

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON MAY 2, 2006

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Medical Care Commission was called to order on Tuesday, May 2, 2006, at 9:05 a.m. in the Town Council Chambers. Chairman Michael Dennis requested that the record reflect that all commission members were present except Commission Member Traverse.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Dennis.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as printed.

IV. APPROVAL OF COMMISSION REPORTS FOR MARCH 21 AND MARCH 28, 2006

The commission reports for March 21 and March 28, 2006 were approved as presented.

V. PRESENTATION FROM DWIGHT D. CHENETTE, CEO, HEALTH CARE DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

Chairman Dennis introduced Mr. Chenette, CEO of the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. Mr. Chenette was also joined by board member, Randy Shatz. Mr. Chenette has been with the Health Care District for 12 years and has been CEO for 4 years. Mr. Chenette then introduced Ms. Shatz, a board member, who has a law practice in Palm Beach, is serving her second term on the appointment of Governor Jeb Bush. She has also served 3 years as Board Chair. All 7 Board members are volunteers, 3 being appointed by the Governor, 3 appointed by County commission and Dr. Jean Malecki head of the Department of Health. One must be an elected official (not necessarily a County Commissioner). Each is entitled to 2 four-year terms but can only serve 3 one-year terms as chair. The services are funded by line item on real estate taxes. Other funding sources are Federal, State and partnering with other organizations.

The elements of program:

- Preventative Health Services
- Community Nursing Services
- Trauma Health Services
- Other health care services –
 - HMO for uninsured
 - Nursing home for indigents
 - Pharmaceutical

The Health Care District (HCD) was created in 1988. Until 1992 there was a huge deficit as a result of not understanding how to underwrite the cost of medical services. In the early years there were basically 2 programs:

- Health Coverage Program for the poor which was shut down in 1992. Debt was not quantifiable. HCD was restructured with new appointments to board and management.
- Trauma System – Created and began operation in the early 1990s. There were two Level II trauma centers, which were staffed as Level I centers. The only difference between the centers was that there was no academic or research components. The trauma helicopter covered the entire county and would go out of the county for patient facility transfers as far as Jackson Memorial in Miami.

Health Coverage Programs:

- **Coordinated care** for uninsured residents below 150% of poverty level, which is \$17K for an individual or a family of 4 at \$30K. Staff determines eligibility using certain criteria which are income, assets, residency, and identification.
- **Maternity care** for pregnant mothers who do not have insurance and need access to health care services. Medicaid program goes up to 185% of the federal poverty level – typically \$36K for a family of 4. HCD program is up to 200% of the federal poverty level which is \$19,600 for individual and \$40K for family of 4. About 1100 mothers in program
- **Vita Health** for a higher level of income but still for a family of 4 below \$35K. Subsidized health coverage program district provides 2/3 of premium.
- **Healthy Palm Beaches, Inc.** created to deliver regulated insurance products. Operates as a social HMO with a mission to deliver healthcare services to medically needy and vulnerable populations.
- **Florida Kid Care** managed by Florida Healthy Kids for uninsured kids.

In response to Mr. Stein's question of what portion of the real estate taxes funding actually comes from Palm Beach, Mr. Chenette said that the Property Appraiser would have to provide that information.

The Edward J. Healey Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, established in 1917, is located on 45th Street and became a part of the Health Care District in 1995 through a 40-year interlocal agreement with the County. This facility has 198 licensed beds with the average age of patients being early 50s. These patients have suffered strokes, amputations, traumatic and severe brain and spinal cord injuries with no payment source to be admitted to regular nursing homes.

Glades General Hospital, a 73-bed hospital built in the 1940s, was sold to Province Healthcare, a for-profit corporation, seven years ago. The first 2 years of Province's operation of the hospital there was a lot of enthusiasm with investments made in the recruitment of doctors and extension of care. In the third year of operation it became obvious to Province that there was no way they would be able to generate the profit margin to continue the operation. In the third and fourth years there was a dramatic decline in the investments made and an increase in the migration of doctors out of western Palm Beach County into West Palm Beach. Due to that erosion of care in the western communities, residents have to make an 80-mile roundtrip to receive medical care. In 2004 Province Healthcare made the decision that they would no longer continue to operate Glades General. The Healthcare District was faced with the decision of how to stop the downward spiral of that facility. The population base within western PBC – 2/3 are 200% of FPL and 1/3 are below poverty level. This region has the highest level of uninsured across the county. Glades General is the only public hospital in the county and is covered by sovereign immunity.

In response to Mr. Stein's question of the Healthcare District having a master plan for health services in the county, Ms. Shatz replied there was no master plan but since FAU was starting a medical school it would mean some possibilities for the county. Mr. Chenette added that there was no comprehensive master plan for hospital care only some components such as emergency response.

Mayor Jack McDonald suggested that Mr. Chenette and Ms. Shatz should approach their board with the idea of an academic institution.

VI. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

VII. NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2006 at 11:00 a.m.

VIII. ANY OTHER MATTERS

IX. SITE VISIT TO JFK MEDICAL CENTER

The members of the Medical Care Commission, along with Assistant Town Manager Sarah E. Hannah, Town Clerk Susan A. Eichhorn, and Palm Beach Daily News reporter David Rogers, met at JFK Medical Center at 11:00 a.m. Madelyn Christopher, Vice President, Physician Services and Business Development conducted a tour of the facility. Among the highlights of the tour were:

- * There were approximately 61,000 patients per year using the Emergency Room services.
- * Trauma patients were stabilized and sent to Delray Medical Center.
- * JFK had 24/7 neurosurgery coverage.
- * Discussion of contributions from private donors.
- * Discussion of various support programs sponsored by JFK.
- * Intensive Care Unit staff-to-patient ratio: 1:1 or 1:2
- * Tours of the Emergency Room, Intensive Care Unit, Radiology Unit, Cardiac Unit and Rehabilitation Unit were conducted.

The members of the Commission directed questions to the physicians and staff members of the various units.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Michael Dennis, M.D.
Chairman

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