

Health and Human Services Committee

Minutes

May 2, 2005

The Health and Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, May 2, 2005 @ 5:30p.m. in the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Robert Rosemier called the meeting to order. Members present were Eric Johnson and Ruth Anne Tobias. Those absent were Marlene Allen, Julia Fullerton, Salley DeFauw and Eileen Dubin. Others present were Ray Bockman, Karen Grush, Diane Strand and Tom Zucker. There was no quorum.

Ms. DeFauw arrived @ 5:36p.m. A quorum is now present.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Ms. Tobias, seconded by Ms. DeFauw, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from April 2005.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Ms. Karen Grush, Director of the DeKalb County Public Health Department passed out her 2004 Annual Report to the committee (on file in the county board office and the health department office). Ms. Grush said that out of every \$100 paid by the taxpayer in local property taxes in 2004, only \$0.60 was expended on public health services. She said that this is from their levy that was established around 1966.

In 1982 there was a TB program in the county and there was a TB tax. The state legislators passed a law that said that the public health department could dissolve their TB program and take the 5-year average of what they have expended on TB and roll it over into public health and it could become a public health tax. Ms. Grush said that they further explained that the public health department does, however, have to assume all the liability of TB care in the county.

We at the health department can get a maximum amount of .0232 cents in tax dollars to support public health. For a number of years we got that, said Ms. Grush. Then because home care was doing really well, we did not get tax dollars at all. When the county board was passing a tax cap, they voted for the reinstatement of the levy because if they hadn't at that point, we never would have been able to get the levy back, she further explained.

Ms. Fullerton arrived at 5:42p.m.

Ms. Grush explained that there are 11 members that sit on the Board of Health, which is comprised of local people that are involved in some branch of the health department and one county board member. Their by-laws specifically state who they have to be, nurses, doctors, attorney, veterinarian, etc.

Under their financial statement, they have about 50 sources of revenue; that is, 25% come from State and Federal Grants; about 2/3rds of the money comes from fees that they charge for services; and then usually between 12%-15% comes in from the county.

They have a little over 100 employees who work for the health department. They also have 30 individuals who are on contract and those people would consist of physicians in the community, physical and speech therapists, etc.

Her department's revenues and expenses are little over \$5 million dollars. They have always generated a little more money than their expenses and it is because of the home health care program. They do have a \$2.9 million dollars fund balance. Of that money, \$1.2 million has been designated to the building fund. They are on their 2nd, 5-year lease. Their plan is to build a new building near the current health department location for the home health care department.

The other \$1.7 million is used for cash flow, said Ms. Grush. Usually they need about \$700,000 to \$800,000 for cash flow in a given year, she further explained. They do have at the moment \$1 million dollars in the bank that is not designated, but once they get into the actual building, they will transfer some of that over for that purpose.

She is the official registrar for the county. All birth and death certificates are registered through her office and then they are transferred over to the county clerk's office to retain.

The environmental health department's biggest program is the food program. They do license and inspect every restaurant in the county, all the food establishments, fairs, schools, etc. About 1.75 food inspectors are employed by the health department.

This department also does all the wells and sewage in the county along with solid waste management. This department has 1 full-time person for wells and sewage work. They also inspect all canning facilities in the county.

They have an animal control department also for the county. There are 2 wardens that work in this department. They follow very closely the Animal Control Act, too, said Ms. Grush.

The home health care department is the only licensed one in DeKalb County for skilled nursing services. There are only 20 other county health departments in the State of Illinois that do have home care. There may be cuts in federal funds with regards to Medicare and health care, which could affect this department.

Their personal health services division involves the prevention aspect and which is really what public health does and how it got started. Many of these programs are geared towards mothers, babies and children. Over the last ten years they have been able to decrease the infant mortality rate. They have a Healthy Mom/Healthy Kids program that has helped with this decrease.

As of today, Ms. Grush, said she was informed that four (4) doctors at a local clinic will be taking no more “ob” patients because of the malpractice issue. One-third of the babies born in DeKalb County are on public aid and they refer those babies and rotate them throughout the county to the doctors. Two years ago there were 14 doctors delivering babies in DeKalb County and as of today we only have 5, said Ms. Grush. This means that there will only be 5 doctors left in DeKalb County delivering babies.

Another issue that has kept them very busy over the last few years is bio-terrorism. They have prepared the plan and trained their staff. There is a committee that was formed that have been meeting every three weeks over the last two years. They will need to start a volunteer program in about one year.

Ms. Grush said that they have been referring clients to the Tri-County Program who have no money to pay for their services. Sixty-six percent of the people that they refer to Tri-County are Hispanic. About 40% of W.I.C. (food program) people are also Hispanic.

The committee asked Ms. Grush how crucial is it that the home health care unit move by the health department? Ms. Grush said that they currently have over grown their space. She said that it is difficult to manage two separate offices. They will need about 10,000 square feet for a new building.

Before closing, Ms. Grush said that there is legislation currently that the big 7 counties in the State of Illinois would like a law passed (because they have the largest populations in the state) to establish one public health department for Northern Illinois and call it a regional office. She doesn't see this going through and happening currently.

The committee thanked Ms. Grush for a very informative report.

APPLICATION FOR TRANSPORTATION GRANT

Mr. Tom Zucker, Executive Director, for Voluntary Action Center, approached the committee about three resolutions. He said that they involve transportation for non-urbanized areas beyond Cortland, DeKalb and Sycamore. The source of these funds are federal who make the grants available to the State. The State of Illinois, in turn, makes them available to counties.

The first resolution, referring to the Section 5311 Program, is the authorization to accept this grant. This is the third year that they have come to the county for this grant, and before this, the City of DeKalb used to apply for this. The City can no longer apply for the grant because now they are considered an urban area. In the grant application, there is an option to be able to pass the grant through to a non-for-profit organization if you so choose. This is what they are asking the County Board to do. By passing the grant through, you would basically be passing the obligation to provide the service, to administer the grant and to raise the match as well, he said.

The transit-grant funds several demand routes that run Monday through Friday, 7:00a.m. to 6:00p.m., and that operate in the north end of the county. Another route operates at the south part of the county and central part as well. The grant is also funding about 2/3rds of the MedVac Service, which are rides for out-of-town medical appointments.

The Veterans' rides are being funded by the grant that the County Board provided. That grant will expire in a little over a year. They started the service for the

Veterans in August of 2004. They have provided about 99 rides to veteran's facilities since August.

Both the Senate and the House versions of the 5311 Program has doubled in this program. There are thirty some counties in the state that do not have this 5311 service and the state is very interested in trying to expand services to those counties. There have not been very many willing county boards, cities, or transit districts who are willing to provide this service.

The match required for this grant is 50% of the operating deficit and 20% for administrative expenses. Last year the grant was \$309,000.00. There will be an increase of 2%, which equals about 6,000 dollars or a total amount of \$314,000.00. The matching amount would make the grant effectively equal about \$600,000.00

Moved by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Tobias, and it was carried unanimously to accept the resolutions and to forward them to the full board for approval.

The third resolution is for a Capital Program. There's likely not going to be a Capital Program this year by what his office has been told, said Mr. Zucker, which the county has already applied for. More than likely there will not be one next year either from what they have been told. However, they will be prepared with the resolution in hand if there is a program to complete the application.

Ms. Allen arrived at 6:44p.m.

DISCUSSION OF SURVEY ON FUNDING INTEREST AND CHANGES TO SURVEY MAILING LIST/COVER LETTER

Chairman Rosemier reviewed the survey for funding (that Ms. Dubin had compiled) note deletion of phrase for the various public agencies and private corporations/foundations that make grants to social service agencies. Chairman Rosemier said that this would be helpful for these agencies to let them know of other funding sources that they could go to apply for grants, etc. If these agencies need money, hopefully, this survey would help to identify where to find the grantwriters or offer the agencies a workshop on how to apply for a grant or how to write a grant. They are all applying for certain grants already, but this would help to broaden things more for them, said Chairman Rosemier.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the committee would ask a few of the agencies if they would look at the survey and get their response. They will bring this subject back to the committee at the meeting in June to discuss it further.

PROCESS FOR FUTURE DELIBERATIONS ON SENIOR TAX LEVY PURCHASES

Chairman Rosemier suggested to the committee that next year he would like to change the process of the senior tax levy hearings where they will be held in two different meetings. He is suggesting that the first meeting would entail the agencies coming before the committee for the hearing purpose. The second meeting would be held two weeks after the hearings and then the committee could make the allocations. Mr. Bockman suggested that the committee should have two meetings scheduled as suggested by Chairman Rosemier and then see if they will need to have that second meeting or not. If they do need it, then there will be a date available for the second meeting. If they don't need it, they you can always cancel the second meeting date, said Mr. Bockman. The committee agreed with this plan.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Chairman Rosemier said that next month (June meeting) the following agencies will be visiting with the committee: Cooperative Extension Office give their semi-annual report, Mental Health Department, Family Service Agency and Ben Gordon.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Rosemier, Chairman

Mary C. Supple, Secretary