

**MNH Delegation Subcommittee**  
**March 13, 2015**  
**Cheshire County Courthouse**  
**Commissioners Meeting Room - 10:00AM**  
**Keene, New Hampshire**

Present were: Subcommittee Members Representative John Mann, Chairman; Representatives John Bordenet, Cynthia Chase, Jim McConnell, Tim Robertson, Commissioners Stillman Rogers, Chairman; Charles Weed; Asst. County Administrator Rod Bouchard, MWNH Administrator Kathryn Kindopp,  
Absent were: Representatives Abbott, Ames, Berch, and Emerson

Chairman Mann opened the meeting at 10 a.m. by distributing a copy of items to address at this meeting.

His first question was as to the objectives of the Subcommittee, starting with addressing the question of what are we providing to whom, and why?

The first item discussed was a schedule for visits to other nursing facilities. The Commissioners are scheduling visits for the subcommittee to a facility in Cohoes, NY, in early April (to be arranged) and to Merrimack County, and Carrol County, NH, on March 20, 2015.

Rep. Mann distributed a list of websites for Green House Model Facilities to members and suggested they peruse them for comparisons and analyses.

Discussion among subcommittee members centered on possible alternative actions (e.g. Compendium), the efficiency of various directions, Green House, sale outright, subcontract to another provider, rehab existing.

Representative McConnell stated that only rough cost estimates regarding work on rehabilitating MWNH are available and to make an intelligent decision solid numbers would be needed.

Representative Mann, as a Delegate, agreed.

Commissioner Rogers added to the discussion that previous County Administrator Wozmak had obtained estimated numbers from MacMillan Company. He said there was a cost estimate for building a Green House Model complex and that Jack Dugan, MEDC, used 'rough figures' based on original cost estimates, depending on various types.

Rep. Bordenet stated his concern, asking about the 'tipping point', the exact criteria triggering ADA enforcement. This has bearing on costs and on conditions that may be 'grandfathered' at MWNH as it exists.

Commissioner Rogers mentioned the bathrooms, the size of rooms, wheelchair access. He stated that it would cost \$17M to change the existing plumbing, perhaps \$20M while yet maintaining 2 person rooms.

Rep. McConnell said that in regard to the profile of needy patients, in the future we may have to alter the criteria as to limits of service, referencing the limit of 500 lbs. being reduced to 350 lbs. thus making it possible to operate more efficiently.

Rep. Mann suggested that renovation options be imaginative and creative. His example: Windows that are too low could possibly have a barrier like a handrail placed across them, rather than be reconstructed. (See attached Agenda 13 March)

Rep. Robertson said that the county has historically limited projects to local bidding and local estimating, and in this case has only spoken with MacMillan. He suggests getting bids, estimates from outside companies as well, working more on a competitive basis to get the best prices. A discussion between Rep. Robertson and Commissioner Rogers led to the Commissioner agreeing to expand their research of estimates to other sources.

Chairman, Rep. Mann asked the members to consider setting a plan for the next 2 meetings. He proposed a 'grouping' approach. For example, two members would work on researching a specific topic then report to the entire subcommittee. The members present agreed to this and Rep. Mann will coordinate assignments. Reps. Bordenet and McConnell volunteered to work on renovation "tipping points" that if exceeded would force upgrade to full ADA compliance.

At this point, Chairman Rep. Mann closed the meeting. (11:30 a.m.)

He then invited comments and questions from members of the Public in attendance.

Ernest Perham, Westmoreland, NH, asked: Of the Green House models existing, how many are County-owned, following that this question is related to the operating expense.

Rep. Mann answered that few Green House model facilities at best, are county-owned, and that they are usually operated by religious organizations, while some are of the Veterans' Administration.

Rep. Chase adds that there are two or three under construction currently that are of Veterans Administration operation.

Bob Brockman, Westmoreland, NH, expresses his agreement with Rep Robertson as to ways to expand bidding. He further states that many county residents are challenged to pay their taxes presently, narrowing their choices of lifestyle and quality of life.

Jeanette Hubert, Westmoreland, NH, expressed her appreciation to Rep. Mann for his fairness and consideration. She refers to a body of questions she had handed to the entire Delegation in the autumn and asks for more concrete numbers as to other alternatives to the MWNH.

William Staats, Westmoreland, NH, questions the franchise costs of the Green House model and he questions the wisdom of becoming part of a commercial network while remaining a service of the county.

Malia Boaz, Westmoreland, NH, stated that she understands the Green House proposed facility would be built to accommodate 150 beds, replacing 150 beds in the current facility. Is this efficient as we look to the future and possible increased need? (It is explained that the State of NH has a moratorium in effect, thus the 150 bed limit on our county nursing facility.) We should not consider this as an emergency now. Where are the youth? They are working hard to provide for families and pay taxes. They cannot take time to attend morning meetings.

Gina Cutler, Occupational Therapist, MWNH spoke to the lack of controlled environment at the nursing home; the effect of some of the physical features, shiny hallways, noise of many persons, summer heat. She maintains that MWNH isn't meeting the emotional needs of some patients or the safety needs of many.

She cited an example of a period of time when MW attempted to sort patients by need, but said it left them with too few available beds to meet the needs because they were keeping a section of beds open for specific need.

Some of the subcommittee members pointed out through discussion that this would not work in any type of facility due to the limit of 150 beds available to our county.

Bob England, retired physician, Keene, NH, spoke as to the benefits of the Green House model facility in regard to the reduced need for psychotropic meds, increase in vocal fluency and less tension. He held that in regard to future needs, the Green House models if built now could easily be added to in number in the future and said that they are 6-7 thousand square foot/\$1M each. (Editor Note: Pods actually average \$2M each).

E. Perham spoke to the availability of land on high ground adjacent to the current facility in Westmoreland that is certainly not in the flood plain.

Mike Forrest, reiterated the concern of limited accessibility at MWNH at various times of the year due to flooding and the low weight limit of the bridge on River Rd.

John Hoffman asked they keep in mind the people we attempt to serve, the preservation of integrity and dignity.

Points becoming repetitive, Chairman Rep. Mann closed the question/comment period. The next meeting will be on March 27, 2015, at 10 a.m., County Offices in the Cheshire County Courthouse, Keene, NH.