

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE COUNTY
INDIGENT HOSPITAL & HEALTHCARE BOARD

February 23, 2010

This meeting of the Indigent Hospital & Healthcare Board was called to order on the above-cited date in the Legal Conference Room at the County Courthouse at approximately 10:15 a.m. by Vice Chair Virginia Vigil.

Roll was called and indicated the presence of a quorum with the following County Commissioners present:

Members Present:

Virginia Vigil, Vice Chair
Harry Montoya, Chair [10:45 arrival]
Mike Anaya
Kathleen Holian
Liz Stefanics [10:20 arrival]

Member(s) Excused:

None

Staff Present:

Roman Abeyta, County Manager
Rachel Brown, Deputy County Attorney
Steve Shepherd, Health & Human Services Division Director
Joseph Gutierrez, Community Services Director
Greg Smith, Healthcare Assistance Program Manager
Priscilla Vigil, Indigent Claims Investigator

Others Present:

Larry Martinez, HPPC
Rebecca Frankel, League of Women Voters

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion by Commissioner Holian, and second by Commissioner Anaya the agenda was unanimously [3-0] approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 26, 2010

Commissioner Holian moved approval and Commissioner Anaya seconded. The motion passed by unanimous [3-0] voice vote.

SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/31/2010

FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR FY 2010

Mr. Smith said there was nothing out of the ordinary to report for the fiscal year at this point.

- A. Comparison of FY 2009 to FY 2010 Claims**
- B. Sole Community Provider Hospital**
- C. Contracted Expenditures for FY 09 and FY 10**

Mr. Smith mentioned that the number of claims processed this year exceeds last year at this time; however, the claim dollar amounts were slightly down.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Potential changes to HAP (Healthcare Assistance Program) Rules & Regulations**

Mr. Smith said following a meeting with a few providers, staff developed a series of potential changes to reduce barriers to providers but primarily clients. The suggestions include:

- Clarify the definition of “resident” and remove the requirement of a social security number
- Eliminate or increase the amount of “liquid assets” an applicant can possess
- Extend the eligibility period from one year to two years for a claim
- Eliminate the requirement to have certain forms notarized
- Increase payment limits for non-sole community providers
- Adjust household income limits
- Extend time to submit claims for both non-SCPs and SCPs
- Open option for payment to private physicians or physician groups under certain circumstances

Remarking that the recommendations were just distributed, Commissioner Vigil recommended that the Commission review the suggestions for discussion and action at the next meeting.

Commissioner Stefanics said she attended the meeting with the primary care providers to ascertain why they were not billing and using available County Indigent Funds. One of the issues that the providers brought up was the amount of information they already collect for the federally qualified health centers for Medicare, Medicaid, and it was too burdensome. The idea was to utilize the information collected for other programs for the County’s funding. Stating the money was for the people of the community, Commissioner Stefanics said she really wanted to see it used.

According to the clinic representatives, it is easier to provide free services or use a sliding scale rather than produce the information required to obtain County indigent eligibility, stated Commissioner Stefanics.

Commissioner Vigil asked whether some of the changes could be administratively handled.

SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/31/2010

Regarding Project Access, Commissioner Vigil asked whether payments to private physicians would in any way conflict with that.

HPPC Chairman Martinez said the Project Access physicians are providing 10 percent pro bono care and are pressuring the labs and pharmacies to do the same. He said it was part of the Health Care Assistance Program.

Mr. Shepherd confirmed it was a separate program that he understood was under the auspice of the Medical Society.

Referring to the suggestions developed by staff, Mr. Shepherd said these items have been mentioned in years past as impediments to the system.

Commissioner Vigil said clearly the County wants the program to be more accessible and requested it be added to next month's agenda as an action item.

Commissioner Stefanics said the director of the Pecos clinic said they were unable to access County funds because the requirements were too onerous.

Mr. Smith said staff will work with the legal department to make sure the changes are within the Indigent Act rules and regulations.

Commissioner Holian said she understood from Ms. Frenkel that people could appeal to the Indigent Board for assistance. Mr. Smith said that is correct that an individual can appeal the Board's decision. He noted that in his tenure with the County there has never been an appeal request and in the past two years merely five recommendations for denial. He mentioned the length of the process and the effort made by staff to keep the bill from a collection agency. The denials were based on income and liquid assets.

Commissioner Stefanics said the Medicaid program has an estate recovery lien and she suggested the County insert something in the regulations to address an issue of that sort. She suggested that may be helpful in deterring people from duping the program.

Commissioner Vigil said she has been very concerned about the indigent burials and asked whether additional funds were available for that service. Mr. Smith said the indigent burial program is budgeted for \$10,000 and less than 45 percent has been used. By state statute the maximum the program can pay for a burial or cremation is \$600. The County's relationship with local funeral homes has been positive.

Commissioner Vigil said she was particularly concerned about the families that lack any resources for funerals.

B. UPDATE: Health Policy and Planning Commission

Larry Martinez, HPPC Chairman, stated that the Community Benefit Fund process continues and the review committee meets again this week to develop a recommendation. At the last HPPC Executive Committee a discussion ensued regarding the future of the HPPC in recognition of the Commission's challenge with the number of bodies it deals with. He said they are taking a proactive stance to continue to work with the Commission to help fulfill what the HPPC was established to do and to provide context with respect to the expenditure of public

SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/31/2010

dollars on public health issues.

With respect to behavioral health in the state, Mr. Martinez said OptumHealth New Mexico, the state's single entity for managing behavioral health funding, issued an RFA for organizations to serve as "core service" agencies. The responsibilities would include coordination of care and assuring an appropriate provider network. Local Collaborative I (Santa Fe, Los Alamos and Rio Arriba counties) will have one core service agency for children's services and two core service agencies will be selected for the adult services.

Commissioner Stefanics said she hoped the HPPC was staying apprised of the BCC's discussions specifically regarding modifications to advisory groups and the \$9 million budget deficit.

Mr. Martinez said the HPPC is mindful of the County's overall financial situation. With respect to the discussion regarding the restructuring the boards and commissions, he said they were not aware of that until recently. He said he received calls from concerned HPPC commissioners that the HPPC had been abolished.

Commissioner Stefanics said budget issues can be seen as an opportunity to rethink how to do things in terms of how we serve the County. She suggested HPPC look for links and collaborations with an eye toward reducing duplication.

Commissioner Stefanics asked where Santa Fe County was ranked in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Pew Charitable Trust report regarding national initiatives to advance policies that promote health. Mr. Martinez said an executive summary was circulating and the full report was available on the website.

Mr. Martinez assured the Commission that HPPC is acutely sensitive to duplication and staff resources. He mentioned the Food Policy Council and jail health services as examples.

Commissioner Vigil thanked Mr. Martinez and the HPPC for their efforts.

C. CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center

Mr. Smith informed the Board that Alex Valdez was not aware of the one-hour weather delay and was present earlier but had to leave to another engagement.

D. Matters from the Board

Commissioner Holian requested a history regarding the GRT that is used for the Indigent assistance program and a description of what those funds can be used for. She asked whether a mill levy property tax was available for indigent care and whether that be used as an additional funding source.

Commissioner Stefanics recalled that Finance Director Martinez discussed this item and perhaps it could be further discussed at the Commission's budget retreat.

Commissioner Vigil agreed the mill levy options were critical information for the Commission to understand. She asked Ms. Brown to research whether a mill levy requires a referendum.

referendum.

Commissioner Holian said she was not recommending a tax increase but rather a clear understanding of the Commission's options.

E. Approval of Indigent Hospital and County Healthcare Claims

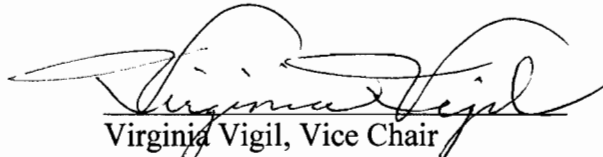
There were no issues that required meeting in executive session.

Commissioner Stefanics moved to approve 533 claims totaling \$428,435.06 as recommended by staff, and Commissioner Holian seconded. The motion passed by unanimous [5-0] voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

This meeting adjourned at approximately 10:50 a.m.

Approved by:


Virginia Vigil, Vice Chair
Board of County Commissioners


VALERIE ESPINOZA
COUNTY CLERK


Respectfully submitted by:


Karen Farrell, Wordswork

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

INDIGENT MINUTES
PAGES: 5

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 31ST Day Of March, 2010 at 03:45:43 PM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1594871
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County


Deputy _____
Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Valerie Espinoza
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM



SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/31/2010