



DAUPHIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKSHOP MEETING

Wednesday, May 25, 2005

10:00 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Haste, Chairman
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, II, Vice Chairman
George P. Hartwick, III, Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Marie Rebeck, Controller; Robert F. Dick, Treasurer; William T. Tully, Esq., Solicitor; Randy Baratucci, Director of Purchasing; Steve Howe, Director of Tax Assessment; Gary Serhan, Deputy Controller; Mike Yohe, Director of Budget & Finance; Edgar Cohen, Director of Facilities Maintenance; Mike Pries, Director of Safety & Security; Barry Wyrick, Director of MH/MR; Tom Guenther, Director of IT; Melanie McCaffrey, Solicitor's Office; Dave Schreiber, Personnel Office; Donna Miller, Commissioners' Office; Bruce Foreman, Esq., Solicitor's Office; Diane McNaughton, Press Secretary; Guy Beneventano, Esq., Solicitor's Office; Elke Moyer, Human Services Director's Office; Lena Martinez, Commissioners' Office; Kacey Truax, Commissioners' Office; Kelly Wolf, Manager of Solid Waste; Greg Schneider, Budget & Finance Office; Laurie Rux, Tax Assessment; Yvonne Fuhrman, Solid Waste; Gail Nye, Commissioners' Office; Tom Wasco, Director of Veterans Affairs; Carolyn Thompson, Court Administrator; Kay Sinner, Personnel; Bob Christoff, Conservation District; Jena Wolgemuth, Commissioners' Office; Ellie Myers, MH/MR; Alicia Smith, Children & Youth; Jennifer Horn, Children & Youth; Jason McCrae, Children & Youth; Yaivette Roberts, Children & Youth; Vicki Shultz, Children & Youth; Katie Bumes, Children & Youth; Sarah Miller, Children & Youth; Currin Haines, Children & Youth; Wendy DePew, Children & Youth; Gloria Murphy, Children & Youth; Amy Strahl, Children & Youth; and Richie Martz, Commissioners' Office

GUESTS PRESENT

Charlie Lawson, Brian Greg, Mike Pilsitz, Nick Conjar, Jr., Jerel Lewis, Chris Garman, Nick Pogasic, Tyrell Bookhart, Chris Haigh, Mike Attivo, Joe Spagli, Skyler Kemp, Jordan Krovic; Al Brulo and Tim Whelan

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Haste, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Everyone observed a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Haste: We have three sets of Meeting Minutes that we will take up at next week's meeting.

DIRECTORS/GUESTS

Commissioners

Presentation of Foster Care Month Proclamation for May

Mr. DiFrancesco: The Board has the pleasure this morning of honoring a very special group of people with a Proclamation. Obviously many of the things that we do here in County government really stem from unfortunate circumstances. The folks that we are going to acknowledge today tend to be the last line of defense in some young people's lives in terms of giving them a new opportunity in the wake of what could be a very unpleasant circumstance. If I could, I will read the Proclamation first and then I want to identify some folks that I believe we have in the audience today.

(Mr. DiFrancesco read the following Proclamation. He also introduced the employees responsible for foster care. Applause was given and photos were taken.)

Office of County Commissioner **Dauphin County, Pennsylvania**

Proclamation

We, the Dauphin County Board of Commissioners, are delighted to join communities across the nation in thanking foster families, child welfare professionals, and individuals in our community who are helping to provide Dauphin County's foster children with safe, secure and stable homes;

Whereas, originating in May of 1988, National Foster Care Month raises awareness and provides the opportunity for people to get involved as foster parents, volunteers, mentors or employers for the more than 523,000 children and youth across the nation that are in need of such care;

Whereas, each May this formal recognition allows the community at large to acknowledge and show their appreciation to the dedicated foster families and child welfare staff who help to care for these children;

Whereas, in Dauphin County, 198 dependent children are in the custody of Dauphin County Social Services for Children and Youth, 50 children are in agency foster homes, while 148 are in provider foster homes;

Whereas, although Dauphin County Social Services for Children and Youth consists of 51 licensed foster homes and more than 30 home studies in process, Dauphin County is in desperate need of more families who are willing to serve as foster parents;

Whereas, as a direct result of foster parents' commitment, compassion and dedicated day-to-day efforts, many children receive nurturing, protection and a sense of belonging they so greatly need;

Therefore, we are truly grateful for all the families who open their hearts and their homes to less fortunate children, and in recognition of their time and talents, we do hereby proclaim May 2005 to be "Foster Care Month" in Dauphin County.

Ms. Smith: I am from the Dauphin County Children and Youth Agency. I supervise our special services unit. We are being asked to say a few words. I would like to say that we have a tremendous group of people who are currently working with us as foster parents and the staff that provides support to them and the children in their care. We are always in need though of more foster homes and we are currently looking for homes for children of all ages, but also people who can take sibling groups, teens and who can take children whose plan may change from returning home to parents or relatives to permanency. We need folks who would be willing to be both foster parents and adoptive parents, if that becomes a plan for the child. On behalf of our staff, I would like to say thanks also to our foster parents. We also had a dinner the other night to honor them and Yaivette Roberts was the mistress of ceremonies for that event and she will say a few words about that.

Ms. Roberts: I am in the special services unit. I want to personally thank the Commissioners for signing the contract for Big Tubba Mista. We had a wonderful time. We really did.

Mr. Hartwick: Yaivette, I saw you could dance too.

Ms. Roberts: They had such a great time. The other thing that I would like to say is I am a part-time foster parent recruiter. Jen, Alicia and I just did a program on life esteem regarding recruiting foster parents. I did see that it was on Sunday. It should be on a lot on Channel 20. I want to thank the Dauphin County Print Shop for collaborating with me to do the invitations and the programs and the Dauphin County Technical School for doing the centerpieces. We just had a nice time honoring the foster parents. We had over 90 people at the dinner. Thank you very much.

Ms. Smith: I just want to say thanks for your support too. We really, as folks know, everything that we do needs to come through the Commissioners and you have all been very supportive of us and it is very much appreciated. We have a softball game coming up.

Mr. Hartwick: I am the pitcher.

Ms. Smith: You are the pitcher. Anybody else who would have any interest in coming on June 23 should call Jen or me at Dauphin County Children and Youth. We will put you to work over there. It will be a fun day over at City Island. The Senators are donating something as well as just a lot of people from the County participating. It is a recruitment event as well.

Mr. Hartwick: I'll put a vote in for the Big Tubba Mista next year.

Mr. Haste: I have heard them numerous times and they are very good.

Ms. Roberts: One of the members of the group is one of our new foster parents.

Mr. Haste: Excellent.

Commissioners

Presentation of a Proclamation to the Steel-High Rollers

Mr. Haste: It is my pleasure to move on and turn the mic over to Commissioner Hartwick.

Mr. Hartwick: Probably at least three times a day I let everybody know where I am from and the community I represent. Obviously we represent all of Dauphin County, but I never beat my chest harder to let people know about being from the community of Steelton. Last night we had a great tribute and honor to the champion Steel-High Rollers - The basketball PIAA AAA Championship Steel-High Rollers. It makes me very proud to hear sports stars come back and talk about what it means to be from Steelton, and what it means to go through the common threads and ties that bind us together. Troy Drayton said last night that every time he stepped out on the field he didn't represent himself, he represented a town, the people of the community and he said he knew on TV that he couldn't drop a pass, because when he came back to the community he would take a lot of crap for it. Ultimately we got about 5200 residents and all of them are head basketball coaches. As Nick and Jeff are both aware that there is no place that we go that people don't have a deep affection, a deep sense of pride and some sort of connection to the town with a little heart, called Steelton, Pennsylvania. It gives me great pride today to bring forward the State Championship Basketball Team. Nick Horvath said last night that when you think of Steel-High Basketball, what do you think of? You think of championships and you think of great players and great tradition. Two of the statistics last night that I can remember off the top of my head were the most combined 1,000 point scorers. We have 28, girls and boys, in Steelton that are 1,000 point scorers. We had the first in history of two basketball players who scored 2,000 points – Tristen Crawford and Tramaine Hawthorne. The best thing about this group is about nine out of the 13 are honor roll students. For that lets give them a round of applause.

(Applause was given.)

Not only the championships, the teamwork and hearing the tradition of what goes along with the pressures of being from Steelton, but to also understand that we don't want to just stand behind these kids when it comes time for basketball season, we want to make sure that they use the experiences that they have in basketball to earn a college degree, to be successful in life and not to sit down in Steelton and talk about what could have, should of or would have been. They talk about how they are coming back to make a difference, because of the opportunities that they have been provided through a sport that they love and have been great at. We really need to be as equally as strong standing behind the kids off the court, as well as, on the court. To the championship Steel-High Rollers, we have a Proclamation and I will read it to you. The Board of Commissioners and Stocks on Second have sponsored lunch for you guys today, free of charge. They will provide sandwiches today after the meeting. All of us have followed you and the entire region was swept by your State Championship this year.

(Mr. Hartwick read the Proclamation.)

Office of County Commissioner

Dauphin County, Pennsylvania

Proclamation

We, the Dauphin County Board of Commissioners, are honored to acknowledge and applaud the outstanding athletic achievements of Steelton-Highspire High School and its victorious 2004-2005 basketball team;

Whereas, the Rollers basketball team, coached by Richard Binder, had an outstanding season, ending with Steelton's fifth state championship victory;

Whereas, these champions have brought honor and recognition to themselves, their school, the close-knit community of Steelton and this very supportive county of Dauphin;

Whereas, the achievements and evident character of these talented young men have carried on Steelton's proud tradition of athletic prowess and further unified this "little town with a big heart" even more profoundly and permanently;

Whereas, Steelton-Highspire High School is the only school in Pennsylvania with two 2,000-point scorers in a single season, and a record-setting 20 District 3 titles, the most in District 3;

Whereas, on and off the basketball court, these young men are winners in every sense of the word;

Therefore, we join the 251,300 residents of Dauphin County in hailing Steelton's much-admired basketball players and wishing them continued success in life; we thank them for providing fans with not only the thrill of competition and the glimmer of trophies, but, more importantly, with enhanced unity, town pride and enduring hope; and, in honor of their accomplishments and ideals, we do hereby proudly declare May 24 and 25, 2004 to be "Steelton-Highspire Rollers Days" in Dauphin County.

Mr. Pilsitz: I would just like to thank the Commissioners for having us here today. It is nice for the kids to see what actually does go on in government. As George has said last night we had Troy Drayton, who used to play for the Miami Dolphins and we had Greg Brown, who is now a coach in Florida and who played in the final four for Florida. Mr. Lewis who now works for Children and Youth in Maryland, played for Steel-High as a point guard and then went to Mount St. Mary's. All those guys come back to talk about the community of Steelton and what it meant for them. It makes me proud to be a teacher and to have some kind of influence in their lives and to see that they do good things with their lives and come back and appreciate people like you that have helped them accomplish that.

Commissioners: Thank you very much.

Presentation – Gail Nye Years of Service

Mr. Haste: Gail, will you come forward. Today is the day to do your evaluation.

Ms. Nye: I love an audience.

Mr. Haste: We knew you did. It is our pleasure and a treat for us. It is not too many times that something like this will occur, but this young lady, known as the fourth Commissioner or "the Commissioner" on the fourth floor has spent 45 years as an employee of Dauphin County.

Ms. Nye: Over 45 years. It will be 46 in September, but I'm not counting.

Mr. Haste: Last week we had our employee appreciation and pin ceremony at Fort Hunter and Gail was not able to participate. It is our pleasure to have a certificate for Gail that states "This

is to commemorate Gail Nye on May 16, 2005 for your outstanding commitment to serving Dauphin County and its 251,000 citizens. We thank you for a job well done. Your work ethic, professionalism and persistence have not gone unnoticed for the past 45 years. Thanks to your noteworthy dedication, the Commissioners' Office has run smoothly and efficiently. This appreciation pin and certificate of achievement are small tokens of our appreciation for your longevity, your loyalty and your reliability. May you always continue in your commitment to public service."

With that we have the 45 year pin, which there are not too many of those in Dauphin County, as well as, a special gift that the staff on the fourth floor decided to get for you Gail.

Ms. Nye: The key to my Lexus.

Mr. Haste: When you find the Lexus I'll get you the spare key. Sapphire is the gem of the 45th year so this is a sapphire for you.

Ms. Nye: Thank you.

(Applause was given and pictures were taken.)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Haste: We are at the point in time in the program if there is anyone in the audience that would like to address an item before the Board, please come forward.

Mr. Lawson: My name is Charlie Lawson. I too am a Steelton resident of 64 years and very proud of that and am truly blessed that I can talk with you today. Having survived two tours of Vietnam and being awarded a bronze star, I am 70% disabled as a result of the war. I went on to work for IBM Corporation and retired as financial services manager. During one of my recent hospitalizations I was appalled at one of my fellow veterans taking advantage of the federal, county and state government. He was imprisoned in Dauphin County for a year. He came out of Dauphin County with over \$40,000 in savings. After two months his pension should have been withdrawn by the federal government if they would have been told by the proper authorities within the County. I am not knocking anyone who missed this, but as I listen to people talk it came to me that this was a habit of abusing social security and veterans' benefits pensions. In other words, there should be something in place to find out about these hidden funds. When you can have an individual, who spends a year at the County Prison and goes to Work Release, abuses the system by using direct deposit recurring withdrawals with someone outside getting the money the first of the month and coming home with in excess of \$40,000 in a year, there is something wrong. I just wanted to bring it to your attention. I'm available if you want to discuss it. I have 25 years experience.

Mr. Haste: When did that occur?

Mr. Lawson: Really, if you don't mind, what I did because of the potentially dangerous nature of it, I contacted the District Attorney, who had an attorney contact me. They rearrested this individual and he is in Dauphin County Prison right now. I don't know if you guys stopped his pension this time, but I would be willing to tell you his name in private.

Mr. Haste: I didn't ask for his name. I wanted to know the timeframe when this occurred?

Mr. Lawson: He was released last year and they rearrested him right away as soon as I told him about it.

Mr. Haste: What we do and we started this within the last year is we take everybody's social security number and give it the Federal government. They have a system where they go through it and we actually get a small finders fee for those that are improperly using social security or federal pensions. We do run the social security numbers of those that we have. Now, if someone uses a fake ID or fake social security number and the law enforcement has not caught that, that is one thing. With the information that we have, we share that with the Federal government. I don't know the number, but I would say it is about \$40,000 or \$50,000 that we have been able to get as a finder's fee. That is not the total amount that is in there. We get a small percentage of what the Federal government does.

Mr. Lawson: In all due respect, I think you probably should do the same thing with the Veterans Administration, because an individual can collect in excess of \$2500 a month, which is \$30,000 a year, which evidently has fallen through the cracks.

Mr. Haste: Without giving names or anything, you are saying that was federal monies?

Mr. Lawson: Disability pensions, which is being direct deposited and taken out by family members. They don't pay the fines and costs when they have the means to do it, which is costing the taxpayers money.

The other thing is that I was delinquent on my taxes, because of the hospitalization. I had the money and I wanted to pay them. It was \$2,000. How can I pay these taxes, because I can't get around. I had a walker and was incapacitated so I called in to the Tax Office. I guess today probably about 90% of people in here use online banking. What I have given you is an example of a bank guaranty check from online banking to pay your taxes. I finally was able to get someone to bring me in here in a walker. I asked downstairs if they would accept this. They said no, we can't do that. I said well I can bring it to your attention and show you that things have changed since you printed years ago the acceptable means of people paying their taxes. Maybe if you guys would look at it you would see it is from the bank, printed at the bank, because what I had to do was to get someone to come to the house and get me in a wheelchair and go buy a money order and fill that out and it comes in all scribbled and someone would have to decipher it. This would save you money and it would please your constituents that they would have this ability. I realize you charge a service charge for credit cards. That is fine. But, I would think that a person who has a debit card that is guaranteed that you would take that payment over the phone and not make them come down here to pay their property taxes when they really want to pay them. They are delinquent another day, week or month. I am just asking that you look at these couple of things, if you would.

Mr. Hartwick: The answer is yes we do use debit cards. I was unaware that we were not able to accept payment with debit cards, but...

Mr. Lawson: They will not take them.

Mr. Hartwick: Steve, come forward. Steve is the Director of Tax Assessment.

Mr. Lawson: I was just here last month and they didn't accept them.

Mr. Howe: We will accept debit cards, credit cards and the only things that we don't accept are Discover and American Express, because they don't pay very timely to the County. We will accept debit cards. We will not accept any debit cards or credit cards over the telephone. Our bank has advised us of that and that is the course we take simply because we have no ability to verify the individual giving us the information over the telephone; whether it is a stolen card or not. That is through the advice of our banks. We will accept debit cards over the counter, as well as, any credit card.

Mr. Haste: What would be the difference of taking the credit card over the counter or the phone?

Mr. Howe: When we accept the credit card over the counter the clerks will ask for identification before they accept the payment. You have to provide not only the credit card, but some other means of identification before we will process the card.

Mr. Lawson: Times have changed with phone security in paying bills over the telephone. I pay the bank, trade stocks and everything over the phone. There are secure numbers on the back of your debit card with information that can be requested by one of your clerks. That 100% verifies that payment from that individual. I will tell you quite frankly I don't think I will pay \$3,000 taxes for someone else off of my credit card.

Mr. Haste: I think what he is concerned is if someone steals your credit card.

Mr. Lawson: But, there are codes that they ask for and it is done nationally. If that is what you want to live by fine, but why then charge me an interest charge on my debit card when the funds are guaranteed. You know the money is there. I'm not saying credit. Debit card is the same as cash. Today, we are being penalized for guaranteed funds. Just look at it from my perspective.

Mr. Hartwick: From my perspective we will investigate if it is something that is viable. We have open minds and I think we want to make it convenient and we want to have a one-stop shop where you have the ability to have some customer service when paying your taxes. None of us like to pay our taxes first of all.

Mr. Lawson: If you would approve the online checks, they are guaranteed. It would save time.

Mr. Hartwick: Thank you for bringing that to our attention.

***Bob Christoff, Conservation District
Act 167 Stormwater Management Plans for the Wiconisco Watershed***

Mr. Haste: We actually have on the agenda three stormwater management plans, but I understand we are going to talk about four.

Mr. Christoff: Three plans for four separate issues.

With me here is Brian Greg, from Herbert, Rowland & Grubic. Herbert, Rowland & Grubic is the consulting engineer for the Wiconisco Creek Plan that is one of the plans that we are going to talk about today. I will start there.

A couple of weeks ago, we sent to the Commissioners a proposed Wiconisco Creek Stormwater Management Plan. These plans were done under Act 167, which is a Pennsylvania Stormwater

Management Act. What the plans will do is provide stormwater management standards for peak discharges, water quality, groundwater recharge and channel protection in the Wiconisco Creek Watershed. We are at the point in the process of getting the plans implemented where County adoption is necessary. Over the past several years we have been working with the municipalities and other entities, watershed organizations, authorities and the Wiconisco Creek Watershed to get to this point to put the plan together. The process goes from the proposed or draft plan, whereby we receive comments back from the municipalities. We address those comments. The next step would be a public hearing, which has occurred and then County adoption. After the County adopts the plan, it goes to DEP for final approval and then the municipalities and the watershed implement the standards. That is one issue.

The other issue is the three plans, which are the Wiconisco Creek, Spring Creek and Paxton Creek. We have requested time extensions from the Department of Environmental Protection to finish those plans. I believe you have the three contracts to grant those time extensions.

Mr. Haste: Will you need adoption today on the...?

Mr. Christoff: The plan that we are looking for adoption I guess would be next week and that would be for the Wiconisco Creek Plan.

Mr. Haste: Do you have that on next week's Agenda?

Mr. Saylor: (Nodded his head.)

Mr. Haste: Any questions? (There were none.)

Barry Wyrick, MH/MR Administrator
Mental Retardation Annual Plan

Mr. Wyrick: It is again that time of year for us to submit our State plans and it is my privilege to submit Dauphin County Mental Retardation Stage One Plan for the 2006/2007 year. Just some highlights and they may be lowlights. The mental retardation system has a process whereby we identify the needs of individuals who are waiting for service. It is called the prioritization of need for service or PUNS. We do that annually with our entire system. The requirement by the State is that we do a data draw in the month of April as part of the planning process. We did that on April 15th of this year for our 2006/07 plan. At the date of draw, we had 60 persons in the emergency status, meaning those individuals we anticipate having significant unmet needs or currently have significant unmet needs from the system. There are 316 persons in the critical status where we anticipate that there will be significant unmet needs within the next year. There are 341 persons in planning status for a total of 717 individuals in Dauphin County who are waiting for mental retardation services. That is an increase of 16.5% over last year and an increase of over 60% over two years ago. Those are very discouraging numbers. Currently our system serves a little more than 2,000 individuals in the MR system. So, now our waiting list has risen above a third of our total capacity, which is an increasing concern. Our proposal to the State, which is included in the 2006/07 Plan includes a proposal to serve all of the 60 individuals who are in the emergency status, as well as, 86 other individuals who have graduated from school or who will graduate from school in the next year, who will be graduating from our education programs to no services currently, for a total of serving 146 individuals with a proposed funding of \$6.5 million to provide the services to those individuals. The Plan guidelines also offer us the opportunity to supply additional information and additional requests for funding which we have done. We have included in the 2006/07 Proposal a request for an

additional \$1.2 million to address staff salaries as part of recruitment and retention, as well as, an additional \$520,000 for the expansion of our supports coordination unit, which basically is the individuals who coordinate all of the services that the individuals in fact receive. When I talk about waiting lists, I am talking about individuals who are waiting to be placed in one of the two waiver programs, which is how medical assistance dollars in the County are provided for the mental retardation services. Over 80% of the funding for MR services is funded under the Medicaid waiver. This is the year that Pennsylvania's Medicaid waiver is re-approved. The center for Medicaid and Medicare services has expressed significant concerns about Pennsylvania's participation in the waiver. In the most strongly worded letter yet regarding the waiver, the Federal government expressed several requirements in order for Pennsylvania to continue with the waiver. At this point I do not believe that Pennsylvania's participation in the waiver is in jeopardy, however, in order for Pennsylvania to come into compliance with the Federal requirements almost every business practice in the mental retardation system will be changing within the next year. So, in addition to the significant stress on our system from having an ever increasing number of individuals waiting for services and the difficulty in maintaining salaries that are able to keep individuals providing services to those persons, we will then add the stress to our system in the next year of converting almost every process that we use to provide service and to fund those services. It is a very difficult time for the MR system across the State and in particular Dauphin County. Are there any questions?

Mr. DiFrancesco: Talk to me about these practices? Are we talking about administrative practices or are we talking about actual therapy or service practices?

Mr. Wyrick: It will change some of the services in terms of clarifying the actual service needs. There must be a process defined by the State in order to be able to identify an individual's needs. That process may change some of the services that are provided.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Do you find or would you expect it to become more restrictive or...

Mr. Wyrick: We are expecting it to become more restrictive.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Again, we are showing statistics here that are exceptionally high, anything driving that such as a change in policy or change in circumstance? Is there anything or is it just pretty much when you took the snapshot the numbers were higher than they were?

Mr. Wyrick: Yes, with the MR system, we can pretty much project and predict a certain percentage of the population will have an MR disorder. The reason that our waiting list is growing is the expansion by the State has decreased. Last year we saw an expansion of 10 people and next year we are anticipating an expansion of 20 people.

Mr. Haste: You are talking about funding, right?

Mr. Wyrick: Yes, into the waiver systems.

Ms. Myers: I'm Ellie Myers, the Deputy Administrator. This is a problem statewide. The statewide waiting list right now for mental retardation services is over 20,000 people. As Barry said, the funding has really slowed down. Funding in our system has not kept pace with the growth and need. There are factors like the number of kids who are graduating from school to our system. Another factor is the aging of the population, because in the past often people with mental retardation didn't live a full life span. Now, they are living longer and living predominately at home and their parents are aging and we have that baby boom bulge that we

are hitting right now. The most recent crisis that I dealt with was a 63 year old retarded man living with his 92 year old mother, who had a stroke. That is the kind of situation that we are bumping up against and as the bulge in population reaches that point where their parents can no longer care for them sometimes the public system is all there is.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Give me if you can and not a long explanation, but in a nutshell these three categories that you laid out?

Ms. Myers: Emergency means really that the person is on the verge of being homeless.

Mr. DiFrancesco: So that would be the case where all of a sudden you are...

Mr. Haste: Or in harm.

Ms. Myers: Or placed in a dangerous situation. Critical means that at some point in the next two years they are going to reach that point. Planning means in our annual process of working with the person we can see that need coming. Ideally, especially with the individuals who have been at home a long time, if you are talking about residential, which is our most expensive service, the best way for a placement to happen is when the parents can participate in it, get the person settled where they are, make sure that they are doing okay and they have made that transition. The worst way to place someone is in a crisis when everything in their life has changed. Ideally, they want a plan for people's needs and meet them ahead of the crisis. The 60 people in the emergency status are in crisis. That has grown dramatically. Last year we had 48 and the year before that it was 31. It is just growing by leaps and bounds.

Mr. Haste: In the same area, it is related. It is not quite the same, but I am going to sound like a broken record on this. I was in Centre County yesterday. We had a County Commissioners Courts and Corrections Meeting and they are taking a snapshot of the prison population around the Commonwealth and they picked 14 county jails that they are looking at and they are getting all kinds of data. One of the alarming things that came out of that, which is probably no surprise, is the number of mental health/mental retardation issues that are going on in the county jails across the Commonwealth. It was the number one spike. When I sit here and hear you tell me that the statewide waiting list is going to 20,000 and we don't have placement. This is hitting as clear as can be and I don't understand why the State is doing what they are doing, quite frankly. This is a population when Centre County is in the middle of building a new jail right now and what they have to do the cost of building a cell for dealing with this type of person is tremendous, the staffing that goes along with that is tremendous, the medical requirement that goes along with it is tremendous and it is the wrong way. We talked about how many times these folks come in and they get hurt or they hurt someone. I know sometimes it is both. They end up doing harm to someone else and the only thing the system knows to do is come back and it is just a bad situation. Someone needs to wake up. If that waiting list is growing to 20,000 and that is spiking in the prisons we have a real problem going on. Again, I am just going to keep bringing that up, because anything that we take back to the State is we need to raise those concerns, because it is there. I would be interested in knowing, but it is probably more costly for us to deal with this situation in the criminal justice system than in a more appropriate setting where we can get them some help where they are not harming themselves or someone else. I would be curious to see what it really costs us in the two different ways. My gut tells me that it is more expensive doing it the wrong way.

Mr. Hartwick: Not to mention that it is Medicaid and Medicare that pay for them outside of the jail. It is County tax dollars that pay for them inside of the jail. It is just a huge shift of the burden of who is going to pay for this. It is being done right under County taxpayers' noses.

Mr. Haste: You and I know, but if people could just hear some of the behavioral patterns of some of these people when they get there on what they do to act out. It would amaze most people. It doesn't us, but it is amazing what happens and it is not right.

Mr. DiFrancesco: The challenge to, again, the State philosophy, looking at the State Hospital, lets close the institution and get these people out in a community setting where may be they can have a more normal life. What they seem to not be acknowledging is they are putting them out of one institution and almost accepting the fact that some percentage will end up in the Prison, another institution that is much less suitable to give them what they need than the current place they are in right now. From what I have seen and I am new to this system, I have been in this job a year and a half and I don't understand the ins and outs necessarily, but I am smart enough to look back and see what seems to be coming out of the Commonwealth right now is not a logical well thought strategic plan. Realizing that this would never be an easy thing to manage, under any circumstance, a lot of what we are hearing, in my opinion, is shifting the burden of cost down to the counties and reducing the quality of care of the people that are in the system. That is a bad combination.

Mr. Wyrick: During the previous administration at the State level, there was a plan that was developed between the Administration and the Advocate communities and the counties regarding a plan to address the waiting list. When the State got into a financial crisis the last year of the previous Administration and continuing into the current Administration that plan was abandoned. Our system would certainly appreciate all of the support that the Commissioners could provide to the State to get back to a plan to address the unmet needs.

Mr. Haste: Could you draft a letter for this Board to sign that we can send to the Governor, as well as our Legislators?

(Mr. Hartwick and Mr. DiFrancesco were in agreement with a letter.)

Mr. Hartwick: Ellie, I know that you don't ever appear before us, but your reputation is wonderful. I know you are an extremely competent employee and I want to thank you for your efforts on behalf of the mental retarded in Dauphin County. Other than the majority of the actual work that is done for the mentally retarded portion of our budget is done through our service providers. Almost all of it, with the exception of very few employees, we have providers who are out there delivering direct services. How is the transition with those providers going with their medical assistance reimbursement and MA realignment in trying to get them to move forward and hopefully reduce the number of County dollars that go to them and State dollars and allow them to claim what is eligible under Medical Assistance?

Mr. Wyrick: The MR system is one of the systems that will not be converted under MA realignment.

Mr. Haste: Did you say it will not be?

Mr. Wyrick: Will not be, because the MR services already are paid for by medical assistance under the waivers.

Mr. Hartwick: 80%.

Mr. Wyrick: 80% of the total budget is under the waivers, the rest of the budget is what is called base dollars to the County. That is really spent on services for individuals who are on the waiting list for the waiver for the most part of our administration.

Mr. Hartwick: How many tax dollars out of the general fund come to support our MR budget?

Mr. Wyrick: General Fund dollars are about \$400,000 of a total budget of \$37 million.

Mr. Hartwick: With our service providers, are we seeing an increase in their amount that they are requesting in providing these services? Are they working with us in order to try to address these unmet needs or are they continuing to raise the price of doing business?

Mr. Wyrick: Our provider system is deeply committed here in Dauphin County to making the system work. Last year when we received no additional funding to do so we actually placed 20 individuals, who were in crisis that were on that emergency waiting list with no new money. That was done simply because our providers were able to identify ways of meeting needs at no additional cost. Our thanks need to go out continually to our provider system for keeping the emergencies away from our door and keeping as many people as possible out of our emergency rooms, off of the street and out of the prison. I can't give them my thanks enough. The other part of your question related to the needs of the providers. They are doing so with causing increasing efficiencies in their agencies financially, but they are about to break. When you see health insurance costs for your employees raising at 16, 17 or 20% a year and our system telling them that we can only give them a 2% increase in their budget, their systems are ready to financially break.

Mr. Hartwick: Barry and I have had this discussion many times. You said mental health is very difficult to put a face on to try to lobby for additional funds, because it is often misunderstood, the idea of mental health is a challenging one to get across for the need in the community. Obviously the waiting lists are high. Mental retardation is different. You can identify the issues, you can see where there is a real need. Is there any kind of grassroots effort going on in the community and could you make us aware of what is going on so we can partner with those groups to make sure that these critical folks are not put on the street or prison?

Mr. Haste: Absolutely.

Mr. Wyrick: There is a grassroots lobbying effort being done by several organizations that support advocacy for individuals with mental retardation.

Ms. Myers: Commissioner Hartwick, you met some of those folks last fall when we did the voter event. We have a local self-advocacy group called "Speaking for Ourselves", which is individuals who actually use services and they are part of a statewide waiting list campaign effort. We have also parents and the ARC and so forth that are working on this issue and are going to talk to legislators and so forth. We are working with the people who use the services to try to advocate for the need. You are right, mental retardation can affect anything. We have all ages, all income levels and all backgrounds. When people need these services, they need them. They are quite expensive services, because most of the people we are talking about on this waiting list are people who need 24 hour supervision, support and care for their health and safety. That means that if you have to replace a family, you have to replace 24 hour care.

Mr. Hartwick: It just seems like lately that everything dealing with human services flows downhill in this job, which pretty much stinks; particularly human services. I want to talk about that and put a face to your cause because, and Jack I hope you are listening to this because this is a critical story, we have 60 people who are facing either being homeless or being in the prison system and that is not being addressed by the State and the waiting list is upwards of 20,000 folks. This has reached crisis. We need to do our part in trying to make this a selling topic with everybody as we do with Children and Youth Needs Based budget. Although as I think it relates to critical needs, this has to raise to the top of the list.

Mr. Wyrick: One good thing out of the action by the Federal government, by the CMS, was CMS clearly communicated to the State of Pennsylvania that the financial responsibility to meet these individuals' needs rests with the State, not with the County system.

Mr. Haste: We will see if reality follows. Do you need any action from us today?

Mr. Saylor: Two weeks ago we presented the Mental Health Plan Update and I understand that also needs to be signed. We inadvertently left that off the Agenda last week so if you could move to adopt it you can sign it today.

Mr. Haste: What are we adopting?

Mr. Saylor: It is the Mental Health Annual Plan Update for fiscal year 2006/07, which was presented to the Board two weeks ago.

It was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. DiFrancesco that the Board adopt the Mental Health Annual Plan Update for fiscal year 2006/07; motion carried.

PERSONNEL

Ms. Sinner: In the Personnel Packet, in the Salary Board requests, I request that you pull the first item, the Continuance Improvement Leader for Spring Creek. There are some things that we have to work out with that and it will be presented at another Workshop Meeting. We are eliminating an Admissions Clerk and a Restorative and QA Coordinator. Children and Youth are creating an Information Technology Technician and a Family Program Specialist 2 position. These positions had been put through a meeting in October and were pulled. In DJ Stewart's Office, we are eliminating a Legal Clerk I and creating one in DJ Postelle's Office. There is a Legal Clerk I that is going to be transferring. In DJ Zozos' Office, a Legal Clerk I is being promoted to a II.

Mr. Hartwick: So there are two people being promoted.

Ms. Sinner: Yes, it is two. That is the result of a second step grievance. These Legal Clerk I's were actually performing the duties of a Legal Clerk II. They filed a grievance and it was heard by Faye Fisher and it was determined that they really are performing Legal Clerk II duties and should be classified as such.

Mr. Haste: The other one I take from that is that a person is just moving from DJ Stewart's Office to DJ Postelle's Office.

Ms. Sinner: That is correct.

Mr. Hartwick: Is this going to cause problems with other district justice offices if they get word that a desk audit was performed and then everybody starts to get a promotion?

Ms. Sinner: Hopefully, the other clerks are doing the duties of their correct position.

Ms. Thompson: I don't know.

Mr. Hartwick: That hot line spreads fast.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Why would somebody be operating outside of their category? Whose responsibility would that ultimately fall back on, the Office Manager?

Ms. Sinner: I would say yes. She would oversee what they are doing.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Then I think it would be very appropriate for us to nip it before it gets out and make sure that the office managers know what is expected and how they are expected to operate those offices. Really at this point, the way the offices are structured you can't really rely on the judge to make those administrative details. That has to go through the office manager in each office. It is very important that they understand that it is their responsibility that the people are doing the work within their class. If in fact they are not and there is a need then it is their responsibility to approach the Board. It shouldn't be a retroactive thing. It should be a proactive thing.

Ms. Sinner: That is correct.

In the Personnel transactions, I am requesting some vacancies to be filled. There is an Aging Care Manager in Aging, a Fiscal Technician and a Caseworker in Children and Youth, Deputy District Attorney and a MH/MR Crisis Intervention Caseworker Up-County. Pianka's Office has a vacancy, a Legal Clerk I is being promoted to a Legal Clerk II vacancy, so we are requesting to fill that and that opens up a Legal Clerk I position to be filled. In Central Court, their Office Manager is leaving and it is really the only clerical employee in Central Court and we are requesting a vote on that today to be approved so we can get a posting out and get that filled. They are hoping to actually get someone in there prior to the person leaving so they can get some training before the Office Manager leaves.

Mr. Haste: Is this in the DJ system?

Ms. Sinner: Yes.

Mr. Haste: Where is this person housed?

Ms. Sinner: At the Prison.

I would request a vote today. There are some new hires at Spring Creek, two Aging Care Managers in Area Agency on Aging, the Prison is putting through the new hires for their correctional officers.

Mr. Haste: We lost another. Just to show you what the numbers are, they did a quick urine check on the new class. I said that we should do another one just to verify so we know that they are clean. One came up hot. How many are we hiring now?

Ms. Sinner: I believe eight.

Mr. Haste: We started with 400.

Ms. Sinner: We have some personnel changes, transfers and separations. We also have overtime reports and two overtime requests from the Prison. The overtime should be dropping once these correctional officers start.

Mr. Hartwick: I know that the hiring committee hopefully has reviewed these, I am just wondering why we are now going back to the practice of giving promotions outside of the hiring freeze. It looks like five promotions in here at the end of the packet.

Ms. Sinner: Those last two, #29 and #30, are those legal clerk IIs as a result of the second step grievance. Item #27, they probably really need someone to step up and do the work of the person that left. That is in DJ Pianka's Office. I can't answer for the one in Children and Youth.

Mr. Hartwick: I will get the answers to that one before we vote. I don't want to start the practice of promotions outside of our hiring freeze. There is no reason for that unless there is a union contractual obligation.

Mr. Haste: If you see, the effective date is not.

Mr. Hartwick: Let me take a look at that.

Mr. Saylor: I did talk to Bob Burns about his two new hire requests coming at the end of June and why they could not wait until the July 13th window and he said that they were 100% State funded so there would be no impact and he has held both positions open for almost one year.

It was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. DiFrancesco that the Board approve Item #8 under Vacancies Approved by President Judge regarding the vacancy of an Office Manager in Central Court; motion carried.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Who does the annual reviews for the office managers?

Ms. Thompson: Their district justice.

Mr. DiFrancesco: So, you would actually see them and review them.

Ms. Thompson: Bob Hawley may review them.

Mr. Hartwick: That is one other question. I have been getting some indications that elected officials don't want to do performance reviews, they said that they are not required to do so.

Mr. Haste: We can always say that we are not required to give raises too.

Mr. DiFrancesco: There has to be something to justify what is being requested.

PURCHASE ORDERS

Mr. Baratucci: There is nothing exciting in the Purchase Orders. It is a small one this week. There are two over budgets. One of which has already been corrected and the other one we will take care of between now and next week. If you have any questions, I can answer them for you or we will have a cleaned up report for you next week.

Mr. DiFrancesco: There is a purchase order request with regards to the radio project for a consultant. Is that on here yet?

Mr. Baratucci: Not yet. I haven't gotten it yet.

TRAINING PACKET

Mr. Haste: Is there anything in the Training Packet that needs approval this week?

Mr. Saylor: There is not.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- A. Fiscal Year 2005/06 Human Services Development Fund Pre-Expenditure Plan. **(**A VOTE IS REQUESTED 5/25/05)**
- B. Appoint Donna Delle Brandmyer to the Dauphin County Area Agency on Aging Council.

Mr. Haste: Items for Discussion, we need to adopt the fiscal year 2005/06 Human Services Development Fund Pre-Expenditure Plan.

Mr. Hartwick: Before we vote, this is noting an 18% reduction from the State and all programs are going to be adjusted appropriately. So, service providers should be aware that every approval, particularly if you have done business with the County in the past, you can expect to see an 18% reduction, unless those funds are restored.

It was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. DiFrancesco that the Board adopt the Fiscal Year 2005/06 Human Services Development Fund Pre-Expenditure Plan; motion carried.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – WILLIAM TULLY, ESQ.

Mr. Tully: I have one matter to add to the Solicitor's report. I have just received a notification from the Dauphin County General Authority of their desire to participate in the transfer of the Cibort Park to Steelton. I am going to add that to the report so that if the Commissioners would like to vote on it next week that would be in order to do so. Other than that I have no other changes and would be happy to answer any questions.

CHIEF CLERK'S REPORT – CHAD SAYLOR

Mr. Saylor: I have nothing further.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Haste: We have a Retirement Board Meeting in five minutes.

PUBLIC PARTICIATION

Mr. Haste: We are again at the point in time for public participation. Is there anyone in the audience that would like to address the Board? (There was none.)

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. DiFrancesco that the Board adjourn.

Transcribed by: Richie Martz

Respectfully submitted,

Chad Saylor, Chief Clerk/Chief of Staff
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