

Town of Guilford, Connecticut

31 Park Street, Guilford, CT 06437

02-02-10

**TOWN OF GUILFORD
EFFICIENCY TASK FORCE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 2, 2010
7:00 P.M. – GUILFORD TOWN HALL**

Present: Martha Carlson, Mike Dowley, Jim Galvin, Chairman Gary Gilbert, Mark

Matlosz

Selectman Charles Havrda, Lyne Landry, Youth and Family Services
Roberts

Director, Dr. Armand Fusco and David

- **7:00 p.m.~~~~~~ Call to order**

Mr. Gilbert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- **7:01 – 7:05 p.m. Approval of minutes of the January 27, 2010 meeting.**

Motion: Upon a motion by Mr. Dowley, and seconded by Mr. Galvin, the Efficiency Task force voted to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2010 minutes.

Approve: Carlson, Dowley, Galvin, Gilbert, Matlosz

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

- **7:05 – 7:30 p.m.~~~~~~ ~Discuss progress on personnel forms, organizational charts, data collection**

Mr. Dowley met with Human Resources Director Mitch Goldblatt to go over the job descriptions and organizational charts. Mr. Dowley expressed his appreciation for Mr. Goldblatt's time and willingness to work with the Task Force to update these items. Mr. Dowley made the following suggestions:

- Update the content of the job descriptions for accuracy
- Remove extraneous job descriptions
- Match job descriptions to org charts, create one master org chart to be placed at the beginning of the job description manual, and number each department on the org chart to match the corresponding detailed departmental org chart and job descriptions.
- Include more detail under supervisory duties, using some of the older job descriptions as a template.
- Update job descriptions every five years

The org charts should have a higher level of detail to include things like labor grade, step and hours worked. Currently the job descriptions are arranged in department order according to the budget. Cost centers belonging to one organization should be listed under that organization. The organization itself should drive the presentation of the budget and budget codes, not the other way around. Instead, the cost centers should be lumped under an organization. The budget should be lined up according to the org chart and not the other way around.

Ms Carlson suggested using VISIO software as an aid in creating the org charts. Once they have been created, it should be up to the department heads to keep them updated.

A question was raised as to why some employees work 35 hours and others work 40 hours. Ms Carlson noted that although it would be difficult to increase all employees to a 40 hour work week without an increase in pay, having all employees work 40 hours could be a potential efficiency.

Mr. Dowley also suggested that an anti-nepotism policy be implemented going forward. Current employees could be exempt.

The Task Force expressed the importance of creating one overall org chart as soon as possible. It will be difficult to move forward without that information. Mr. Dowley was pleased with Mr. Goldblatt's level of cooperation. He taught Mr. Dowley a great deal about the vagaries of municipal government. He was surprised to learn that it is much more complex than a large corporation.

Ms Carlson is aware of 6-7 org chart models she could suggest that may be helpful. She also inquired about the status of the employee handbook update. That update has been delayed due to work being done on the budget. Ms Carlson will forward an electronic copy of the State's employee handbook for the Task Force members to review before the next meeting.

The Task Force asked Mr. Havrda about the status of the implementation of employee evaluations. He has spoken with Mr. Mazza on this, and is aware that the Task Force would like to move forward. Currently all efforts are focused on the budget, but Mr. Havrda will inform Mr. Mazza that the Task Force feels this is an important issue and would like to have a timeline in place and need Mr. Mazza's support to move forward.

The Task Force would like to make clear that the requests they have made of the Human Resources Director will make his job easier in the long term. It will provide him with the proper tools to do his job.

• **7:20 – 8:05 p.m.~~~~~ Discussion with Lyne Landry, Director of Youth and**

Family Services

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The Task Force stated that the Youth and Family Services Board members provided them with a good overview of the services the department provides, and they asked Ms Landry to explain her duties.

Ms Landry's job is to oversee the entire Youth & Family Services (Y&FS) department, which was created in the 1970's. One of the biggest misconceptions about the Y&FS department is that the only services they provide are clinical. In reality, one-third of what they do is clinical, and two-thirds is prevention based. Ms Landry oversees the Clinical Director, and oversees the prevention programs in the schools. She manages the department's budget, oversees billing, and writes grants to apply for funds to provide extra activities. She does a yearly personnel evaluation of all of her employees, which she did in her previous position as a non-profit administrator.

Ms Landry addressed a misconception that she spends 50% of her time doing billing. That is not the case. When the department was transitioning to a new billing system, she felt it was important to learn the system.

Ms Carlson asked for a sense of what the budgeted costs for clinicians was as compared to the department's revenue. Ms Landry responded that this is a difficult question because not all of a clinician's time is billable. The approximate budget for salaries is \$180,000, which includes a clinical director, two social workers, one and one-half full time employees and a psychiatrist to oversee clients' medications. Last year's revenue was \$83,399, which covered approximately 46% of salaries.

In response to a question from Mr. Gilbert, Ms Landry explained that there is a Clinical Director who oversees the clinical staff, and a Program Director who oversees prevention based staff and programs. A director acts as a manager.

Ms Carlson asked about the HUSKY program. Approximately 41% of patients have Anthem; the percentage on HUSKY is lower. Y&FS does not enroll clients in the HUSKY program, the Social Services Department does that. Most clients are referred either by family members, the police department, or the schools. A few are walk-ins. Due to a variety of factors, including a rise in divorce rates, the department has been experiencing an increasing need for their services There is an increase in the number of clients who qualify for HUSKY

as well.

Mr. Gilbert asked why the clinical services are not outsourced. Ms Landry explained that many private clinicians do not take HUSKY patients, and it can be difficult to find clinicians who take any third party reimbursement at all. The department provides a vital function and services a growing and urgent need. Staff members who provide prevention services are not equipped to provide clinical service. Services including substance abuse counseling and psychotherapy have been provided for many years, the only recent change is the third party billing. Prevention and intervention programs are both needed, they go hand in hand. Every Youth Service Bureau in Connecticut has a clinical component; the differences are the billing component.

The department does make referrals to other agencies such as Harbor Health, Clifford Beers and a day program in Branford. If a permanent need evolves or if a person needs services beyond those the department can provide, they will refer the patient elsewhere. The reason that the department uses the services of a psychiatrist v. an APRN is that the department could not find an APRN at the time they needed to hire someone.

Billing was instituted in about 2004, when the Board of Selectmen asked the department to investigate ways to generate revenue. Mr. Dowley asked if third party billing met the original expectations. Ms Landry responded that the original projections were unrealistic and were based on an old formula. A realistic revenue projection would be \$83,000 annually. With the recent upgrade in software, the department can track more realistic numbers.

The current caseload maximum is 65 clients. On average, the department receives \$64.00 from HUSKY, \$72.00 from Anthem and \$5.00 from CIGNA for every session billed. Five or six clients currently have no insurance and pay \$25.00 - \$30.00 per session, and two clients pay nothing. An outside, private clinician would not have a sliding fee scale and would not accept patients who could not afford to pay anything.

Ms Landry explained that not all the hours a clinician works are billable. Time is spent charting and documenting as well. In a forty hour week, a clinician may spend approximately fifteen to sixteen hours with clients. Only those fifteen to sixteen hours would be billable. The average length of treatment can range from six months to two years. Ms Carlson stated that she was unaware that the department provided long term care, she thought they only did crisis intervention. As an example, Ms Landry noted that after being discharged from the hospital, a suicidal patient may be treated by the Y&FS staff.

In order to bill insurance, medical need must be determined, and the insurance provider must authorize treatment. HUSKY generally authorizes 20 visits inside a year.

Mr. Galvin asked about grants that the department applies for. Last year they received a \$6,250 grant from Workforce Alliance, and grants of \$6,000 and \$5,000 each for summer programs. A grant from the State Education Department pays for a musical put on by and for children.

Mr. Galvin also asked about the performance evaluations Ms Landry does. She provides a copy to the employee, and a copy is sent to Human Resources. This is a practice she took upon her self for documentation purposes. It was rarely done by her predecessors.

The Task Force asked about the Y&FS organization chart. Ms Landry keeps one on file which she created by utilizing Microsoft Word.

Ms Carlson asked about the billing software. The department hopes to be able to do online charting this spring. A consultant has been helping to train the billing coordinator. Since the current billing coordinator was transferred from another Town Hall department and therefore had no prior billing experience, training has taken a lot of time. Mr. Dowley asked if the department could at some point wean away from the consultant. The goal is to eventually have the consultant review the department records once a year for audit purposes. It is cost effective to have the consultant address any possible issues prior to a Medicaid audit.

Mr. Gilbert asked about the feasibility of merging the ambulance and Y&FS billing. Ms Landry stated the two types of billing are completely different, it would be like comparing apples to oranges, or comparing the services of a chiropractor to a gynecologist. Y&FS records need to be secure, private, and HIPPA compliant. They are dealing with children and mental health issues. An ambulance run is a one time fixed cost and does not require a diagnosis or medical coding. The Ambulance Department does not have to prove medical need. The amount of interfacing between the staff and charts would make it inefficient to have the records stored offsite.

In response to a question regarding efficiencies, Ms Landry stated that not all departments have the same IT software, which creates inefficiencies. It would also have been helpful to have a billing coordinator with medical experience.

The Task Force thanked Ms Landry for her time.

- **8:05 p.m. – 8:45 p.m. Presentation - Dr. Armand Fusco and David Audit Committee**

**Roberts – concepts of Citizens**

Mr. Roberts introduced himself as a member of POAG, the Property Owners Association of Guilford. He was pleased to see how quickly First Selectman Mazza followed through on his campaign promise to create this Task Force. He hopes the Task Force and Citizens Audit Committee will be able to achieve common goals.

Dr. Fusco introduced himself as a former school superintendent and has established 14 citizen audit committees throughout the state, as well as one in Massachusetts. He does research on the internet and reviews audit reports from other states. Through line item comparisons, a citizens audit group in Redding, CT made recommendations to cut 10% off the Town budget and 18% from the school budget.

He distributed a report to the Task Force which outlined three sections:

- Issues to be considered
- Opportunities to look at
- Actionable recommendations

He spoke to the fact that the Town does not have any policy manuals. Having policies in place prevents problems, and policies need to be monitored so nothing slips through the cracks. He also stated that fiscal audits do not always find problems, but fraud audits can be very beneficial.

- Check registers and credit card statements are extremely useful in detecting fraud.
- Are bidding and quoting policies being followed, and is there punishment, are there consequences?
- Asset management should be studied, as assets walk away on a regular basis
- Cell phone and vehicle usage should be studied
- Staffing should be studied. There should be a policy that no vacant position be filled for 90 days to allow time for an independent study to justify the necessity of the position.
- Best practices should be established for all operational areas

He stated that a large problem is that towns and schools don't know how to assemble data that has been collected so that it is useful. Efficiencies include effectiveness and economy.

The Town and Schools should work together, utilizing one Finance manager and one facilities manager.

He suggested that a permanent audit committee be created with 12-18 members, and Ad hoc Committees be utilized to study specific areas such as technology. Communication and coordination with the public and other organizations is important.

Mr. Dowley asked if there is any comparative literature within the 169 towns in the State as to structure, size, and population. Dr. Fusco stated that GASB (Government Accounting Standards Board) may have some information

Mr. Matlosz & Mr. Havrda asked, of the 14 towns with citizen audit committees, how many implemented the suggestions. Only Enfield has done so. Have any of the suggestions made by the Committee in Redding had been implemented? There has been resistance to their suggestions according to Dr. Fusco.

Ms Carlson asked about the structure and membership of the Guilford Citizens Audit group. It is an all volunteer group and the chairman is Nils Dailey. They recently added 5 new members.

Nationally, school corruption is pervasive, and Dr. Fusco has written a book on the subject. The Audit Committee is not looking for corruption. They want the town and schools to be their best by implementing best practices. Investigative work should be done in a one on one setting; it cannot be done in public.

The Task Force thanked Dr. Fusco and Mr. Roberts for their time and willingness to share their information.

**6.~ 8:45 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. New Business**

The Task Force will invite Library Director Sandra Ruoff, and a member of her staff if she wishes, to their next meeting.

Mr. Galvin reported that he will be meeting with Human Resources Director Mitch Goldblatt to review Worker's Compensation.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Quercia, Clerk