

The Legislature of Rockland County



ALDEN H. WOLFE
Vice Chairman
Legislator – District 6

Chair, Environmental Committee

MINUTES ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY JUNE 12, 2013 5:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

HON. A. WOLFE, CHAIR
HON. H. CORNELL, LEG. CHAIR
HON. T. EARL
HON. A. WIEDER
HON. C. CAREY

MEMBER ABSENT

HON. N. LOW -HOGAN
HON. F. SPARACO

OTHERS PRESENT

LEG. J. JOBSON
LEG. P. SOSKIN
E. YEGER ESQ.
K. HENRY
R. HANSEN
M. DONOGHUE
J. HUNDERFUND
O. ALLEYNE
G. TALAMINI
S. RUTLEGE
A. VAIDIAN

CHAIR WOLFE CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 5:36 PM

1. REF # 9481- DISCUSSION: OPERATIONAL REVIEW (DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS)
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.
(HON. ALDEN H. WOLFE LEGISLATURE)

DISCUSSED

ACTION: Chair Wolfe directed that a new referral be introduced as a discussion, which is to focus on the issue of exploring the hiring of a coder to maximize the billing in the Department of Health.

Chair Wolfe welcomed everyone for coming for the presentation - Department of Health Overview. Kathy Henry RN, MA, Acting Commissioner of Health, and Ron Hansen, MBA, Director of Fiscal Operations, gave the presentation. They discussed the Rockland County Department of Health Organization Chart, Department Snapshot, Budget History, Department Statistics, Grants, and Challenges. The mission of the Rockland County Department of Health is to promote and protect the health of our community. They envision a safe and healthy community in which to live, work and play where everyone has equal opportunity for a healthy productive life. They aim to make Rockland County the healthiest county in the nation.

Chair Wolfe stated that he appreciated all their hard work done throughout the years and that the presentation was right on target. He reviewed the strategic plan and thinks it's really wonderful. There are a couple of weakness and external opportunities or threats that you have identified that I want to explore in more detail including the problem you stated in your report that there is a disconnect between divisions, because of different locations.

Chair Wolfe asked if there is anything that we can do to help with that.

Mrs. Henry advised that currently there is two divisions of administration, patients services and environmental in building D. Public Health and social workers are in Building J. You may not know, but it is right up from building L. I have spoken over the years to Gerry Walsh and Bob Gruffi about the goal of us being all together. I hope and I think that it is a possibility to move into the Mental Health Department as it's shrinking so we could be on the same floor.

Chair Wolfe stated that I know that it has been an issue that comes up during our review of the hospital. Also, what challenges are you experiencing there?

Mrs. Henry said that there is a lack of technology, which is an issue. She advised that in the last year's budget to billing junctions from Hospitals, Mental Health and Health Department they are looking at how to improve with the sole purpose of improving billing. One of the discussion items to be presented in the 2014 budget is rearranging of some of those positions, including the hiring of a "Coder".

Chair Wolfe suggested that maybe by incorporating the emergency electronic medical recorder it would allow for better Medicaid surveillance.

Mr. Hansen said they started losing a lot of money, because they were taking care of the uninsured and the Medicaid patients.

Leg. Cornell congratulated Kathy Henry for the Smoking Sensation Program. The work that was done on that program, including the health education at schools is so important. All the work that has been done with the schools, with the children, the parents and the faculty is so very important.

MOTION TO ADJOURN 6:28 PM
CAREY/CORNELL

UNAN

Respectfully submitted,

Lesly Senatus, Committee clerk

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