

Cheshire County Delegation
Maplewood Nursing Home Subcommittee
County Hall Building
Commissioners Conference Room
12 Court Street
November 13, 2015 – 10:00AM

Maplewood Nursing Home Subcommittee members; State Representatives Richard Ames, Paul Berch, John Bordenet, Daniel Eaton, John Mann, Jim McConnell, and Timothy Robertson

Staff: Commissioner Charles Weed, County Administrator Chris Coates, Sheryl Trombly, County Finance Director Asst. County Administrator Rod Bouchard, Maplewood Nursing Home Administrator Kathryn Kindopp;

Guests: Jonathan McCosh, Yvonne Goldsberry, and a number of observers from the public.

Chairman Mann opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and announced the agenda which was focused on the guest speakers, Jonathan G. McCosh, D.B.A. and Yvonne Goldsberry, PhD.

Jonathan G. McCosh is currently an Assistant Professor of Business Administration at Colby-Sawyer College. He has extensive experience in health care and previously was an Administrator at the New Hampshire DHHS working in rate setting and auditing.

Upon being introduced, Mr. McCosh commented that he finds Maplewood Nursing Home to be impressive, commending the staff on their quality and longevity of employment, the Administration, and the county's support.

He then recommended that Cheshire County "not build brand new, from scratch" as a solution to our nursing home questions. He added that to do that is cost prohibitive for the Cheshire taxpayers.

He based his recommendation on the circumstances surrounding the experience in Carroll County. He says that a county can spread the cost over a larger population is at an advantage, as in Merrimack County, but not in Cheshire. In speaking to the various types of nursing facilities, McCosh added that the Green House Model, while an innovative and appealing approach, was not a viable solution for Cheshire County.

He added that Green House Model homes require more land area to build, and cost more to operate due to increased staffing and maintenance required. While he recognizes the admirable features, he says Green House is more appropriate to Assisted Living facilities. He said that if Cheshire County decided to rehabilitate Maplewood Nursing Home it would be acceptable to move ahead now, but if a new build was decided upon, it would be very important to wait.

Rep. Eaton asked a question as to Federal emphasis in the future on home care vs. nursing home care. Mr. McCosh replied that home care is much less expensive. Nursing homes administer more acute care.

In response to a question from Rep. Berch regarding what McCosh would predict for future nursing care regulations, etc., it elicited a response from Mr. McCosh that he was told that an answer would be based on assumptions because of the indecision prevalent in the State at this time.

Rep. McConnell asked about the State cap on numbers of nursing home beds, to which McCosh gave a rundown of the action taken in the 1970s for the purpose of stemming the problem of rapid growth in number of nursing homes being established. At one time, the cap was out of effect and before it was restored, three facilities in NH increased bed numbers. Those facilities were north and west of Lake Winnepesaukee; however, Cheshire is under the 150 bed facility cap.

Rep. Berch asked a question concerning the trends in NH regarding staffing levels. McCosh said that it is more challenging now to get LNAs and that a future wage increase may have to be considered.

Administrator Coates asked if he had heard Mr. McCosh correctly in saying that Managed Care Organizations (MCO's) will receive monies from the State at the current rate of reimbursement and that the MCO's will then pay vendors with the money that is left after the MCO's subtract their charges. Coates said that the Medicaid reimbursement from the State does not cover Maplewood's expenses now and that when the Managed Care programs go into effect the Nursing Homes will be receiving even less reimbursement.

Yvonne Goldsberry was introduced. She was familiar with most of the members and the County employees and officials as she was most recently employed as the Vice President of Population Health and Clinical Integration at Cheshire Medical and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital in Keene.

Ms. Goldsberry is currently President of New Hampshire Endowment for Health, Inc. and was previously employed by the State of New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community and Public Health. Dr. Goldsberry is very knowledgeable in the area of Managed Care Organizations (MCO), Medicare and Medicaid.

Ms. Goldsberry, a former member of the Maplewood Nursing Home Task Force, said that she has a bias for the Green House Model as she believes it is a superior type of nursing facility. She added that she sees it as a benefit that the subcommittee is not committed to a timeline, giving more time for investigation of alternatives and learning. She pointed out that reimbursement rates are part of Legislative action on long term care and nursing services within a Managed Care Organization contract and said that there have been no decisions made yet as to rates and application for MCOs.

County Administrator Coates added that the rate of MCO's contracts and Legislative rates are to be determined by the Legislature. The MCO might ask for rates based on needs, but the Legislature sets the rates. The MCO's are then held to meeting the defined expectations and more closely defining needs. In NH, there are two MCO providers; NH Healthy Families and Well Sense Health.

Coates said that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently posted a new ruling that Assisted Living Facilities (ALF) can no longer be on the same campus as a Nursing

Home. He said that the Maplewood Nursing Home Administrator, Kathryn Kindopp and the Director of Finance, Sheryl Trombly are working with other County Nursing Homes to have the State apply for a waiver that would grandfather Maplewood to be able to retain its current ALF operation in Westmoreland but potentially not in Keene if a new facility is constructed.

Questions about pending regulations were discussed and the general consensus was that insurance coverages, MCO's operations, Medicaid, and Medicare, are in a state of flux making it very difficult to determine future needs.

Ms. Goldsberry encouraged the subcommittee members to reach out to her with future questions. Her contact information is found at the New Hampshire DHHS web site.

Administrator Coates informed the members that the EGA contract was to be complete and delivered to the County officials on January 20, 2016. It was decided to set a tentative date of January 29, 2016, at 10 a.m., to be confirmed, for presentation by EGA of their contract to the Subcommittee.

Rep. Eaton moved to adjourn, seconded by Rep. McConnell. Committee members voiced unanimous consensus and the meeting was adjourned at 11:30AM.