director of Emergency Services for Kishwaukee Health System and Ms. Karen Grush, DeKalb County Public Health Department. All of these organizations have a close relationship and that deal with many of the same client. Since Ms. Grush alerted the committee about the impact to her services, he thought it would be good to find out how it impacts the other two agencies here this evening.

Ms. Richmond said that she needs to get the word out about the clinic so that the community knows more about their services and whom they serve. She also mentioned that they do serve the same clients as the other two agencies present this evening. Mr. Richmond passed around a handout to the committee explaining what the clinic does and whom they serve. They started the clinic about ten years ago through a grant. They provide services for the underinsured, non-insured, and low-income population of all ages.

She is the Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences at N.I.U. and the clinic has always reported to them. She is the new director of the clinic and she is currently seeking an Assistant Director.

She also said that the clinic is located at the back of the Kishwaukee College Campus. It is very nice and was furnished with \$500,000 of equipment through a Federal grant. The building is furnished by Kishwaukee College and N.I.U. funds the operational costs.

Recently they have partnered with the University of Illinois School of Medicine at Rockford to have a doctor on site at the clinic. The doctor usually is there one to two days a month and works with the nurse practitioner. There must be a collaborating physician for every 2 nurse practitioners. They are currently trying to bring more physicians on board.

They treat acute and chronic illnesses, school, sports and work physicals, treat STD's, give immunizations, etc. They do not treat insulin-dependant diabetics because they have to be monitored, they refer these patients. They are limited in their services for people who may be suffering a heart attack, they refer them out, as well, as, pregnant mothers.

The costs for their clinic are paid as follows: there are reduced costs for all services, they accept Medicare, Medicaid, Kid Care, Private Insurance and Personal Payments. They cannot run the clinic as a "free" clinic. They also have received some endowments, too, said Ms. Richmond.

Ms. Julia Fullerton arrived at 5:50pm.

They also can see people who need checkups, blood pressure checked, diabetics that do not need insulin, cholesterol screening, preventive health education, well-baby clinic, social work appointments and mental health collaboration. If they see a person that cannot pay for their services, they will call the clinic for the appointment and verify with them that the person cannot pay. They try not to turn people away for service. If they have to then they refer them to another facility, like Crusaders, in Rockford.

One of the other problems that they really run into in serving these clients is that they can treat them, but sometimes they can't afford the medications. Their clinic does take payment from Kids Care, Medicare and Medicaid. Ms. Richmond wanted to point out that eighty percent (80%) of their clients are Hispanic and because of this some of their staff speaks Spanish.

Their funding for operational costs come from endowments, donations, revenue from patients, personal donations, and operational costs from the N.I.U.

They are there not only for the community, but also for the academics. They have a laboratory for clinicals; they are there for the nursing students, health promotion, preventative care, and for Speech and Hearing clinics. There is a rich environment for the academic sciences. They have talked, at the college, that they would like to expand the services once the present services are stabilized. Rockford is very interested because they have the social work program and a rural med program. Ben Gordon is very interested, too, for mental health services. These are all long-range plans.

They also have an indigent drug program. This program is designed where several pharmaceutical companies will give medicine.

Ms. Richmond said that their problem is not only the budget, but currently they have nurse practitioners that come two days a week. This is supposed to be a walk-in clinic and it is not there yet. They do have to make appointments because of this, but if necessary, they will help walk-ins and some emergencies. They hope that by the first of August, hopefully, they will have on board two nurse practitioners working part-time and one more that will work full-time. They would like their hours to be extended from

8:30a.m. to 5:00p.m. and they will open early for patients who need lab work. They have never intended to close the clinic because she feels there is a great need out there in the community for their services. She is very optimistic that the clinic will make it.

Ms. Dubin asked if transportation to the clinic is a problem for their clients? Ms. Richmond said that yes it is. It is her understanding that Pat Quinn's office has money for transportation needs for medical services for our county from the State of Illinois. Ms. Richmond said that she was told that we are one of the few counties that are eligible for this money. There is a doctor from Rockford that is trying to find out more information on this.

Ms. Grush said that there is Voluntary Action Center transportation that will take patients for medical appointments. She said that she agreed with Ms. Dubin that transportation has been an issue for a while. Mr. Bockman suggested that the Voluntary Action Center would be a good place to begin asking about these funds just in case they may know of them.

Chairman Rosemier asked if any of the three counties that they serve are supporting the clinic? She said no, not to her knowledge.

Ms. Richmond said that they are looking at possibly moving into the old Monsanto Building too and still be at Kishwaukee College. Ms. Cindy Graves of Kishwaukee Hospital said that there may be space in a medical office building near the new hospital.

Chairman Rosemier said that he feels, himself, if he was ill and had no income that he would think of Tri-County to seek help, that would be his first thought. Ms. Grush said that she disagrees, that she feels their first thought would be the Health Department. If a patient is calling for healthcare, they first will call the Health Department. If they say that they need to see a doctor and we tell them that we don't really have doctors here, her office does get some information from them. If it is appropriate they will refer them to Kishwaukee Hospital Emergency Room or Tri-County Clinic. Their services are uniquely different, she explained. The sameness between them would be the immunizations.

Ms. Grush said that she would like to comment on the large population in the county that cannot get in to see a physician. The reason that Tri-County is where it is at is because when they were going for rural health status ten years ago, DeKalb County didn't qualify for it, but Lee and Ogle Counties did. So the western edge of the County was considered physician shortage and the rest of the County was not. We know that we have our poor, and we do, but compared to a lot of other areas in the State we aren't that bad. Ms. Grush continued by saying, for example, the dental exams for children that they get every year, she was looking at the paperwork sent to them from the State and DeKalb County showed 30% of low-income population. She felt that was huge, but when she talked to the State about it, she was told that the State's number was 70%.

Ms. Grush asked Ms. Graves if the Emergency Room at Kishwaukee Hospital has seen any increase in utilization in the ER that is inappropriate, like sore throat complaints, earaches, etc.? Ms. Graves said no, not really.

After further discussion Chairman Rosemier thanked the three guests for coming and he thought it was a very good discussion.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Rosemier updated the committee on the Grant Needs Survey that he has been working on. He said that he was not able to get all of the work done on it and that he would like to get the committee’s feelings as to whether or not he should send the survey out or not. He said that Ms. Jenny Tompkins is the contact person for him to speak to about having a seminar or workshop in this issue.

He also said that he would like to invite two alternative schools in DeKalb to come to the October meeting, that is the Kishwaukee Education Consortium and the Behavioral School.

Ms. Tobias informed the committee that she went to a meeting with other county board chairmen through the River Valley Workforce Investment Board (W.I.B.) today. She said that the three counties are out of compliance currently because they do not have enough businesses sitting on their board. They receive approximately \$5 million for all three counties, that is, Kane, Kendall and DeKalb Counties. She said that Kane County is the service provider for our W.I.B. and that they oversee the financial matters too. They will be signing a new service agreement soon that will be sent out to them shortly.

Chairman Rosemier asked the committee if they could accommodate Ms. Fullerton who is now working in the Northwestern Suburbs and change the meeting time to 6:00p.m. from now on? They all agreed and they will begin with the new time in August.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Tobias, seconded by Ms. Fullerton, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Rosemier, Chairman

Mary C. Supple, Secretary