

VALLEY HI COMMITTEE
McHenry County – Valley-Hi Nursing Home
2406 Hartland Road
Woodstock IL 60098

MINUTES OF THURSDAY, JULY 24, 2008

Chairman Zierer called the Valley Hi Committee meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. The following Committee Members were present: Mary Lou Zierer, Chairman; Mary McCann; James Heisler; James Kennedy; and Dan Shea. Ed Dvorak and Pete Merkel were absent. Also in attendance: Pete Austin, County Administrator; John Hadley, Facilities Management; Richard Yerian, Valley Hi Administrator; Pam Shumway, Valley-Hi Consultant, Representatives from Revere Healthcare, interested public, residents, and the press.

	Mary Lou Zierer, Chairman
Ed Dvorak	James Heisler
James Kennedy	Mary McCann
Pete Merkel	Dan Shea

MINUTES

Committee members reviewed the committee minutes for June 12, 2008. Mr. Shea made a motion, seconded by Mr. Heisler, to recommend approval of the minutes as presented. The minutes were approved with all members present voting aye.

PRESENTATIONS

Committee members were introduced to the new Valley Hi Administrator, Mr. Robert (Bob) Yearian. Mr. Yearian has been on site for approximately two weeks and is still adjusting and learning about Valley Hi. He seems to be a good positive fit for Valley Hi. Chairman Zierer stated she hopes he is successful and gets the support he needs to be successful. Since Mr. Yearian lives outside the area he is renting a house in Marengo during the week in order to be closer to the nursing home. Mr. Yearian's resume is available for review. He has drafted a letter for the families and Board members to introduce himself. He will be attending the Morning County Board meeting in August in order to introduce himself to the board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Pat Biestek addressed committee members and welcomed Mr. Yearian, though she stated she is suspicious of any Revere personnel. She noted that when Revere Healthcare was hired Mr. Austin stated that the County would save money. The move to hire Revere Healthcare was only approved by one vote. She noted that Mr. Austin required that the nursing staff hours be changed from a four day work week to a five day work week at which time 7 nurses quit and one retired early. She noted that the plans do not seem to be working. She stated she feels that Revere does not seem to be a good fit and has been a bad investment for the County and she is hopeful that the County gets out of the Revere contract very soon. She stated in the 17 ½ years she was employed with the County this company seems to have the worse track record of any former Administrator of Valley Hi. She feels that Revere hired an incompetent Administrator and Director of Nursing who has no experience in the Nursing Home industry. Committee members responded that a new Administrator has been hired, that has over 20 years of experience and the decisions being made will be revisited. Staff will be included in decisions being made and complaints can be turned in to County Board members to get addressed.

NEW BUSINESS

Update-Director of Nursing Position: Committee members were informed that Ms. Diane Christenson has been hired as the new Director of Nursing for Valley Hi. She has a great deal of clinical experience. An Assistant Director of Nursing, Sue Burke, has also been hired and she will be helping with the clinical training for the nurses. During the interview process this skilled individual was found to fill this position as well. She will start in September. She will be in charge of the nursing training as well as help with the training of Medicare nursing. This will be discussed further at the August 14th meeting.

Discussion – Dietary Service: Committee members entered into discussion with the dietary consultant from Revere to receive an update from the previous committee meeting. She has been reviewing the food service operations for Revere. Valley Hi has a new menu which they are in the process of implementing. New products have to be ordered to fill the menu needs. The products have been upgraded. When food is being ordered, they have various levels of products. They have upgraded the foods being bought for the facility. They are training staff on the new menu and recipes. The staff hasn't followed the required recipes in the past, so they are in the process of providing the needed training. The dietary consultant has reviewed the menu and found them nutritious. The staff is also creating an alternate menu for those not liking the regular menu. The alternate menu will be changed based on the season and the foods available. The kitchen staff is now full with the last hire starting at the end of the month. She stated that it takes time to train the staff correctly and it is hopeful that this will be a smooth process. The Monday Morning Chats are still being held in order to address any outstanding issues. No one showed up for the last chat session so it is hopeful that the resident's complaints are being addressed. The dining room issues will continue to be monitored. Mr. Yearian noted that there were a lot of issues that needed to be addressed, but, it seems they are now on the right track with the complaints being addressed. When a resident is interviewed, prior to admission, they are asked what their likes and dislikes are so that alternates can be offered when needed. The aids are helping the residents with their choices. Chairman Zierer noted that she had received four (4) calls with complaints about the food and they noted that it does not help to complain to Revere Staff because they don't help with the complaints. It was noted that staff will continue to monitor the issue, they will continue with their Monday Morning Chats and have made dietary a priority and will continue to move forward on the food issues.

Committee members questioned why food costs were adjusted from the previous month. They noted that the costs should be going down and it shows they are increasing. Staff noted they will check the reports and bring them back for committee review. Agency staff use in the kitchen has decreased and the residents are now being served by Valley Hi staff. It was noted that the Financial Statement will be reviewed next month and it will show committee members where Valley Hi stands financially.

Valley Hi Family Group: The Social Service Director is scheduling a Family Group meeting which will give the family members a chance to address management in a meeting format. This will give Valley Hi the opportunity to educate the families on the different issues surrounding long term care. A different topic will be discussed each month on aging and will also be a tool to measure acceptability of the changes being made at the facility. Chairman Zierer requested that information for this meeting be provided to committee members as some of the members may want to attend these meetings. They noted that the meeting has tentatively been set for September 13th and committee members would be informed of the time schedule.

Review of Emergency Plan: Mr. Labaj will attend a future meeting to bring back the emergency plan for review. When the facility was moved into, the emergency plan was created, based upon the blueprints for the facility. Now that the facility is operational and we have a sense of how the facility works we want to make sure the plan is okay for the facility. This will be placed on the August agenda for review.

Illinois Nursing County/Public Nursing Home Rates: Mr. Adam Lehmann presented committee members a Rate Comparison chart for county owned and private nursing homes. He noted that it is not easy to make comparisons because of the different levels of care. Generally all of the rates are higher than the Valley Hi rates. This gives the committee members a sense that the previously proposed increase increments should be moved forward. He noted that all nursing homes are increasing their rates in the State. Committee members thanked Mr. Lehmann for the information.

Committee members noted that in last Summer's audit it was suggested the County charge for oxygen as a way to increase revenue. It was noted that this is not being done at this time because of storage issues. This issue will be reviewed again in September.

Update on Medicare beds: Committee members were informed that a letter has been received confirming that Valley Hi Nursing Home is now 100% Medicare approved. This designation will allow residents to "keep" their bed space if they should have to be transferred to hospital for a period of time. When the new facility was moved into, there were only 10 Medicare designated beds. The facility has been approved for 128 Medicare beds.

Update on IGT: Committee members were informed that the State issues continue with nothing significant to report at this time. It is important to continue to follow this issue.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Zierer addressed the committee regarding copies of bills in the amount of \$6,541 she had obtained from Revere for services up and above their contract. She stated that she feels some of these expenses should be covered under their \$270,000 contract. She stated that she did not know about added expenses for personnel and mileage for persons hired by Revere and when they were interviewed they gave the wrong impression. Mr. Austin replied that he is responsible for reviewing and approving any invoices received from Revere and these expenses are part of the benefit of hiring experts to fix the issues at Valley Hi, which comes at a cost. Hopefully, most of the costs already seen during the restructuring of the facility should taper off and if Board Members were not clear of what the contract included he apologized. Chairman Zierer stated that she didn't know that mileage costs would be so high and she should have been made aware of the additional costs to the contract and she expected to have a better facility and thought they would be saving money, not costing more. It was noted that one of the discussions for the August Valley Hi meeting will be for the committee to discuss what is the value of the Revere contract. With the facility now having the beds Medicare Certified, the hiring of a Director of Nursing, and with hopes the food costs will decrease because of less waste, it is hopeful that costs for the facility will start decreasing. Mr. Austin noted that he thinks we are making progress but unfortunately the progress has been slower than anticipated. Now that the management issues have been addressed it is hopeful that we can now move forward to seeing a decrease in costs for the facility.

REPORTS TO COMMITTEE, AS APPLICABLE

Financial Report: Next month.

Administrators Report: Mr. Yearian requested direction from committee members on what they would like to see on the monthly report. Committee members noted they would like information on how the facility is on the employee count for nurses and review of the monthly income statement. Committee members were informed they are currently working on some referrals for residents for the facility. They were informed that Valley Hi would never have a full facility because of "isolation" issues that may exist. With the facility receiving the Medicare Bed status, this will be an easier issue to address. Chairman Zierer noted that she has received a call regarding information on a possible admission. Committee members were informed that if they receive any calls regarding an admission to the facility to have them call the admissions office as they would first have to complete an "assessment" to see if the facility would be able to meet the needs of the patient.

Committee members were informed that the "State" has come into the facility for a revisit on a previous complaint they received. The facility has been given a clearance and is in compliance. There is an outstanding issue that may still need to be addressed regarding the requirements to have the outside entryways "sprinkled". The county is appealing this request, but, may still have to have the sprinklers installed. This would cost between \$25,000 and \$30,000. Committee members questioned how the facility could be given the clearance to open if it did not meet the requirements of the State. They were informed that it is because of the different interpretations of the code, but, the sprinkler issue is the only outstanding issue that remains.

Resident Council: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Kennedy made a motion, seconded by Ms. McCann to enter into executive session, at 9:35a.m. to discuss personnel. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a roll call vote (Heisler, Kennedy, McCann, Shea, Zierer)

Mr. Shea made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to return to regular session at 9:55a.m. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a roll call vote (Heisler, Kennedy, McCann, Shea, Zierer)

Chairman Zierer noted that there was no action taken during the executive session.

Mr. Heisler suggested that at a future committee meeting, that will be held in the Valley Hi facility, that the members meet at the facility and receive a sample of the foods being served to the residents. He stated then they could see for themselves what the complaints are about. Staff noted they would check to see if this would be possible.

FUTURE TOPICS

- Emergency Plan
- Update on IGT
- Oxygen Storage
- Discuss the value of the Revere Contract
- Update on Financial Report

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Shea made a motion, seconded by Ms. McCann to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

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