

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Health & Human Services Committee Minutes
June 5, 2023**

The Health & Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, June 5, 2023, in the Legislative Center's Gathertorium in Sycamore, Illinois. Chair Rukisha Crawford called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Those members present were Meryl Domina, Joseph Marcinkowski, Amber Quitno, and Chair Rukisha Crawford. A quorum was established with four members present and three absent. Others present included Rehab and Nursing Center (DCRNC) Administrator Bart Becker and Administrative Analyst Liam Sullivan, as well as the DCRNC Director of Nursing Amy Larson and Assistant Director of Nursing Brooke Johnson. Savannah Ilenikhena was absent. Chris Porterfield arrived at 6:31 p.m. and Michelle Pickett arrived at 6:47 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Meryl Domina moved to approve the agenda as presented. Amber Quitno seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Meryl Domina moved to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2023 committee meeting and Joseph Marcinkowski seconded the motion and the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

DCRNC Operational Update

DeKalb County Rehab and Nursing Center (DCRNC) Administrator Bart Becker provided an operational update for the DCRNC and stated that the concerns identified during the February inspection have been resolved and that the DCRNC continues to maintain a three-star rating overall. He outlined that DCRNC staff meet monthly with Kishwaukee Hospital staff to review patient status and he emphasized that the DCRNC has a great relationship with the hospital. Bart Becker added that there have been no COVID-positive cases in the center since April.

Bart Becker stated that during the last couple of months, an additional \$110,000.00 has been collected on past due accounts and that his team continues to work to reduce unpaid balances, including offering payment plans. He added that it would be beneficial if the county could arrange for payments to be made to the DCRNC via ACH, as that would help to secure funds owed to the center. Bart Becker mentioned that the operation has done better during the last several months in covering expenses. Liam Sullivan reviewed that revenue is booked on a cash basis and that collections on past due accounts are compensating for losses at this point. Liam

Sullivan also mentioned that he will investigate if ACH is possible with the county's current financial software.

Bart Becker reviewed that the resident census has been fluctuating between 110 and 122, and that the census level must be maintained within a range in which the center can manage with available staff. He added that the night shift is the most difficult to staff and that there have been challenges in hiring for this shift and in obtaining agency staff for this shift as well.

Bart Becker stated that the agency staffing expense for May was \$275,000.00 and he emphasized that this is the lowest the staffing agency expense has been since December 2021. He stated that he projects June's expenses will be even lower, as hiring has increased which has reduced the need to utilize the staffing agency.

Following an inquiry from a committee member, Bart Becker stated that he feels the CNAs and nurses are very happy with their employment at the DCRNC and that the center provides a good working environment. He stated that to significantly reduce the agency staffing expense, the rate of pay would have to be increased for the county's CNA and nursing positions and that this would aid in attracting and retaining staff. Committee members inquired about the possibility of raising salaries and Liam Sullivan explained that major changes in the pay scale could jeopardize the sale of the DCRNC as these changes could potentially violate the sale agreement. He added that there is a retention bonus in place for existing employees that remain on board through the sale, which helps to ensure a continued high level of quality care.

Committee members discussed reviewing the terms of the sale agreement to determine if increasing wages for CNAs and nurses is a possibility. Members expressed concern over the continued delays in the sale of the DCRNC and suggested that staffing agency expense is becoming more critical as the sale date continues to be delayed. Liam Sullivan mentioned that the sale should be final by September/October. A committee member inquired about raising room (care) rates to increase revenue. Liam Sullivan stated he will consult with the State's Attorney's office to investigate the possibility of increasing wages and will also research the possibility of raising room rates.

Michelle Pickett motioned to schedule a special committee meeting to discuss the possibility of increasing CNA and nursing wages. Amber Quitno seconded the motion and the motion passed.

The committee discussed potential meeting dates and Michelle Pickett motioned to schedule the special committee meeting for June 26th at 6:30 p.m. Amber Quitno seconded the motion and the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

There were no old business items.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no new business items.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Michelle Pickett and seconded by Chris Porterfield to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried, and the meeting adjourned at 7:41pm.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Klein, Recording Secretary