

During the discussion of the health clinics, Mr. Greene stated that one of the possible alternatives being considered is expanding the Mary Castriotta Clinic at the Miller River apartments by building a second level at the site for approximately \$150,000.

Councillor Duehay stated he believed that many questions he had regarding the draft report went unanswered. He further stated that the city should be considering ways to change existing state regulations for health care delivery in an effort to mandate more cooperation between the Cambridge Hospital, Mt. Auburn Hospital and the Sancta Maria Hospital. He further stated that a model should be prepared representing what Cambridge believes all the area hospitals should be doing in terms of neighborhood health clinics and that model should be presented to the State Commissioner of Public Health.

Councillor Wolf stated that preparatory to the model being established, the hospital should conduct a needs assessment throughout the community to determine who is and is not being served and in fact just what services are being requested.

In response to this, City Manager Healy stated that based on current and past performance indicators of the health clinics, he believed the health commissioner would reject a model that required regulatory changes.

At this point the committee focused on the actual deficit issue. Mr. Greene stated that the total operating deficit was \$4.187 million which included the \$1 million deficit of the health centers. Mr. Greene further stated that he believed one reason the hospital deficit was so large is due to the fact that the Harvard Community Health Plan (HCHP) no longer referred its surgical patients to Cambridge since HCHP has recently bought the Parker Hill Hospital in Brookline.

At this time it was agreed to conduct a meeting of the committee on March 16, 1984 to discuss in more detail the hospital budget deficit and health care delivery and to discuss more fully the health centers on March 22, 1984. This meeting was adjourned at 10:35 AM.

At 8:06 AM on March 16, 1984 at the Cambridge Hospital Board Room, Councillor Francis H. Duehay opened the meeting by stating that it was his intent for the committee to obtain a better understanding of the hospital budget, its deficit and cost containment problems. Those in attendance were: Councillors Walter Sullivan, Alfred Vellucci, and Alice Wolf. Also present were City Manager Robert W. Healy, Deputy City Clerk Joseph E. Connarton, Hospital Administrator Michael Greene, Hospital Comptroller John O'Brien, Chairman of the Health Policy Board Dr. Edna Homa.

City Manager Healy stated that since the adoption of Chapter 372 of the Acts of 1983, hospital revenues were "capped" and consequently places a strain on the operational budget. In addition he stated that patient bed activity has been down and unfortunately coincided with the same fiscal period in which nursing staff, through collective bargaining, obtained a fairly large salary adjustment which brought their salaries to parity with surrounding hospitals. He further stated that the most recently agreed contract was for 3% and through a change in working conditions. The nurses would actually be working an additional twenty-six days.

At this time Mr. John O'Brien, Hospital Comptroller, stated that projected revenues for FY84 were up by \$1.3 million but contractual agreements and total bad debt would equal \$10 million. He further stated that analysis showed approximately 90% of all those considered "bad debts" were legitimately poor and disadvantaged people.

Mr. Greene stated the hospital currently had a 73% occupancy rate, while both the Mt. Auburn and Sancta Maria Hospitals were running at about 90%. He further stated that from 1979 to the present the hospital has experienced a steady decline in admissions as well as in emergency room visits. He continued by stating it was the mission of the hospital to stabilize the "critical mass" and identify our "excell capacities" and to "sell off" these capacities.

At this time Councillor Vellucci stated that it was his belief that the hospital has been the recipient to too much bad and negative publicity and this was the cause of the hospital's reduced patient bed activity. He further stated that this so-called "bad press" was in part due to the doctors fighting among themselves, and also due to the fact that several doctors on the staff do not refer their private patients to the hospital for surgery or other medical attention.

Mr. Greene outlined the following areas which have changes already made or underway in terms of new management and/or cost effective methods:

- Pediatrics
- OB/GYN
- Surgical
- Pathology
- Anesthesiology

Councillor Duehay suggested that the committee host a reception for the chiefs and associate chiefs of all departments in order to communicate with them and vice versa. It was agreed the Deputy City Clerk and Hospital Director would meet and discuss a mutually convenient date for such a reception. It was also agreed to have a similar meeting with all members of the Health Policy Board.

Councillor Wolf also suggested the establishment of visiting committees as another way to determine if the negative rumors often relating to the hospital staff are true or untrue.

At this time the discussion focused on the medical staffs' ability to speak a second language. Councillor Vellucci stated he believed this was an extremely important factor for the hospital and a study should be undertaken to determine how many interns and other medical staff actually speak Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, etc.

In terms of the health centers, Councillor Duehay stated that a "Health Stop" had recently opened on Massachusetts Avenue in North Cambridge and it was affiliated with the Sancta Maria Hospital and that the Mt. Auburn Hospital had recently filed a \$45 million certificate of need application with the Commonwealth for a major expansion of this ambulatory care facility. He further stated that these factors place Cambridge in a competitive atmosphere and that is one that can't be done. He further stated he had held a meeting with Dr. Edna Homa, Chair of the Health Policy Board, and with Lewis Pollack, the Health Commissioner for the City of Boston, in order to discuss Boston's health care delivery system and the cost of its delivery. He stated that Mayor Flynn had just appointed a committee

to review Boston's inpatient care/bad debt problem and that competition is not allowed among the Boston Neighborhood Centers. He further stated that some centers were in fact receiving financial assistance from private hospitals. He stated that possibly the City Manager and/or Mayor should consider appointing a special committee to look into this idea, in the same manner as Mayor Flynn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.

At 8:04 AM on March 22, 1984 at the Cambridge Hospital Board Room, Councillor Francis H. Duehay opened the meeting by stating he hoped that the committee would learn today whether or not the principle reason for consideration of closing some health centers was financial and if not what are the considerations. Others in attendance were Councillors Saundra Graham, Walter Sullivan, and Alice Wolf. Others in attendance were City Manager Robert Healy, Assistant City Manager for Human Services Jill Herold, Deputy City Clerk Joseph Connarton, Hospital Administrator Michael Greene, Director of Ambulatory Services Joan Zoref, Assistant Director of Nursing Services Beverly Gorvine, Chairman of the Health Policy Board, Dr. Edna Homa, Members of the Health Policy Board Barbara Ackermann and Elsa Stern.

Councillor Duehay further outlined what he believed the components of the discussions to date have been. Specifically:

- Needs assessment
- Economic projection - new plan/model
- Integration of pediatric and adult health center service
- Change from nurse practitioner to physician oriented clinics
- Range of services to be offered
- Past billing problems
- Governance of proposed models
- Neighborhood participation
- Marketing of health services

In response to Councillor Duehay's question, City Manager Robert Healy stated that money was not the principal reason, but only one of the considerations made during discussions on the health centers. Other considerations he said included the overall health care delivery of the centers and the actual target population for these services. Furthermore he stated the reduction of federal assistance was also a factor.

Ms. Joan Zoref, Director of Ambulatory Care, stated the only federal assistance still provided to the clinics was coming from the National Health Service Corporation. She further stated the federal government was now placing its emphasis on medical care in rural areas.

At this time relative to an earlier statement regarding cooperation of area hospitals, Councillor Graham stated she believed that is an issue which should be left alone until such time as the Cambridge Hospital and its management people decided what kinds of services the hospital should and can provide. Furthermore, she stated that once these services have been agreed upon, the hospital should then target the population it could best serve and target that population.

At this time Mrs. Barbara Ackermann, Health Policy Board member, stated that one of the hospital's strongest marketing points is that it provides continuing health care to anyone who seeks to obtain it. This she said is something the "Health Stops" can't do. Furthermore, she agreed with Councillor Graham regarding targeting a particular population and stated that one such population should be women.

At this time both Beverly Gorvine, Director of Nurses and Joan Zoref, Director of Ambulatory Care, stated that the health centers, although staffed a nurse practitioner, do not have enough obstetrical staff to follow pregnancy through to term. This is important if the centers really want to address the female population. Ms. Gorvine further stated that it is the hope of the "working group" to provide full family health care if the centers are re-organized.

At this time both Councillors Duehay and Graham questioned the activity of the hospital maternity room in relations to the number of births and availability of midwives. Mr. Greene responded by stating that during FY83 the hospital had 526 new deliveries which is consistent with the steady decline of deliveries at the hospital since 1979. Nothing has been done at the hospital to stimulate the maternity room activities in five years. Regarding midwives, Mr. Greene stated that although places such as Beth Israel and Mt. Auburn do.

At this time Ms. Elsa Stern, Health Policy Board member, stated that it is her belief that another group which should be targeted for health care is the elderly of the city. She stated that a family always listens to a grandmother and if she receives proper medical treatment, she will so inform her family.

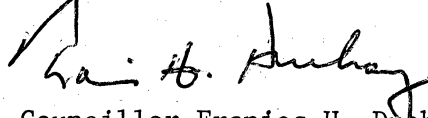
At this time Councillor Wolf questioned whether or not the present leadership of the OB/GYN Department was prepared to meet the challenges of the 80's and 90's. Mr. Greene responded by stating that he was looking at that issue among others and that several problems existed including a lack of leadership in the nursing office which has now changed as well as the basis fact, as previously mentioned that births are down and have been since 1979.

Dr. Chalfen stated that he and the hospital director would like to take an overview of the entire OB/GYN program both at the Cambridge Hospital and Mt. Auburn. He further stated there could be some advantage to integrating the department as it is currently structured. Councillor Duehay requested an "action memo" on the goals the hospital hopes to achieve in this area and that the memo be distributed to the members of the City Council Committee on Health and Hospitals.

Councillor Duehay further stated that at the next meeting he intended to have a full review of the programs and services which would be offered in a reorganized Health Center System. Mrs. Ackermann requested that some time be given at the next meeting to discuss the nurse practitioner vs. doctor issue and the related question of whose in charge.

This meeting was adjourned at 10:35 AM.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Francis H. Duehay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Councillor Francis H. Duehay
Chairman

FHD/smc

City of Cambridge

In City Council April 9, 1984

The City Council Committee on Health and Hospital under the Chairmanship of Vice Mayor Francis H. Duehay has conducted a series of meetings at the Cambridge Hospital in an effort to obtain a working knowledge of both the current deficit of the Cambridge Hospital and to discuss the draft report submitted by the Neighborhood Health Center Planning Group to the City Manager. To date the committee has held three meetings which covered the above areas.

The first meeting was held on Friday, March 9 beginning at 8:00 AM. Those in attendance were Councillors Walter Sullivan, Alfred Vellucci and Alice Wolf. Also present were Robert W. Healy, City Manager, Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager, Michael Greene, Hospital Director, Dr. Melvin Chalfen, Health Commissioner, Alfred P. Vellucci, Assistant Director for Fiscal Affairs, Joan Zoref, Director of Ambulatory Services.

The meeting tended to focus on the Neighborhood Health Center, their function, overall delivery of health care and its true cost. The discussion was based upon the draft report prepared by the Neighborhood Health Center Planning Group which was convened by City Manager Robert W. Healy with a mandate to evaluate health care needs against shrinking financial resources. However, the goal of the group was to preserve the Health Center system in Cambridge and to assure stable funding of this community based health care system.

Mr. Michael Greene, Hospital Administrator, outlined to the committee the criteria used to evaluate the system; specifically by looking at alternative methods of delivery, geographical location of clinics and access to them by all the people of Cambridge, cost effectiveness and the actual health care delivery. Mr. Greene emphasized that the planning group will seek input from the community and to that end has established a series of six public meetings in an effort to get first hand what the needs of the community are in terms of health care. He further stated in response to a question by Councillor Wolf, that this type of needs assessment has to be part of any comprehensive review of the health centers.

Councillor Duehay questioned the linkage between the hospital and the health centers as well as long range planning in this area with other hospitals in the city. Mr. Greene responded by stating that the linkage question is important and is being reviewed. He further stated that no planning with other hospitals has been done along with health center idea, but it had been done with the Massachusetts General Hospital in terms of obstetrics/pediatrics. This arrangement will provide the hospital with approximately ninety new births per year and the use of a "neo-natologist" on a half-time basis.

Both Councillors Duehay and Vellucci questioned the lack of comprehensive marketing program for the hospital and the services which it provides. Councillor Duehay stated that without such a program the hospital will always be lagging behind Mt. Auburn and the Sancta Maria. Councillor Vellucci suggested that pamphlets be prepared in several languages outlining the services of the hospital.

REPORT

5232

Committee on Health & Hospitals

Re: three meetings held by the Committee on the Neighborhood Health Center, its function & delivery of health care, the Hospital budget, its deficit & cost containment problems; and the principle reason for the closing of some health centers.

In City Council,

April 9, 1984

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