

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113  
THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2000  
8:15 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair  
Larry Hudkins  
Linda Steinman  
Bernie Heier  
Bob Workman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Dave Johnson, Deputy County Attorney  
Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk  
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy County Clerk  
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1 APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2000**

**MOTION:** Heier moved and Steinman seconded to approve the Staff Meeting minutes dated May 4, 2000. Steinman, Hudkins, Workman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- A. Excellence in Health Care Trust Grant Application
- B. Pancake Feed to Support the Norris Drug-Abuse-Resistance-Education (D.A.R.E.) Program

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Steinman seconded to approve the additions to the agenda. Steinman, Hudkins, Workman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**3     **AMBULANCE SERVICE** - Natalie Olson, Executive Director of the Lancaster County Medical Society; Dr. Dan Noble, Lancaster County Medical Society; Doug Ahlberg, Emergency Management Director; Joe Hampton, Former City Council Member**

Dr. Dan Noble, Lancaster County Medical Society, said his organization has continued to emphasize the need to maintain standards to insure the best possible patient care and the need for independent medical oversight in discussions of ambulance service. He noted that oversight that is independent of the providing service is recommended by the American Ambulance Association. Noble said Dr. Joseph Stothert, Medical Director for the Omaha Fire Department, who testified at the April 24<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting, is a city employee and reports directly to the Omaha Mayor and Fire Chief. He remarked that it is difficult to criticize superiors in this type of relationship.

Natalie Olson, Executive Director of the Lancaster County Medical Society, explained that EMS Inc., which was created through City ordinance to provide medical oversight of the EMS system, is independent of the providers. She said Dr. Reckaway, Medical Director, is employed by EMS Inc.

Noble added that the Medical Directions Board, a subcommittee of the Lancaster County Medical Society that approves the protocols and standards for the EMS system, is comprised of 15 physicians with sub-specialties which adds to the medical oversight.

Olson said the ordinance that created EMS Inc. requires the City to contribute towards its funding, up to an amount of \$100,000 per year. She said this funding was cut back to \$55,000 last year.

The Board requested a history of City's funding.

In response to a question from Steinman, Olson said members of the EMS Inc. Board are appointed by the Mayor, with the advise and consent of the City Council.

Noble reviewed the Lancaster County Medical Society's proposal to change the current system of appointment, making all appointments subject to the approval of the Lancaster County Medical Society (LCMS) Board, and to increase the size of the Board of Directors from seven to nine members, to be comprised of two LCMS member physicians, two individuals nominated by the Mayor and approved by the City Council, one individual appointed by the County Board of Commissioners, one representative from Bryan LGH Medical Center, one representative from Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center and two individuals from the community. The proposal also includes review and approval of bylaws and changes to bylaws by the LCMS Board.

In response to a question from Steinman, Olson said community representatives would initially be appointed by the LCMS Board. She added that this proposal was based on the model for the Community Blood Bank.

Steinman said the proposed system of appointment is a sticking point for several members of the County Board and asked whether the Lancaster County Medical Society would oppose a method of appointment by the elected officials.

Olson said the proposal was in response to a request from the City and may be modified.

Campbell suggested creation of a body, such as the District Energy Corporation, that is self-perpetuating in nature. She said the Lancaster County Medical Society (LCMS) could assist with criteria for appointment to that Board and requested that some research be done in this area.

Noble said LCMS does not have a vested interest in approving appointments and is primarily concerned that the Board be broad-based and maintain some independence from City and County so that they can make the appropriate decisions on patient care. He added that it would be beneficial for LCMS to maintain an advisory role.

Olson said the Request for Information (RFI) does not mention independent medical oversight. She said Mayor Wesely and City Fire Chief Michael Spadt have indicated support of the concept, but a mutually agreed upon definition is lacking.

Workman said it is his understanding that the City wants to secure a new provider before dealing with the oversight issue.

Brief discussion took place on the issue of paramedics, with Noble stating medical providers are already seeing some negative impacts from having too many paramedics in the community. He said LCMS is concerned that if the Fire Department is awarded the contract and is allowed to have their own Medical Director, this problem will increase.

Olson remarked that there is a crucial difference between experience and proficiency.

Joe Hampton, former City Council member, said the key word is control and the Fire Department has demonstrated resistance to EMS Inc. directives. He said the Fire Department plans to add 26 positions, if awarded the contract, which will have a major budget impact for the City and County. Hampton added that the County Board has a responsibility to look after the welfare of its constituents, 90 percent of which reside within the City of Lincoln.

Eagan said the County has not been involved in ambulance service or oversight, up to this point. He also indicated that there may be new restrictions on the ability of ambulance service providers to recover fees that are not covered by Medicare.

Campbell noted that the 17 rural fire districts are not in agreement on the provider issue. She said that the County Board will recommend that there be an agreement between the ambulance service provider and the rural fire districts.

In response to a question from Doug Ahlberg, Emergency Management Director, Noble said Dr. Reckeway's selection as Medical Director was based on a recommendation from the Lancaster County Medical Society. He said emergency medicine experience is crucial for this position.

Olson added that qualifications for this position were established by the EMS Inc. Board.

**4 LABOR NEGOTIATIONS** - Georgia Glass, Personnel Director; John Cripe, Classification and Pay Manager; Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney

**MOTION:** Workman moved and Hudkins seconded to enter Executive Session at 9:22 a.m. for discussion of labor negotiations. Workman, Hudkins, Steinman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** Steinman moved and Heier seconded to exit Executive Session at 9:47 a.m. Steinman, Heier, Workman, Hudkins and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**5 SALARY FOR CAPTAIN OWEN YARDLEY; SERGEANT POSITION FOR JUSTICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER - Terry Wagner, Lancaster County Sheriff; Bill Jarrett, Chief Deputy Sheriff**

Salary for Captain Owen Yardley

Terry Wagner, Lancaster County Sheriff, reported that Captain Stephen Gates will retire from the department, effective May 17<sup>th</sup>. He said Sergeant Owen Yardley will be promoted to Captain, effective May 18<sup>th</sup> and requested that his salary be set at \$53,500.

**NOTE:** The Board will taken action to set the salary for this position at the May 16<sup>th</sup> County Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Sergeant Position for Justice and Law Enforcement Center

Wagner said the Special Services Division, which provides courtroom and building security for the Justice and Law Enforcement Center, has doubled in size. He said he has decided to promote one of the deputies in this division to the position of sergeant to assist with supervision, noting the Public Building Commission has agreed to fund the salary increase.

**6 TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT WITH JOHNSON HOME HEALTH CARE FOR RESPIRATORY CARE - Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator; John Cripe, Classification and Pay Manager**

Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator, presented copies of a letter from Johnson Home Health Care indicating a change in ownership and 30 day notice of contract termination for the respiratory care and a follow-up letter extending the date of termination to July 31, 2000 (Exhibit A).

Van Hunnik reported that Koley's Home Care, a sister company, had offered to assume the contract responsibilities, subject to County Board approval, but said it was his recommendation that the process be opened to bids.

**MOTION:** Steinman moved and Heier seconded to agree to the termination of the contract with Johnson Home Health Care for respiratory care, effective July 31, 2000 and to rebid the contract. Steinman, Heier, Workman, Hudkins and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**7 OVERTIME FOR REGISTERED NURSES** - Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator; John Cripe, Classification and Pay Manager; Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney

Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator, presented copies of a letter sent to Georgia Glass, Personnel Director, indicating that Lancaster Manor will cease paying overtime to registered nurses and requesting establishment of County Personnel Rules that will provide for 8-12 hour work shifts and 14 day, 80 hour work periods for registered nurses (Exhibit B).

John Cripe, Classification and Pay Manager, said the proposed changes will be presented to the Personnel Policy Board at their next meeting. He noted that Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, has been apprised of the proposed changes, but is not required to implement the same policy for registered nurses in that department.

**8 JUVENILE BOARDING CONTRACTS** - Juvenile Court Judge Tom Dawson; Juvenile Court Judge Toni Thorson; Lesli Lee, Juvenile Court Bailiff; Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer

Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, distributed the following materials (Exhibit C):

- *Lancaster County Boarding Contracts, Juvenile Court, FY86 to FY99 Actual Net Cost, FY00 Projected Based on Bills Paid - July to March*
- *Juvenile Court Boarding Contracts Costs for FY86 to FY01 (Graph)*
- *Boarding Contracts Paid 7/1/99 to 10/31/99*

Kroeker said an additional \$140,000 - \$150,000 is needed to pay boarding contract obligations through June 30, 2000.

Juvenile Court Judge Tom Dawson said there may be a slight reduction in that cost, as some bills won't be paid until the start of the next fiscal year.

Dawson estimated the cost of juvenile boarding contracts at \$689,000 for Fiscal Year 2001. He said the Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) has made an effort to become involved earlier in the placement process which has helped to reduce costs, however, the number of filings has increased.

Steinman reported that Lori Griggs, Chief Probation Officer in the Juvenile Division, will be working with the Assessment Center to provide alternatives to filing.

Juvenile Court Judge Toni Thorson, said the County Attorney's office makes the decision on whether to file. She added that a number of the filings are supplemental and due to extensive follow-up to see whether the offender has completed terms of probation or alternative program placement.

Thorson also stated the Juvenile Court Judges have concerns as to whether OJS has the resources, ability and will to find alternatives, if the initial placement plan does not work.

Dawson said OJS is limited by funding. He added that if proper treatment is not provided, youth are likely to re-offend and be returned to the court system.

Steinman said there are indications that the federal government will eliminate Medicaid funding for 4E placements (cases involving ungovernable youth), if the Juvenile Court is in disagreement with the Department of Health and Human Services.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Dawson said the Juvenile Court is responsible for placement decisions unless the youth is committed to OJS. At that point, OJS assumes responsibility and may adjust the plan without permission from the Court. He noted that the child has the right to object, which would bring the case back to the Juvenile Court.

Hudkins said it may be necessary to cap juvenile boarding costs next year.

Dawson responded that the Juvenile Court will make every attempt to stay within the budgeted amount. He said he is hopeful that the efforts made by OJS will continue and that the system will become more efficient.

Thorson added that the judges are trying to monitor the budget more carefully.

The Board requested data on the number of cases that were referred to OJS and brought back to the Court for an alternative solution.

Thorson noted that some of these youth may be moving into the adult system.

Heier asked whether the Court conducts an economic study of the family to determine whether the parents can contribute to the cost of out-of-home placement.

Dawson said most lack sufficient resources to assist in this cost. He noted, that he has ordered reimbursement of attorney fees in some cases, which is paid at the Clerk of the District Court's office.

The Board directed Kroeker to prepare a resolution for payment of the boarding contract cost adjustment for this fiscal year.

## **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

A. Excellence in Health Care Trust Grant Application (Exhibit D)

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Steinman seconded to authorize the Chair to submit a letter of support to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services for an application for Excellence in Health Care Grant Program funding of the Communities Helping Immigrants and Refugees Progress (CHIRP) Program. Hudkins, Steinman, Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

B. Pancake Feed to Support the Norris Drug-Abuse-Resistance-Education (D.A.R.E.) Program (Exhibit E)

Campbell, Heier and Workman indicated that they will attend.

## **9 CONSENT ITEMS**

A. Request from Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, to Attend Association of Government Accountants (AGA) Seminar on June 2, 2000 at the Cornhusker Hotel

**MOTION:** Steinman moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the Consent Item. Steinman, Hudkins, Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

## **10 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

A. Paving of Havelock Street East of 84<sup>th</sup> Street

Campbell reported that correspondence received from Jennifer Dam, Planning Department, indicates that the City is willing to proceed with annexation of the Lancaster County Agricultural Society Events Center property as proposed, provided access to Havelock Avenue is restricted to service vehicles until Havelock Avenue is paved (Commissioners' Information Packet).

The Board asked Don Thomas, County Engineer, to check on when annexation of the remainder of the Events Center property is anticipated.

B. Use of County Road Funds Inside Cities and Villages

Item deferred.



#### C. Letter from Firth Rural Fire District Board

The Board requested a copy of the record of the Firth Rural Fire District Board action on the matter.

#### D. Wilderness Park Bridge

Eagan reported that the City has awarded Backpack Bridges the contract to construct a tied arch bicycle/pedestrian bridge in Wilderness Park over Salt Creek. He added that the County has been added as an insured party on the contract.

#### E. Youth Detention Facility Update

Eagan reported receipt of a price quotation for a change in plumbing pipe. Hudkins reported that the fence that was removed along the State property line will be salvaged.

#### F. Lobbyist Contract

Eagan said Gordon Kissel, Legislative Consultant, has requested a two year contract, with a salary of \$36,000 for the first year and \$38,000 for the second year of the contract. He added that Kissel has agreed to bear all expenses.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Steinman seconded to accept the proposed contract terms and to proceed with development of a contract. Hudkins, Steinman, Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

#### G. Girls State - June 8, 2000

Steinman volunteered to meet with Girls State participants on June 8<sup>th</sup> from 2:45 to 3:45 p.m.

### **11 DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

#### A. District Energy Corporation - Heier, Hudkins

Hudkins reported that a final report on the State Capitol/State Office Building project was presented.

Heier said plans for a ground-coupled air conditioning system for the Airpark Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) were also discussed.

B. Monthly Meeting with Mayor Wesely - Campbell, Hudkins

Campbell and Hudkins reported that discussion focused on budget issues, with the Mayor noting concerns regarding health insurance and prisoner housing costs. The Mayor also indicated a request for two additional planners in the Planning Department, which has budget implications for the County.

C. Joint Budget Committee - Campbell, Steinman

Item deferred.

D. Public Building Commission - Campbell, Hudkins

Hudkins reported briefly on the dedication of the Lancaster County-City of Lincoln Government Center.

E. Board of Health - Hudkins

Hudkins reported that Dr. James Ganser and Betsy Palmer were elected Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.

**12 EMERGENCY ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

Board consensus to hold a Staff Meeting on Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> immediately following the Board of Commissioners Meeting.

**13 ADJOURNMENT**

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

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Bruce Medcalf  
Lancaster County Clerk