

MEETING OF THE NORTH RIVER EXPANDED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM
GOVERNING COMMISSION—WEDNESDAY, December 18, 2013

The meeting of the North River Expanded Mental Health Services Governing Commission was convened at 7 p.m. by Commission President Joyce Zick, at the Parish Hall of St. John's Episcopal Church. The following Commission members were in attendance: Gloria Centeno, Joan Liautaud, Roger McGill, Mary Shehan, Carole Spreitzer, Mary Tinich, Rosemary Tirio. Commissioner Wilfredo Santiago was absent.

Commissioner Tinich moved that the November meeting minutes be approved with the correction of the names of Commissioners Liautaud and Shehan which were misspelled in the November minutes. Mary Shehan seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Tinich, chairman of the PTELL Committee, reported that at the December 13 meeting, our *pro bono* attorneys had advised the committee to use the regular language in the PTELL law for the wording of the referendum that will appear on the ballot in the March 18 election. This wording is contained in Resolution 13-02 and refers to the aggregate amount of \$601,034. However, on December 17, the lawyers spoke with the County Clerk's office and advised the Commission to pass Resolution 13-01 in which the wording expresses the tax amount to be levied as "an additional tax of .026% of the Equalized Assessed Valuation" of the properties to be taxed rather than an aggregate of .004 of the property tax bills as in Resolution 13-02. Commissioner Tinich added that the lawyers said that the .026% of the EAV is one and the same as the .004 of the property tax bills.

Commissioner Tinich added that the lawyers said that both forms of the referendum might have to be on the March ballot. Discussion ensued in which the feasibility of having two referenda about the same matter on a ballot was questioned. The possibility of voters voting for one and not the other referendum thereby cancelling the vote and preventing passage was also discussed.

Commissioner Tinich moved to approve Resolution 13-02 and its submission to the Chicago Board of Elections to place the aggregate levy PTELL referendum on the March 18, 2014 ballot. Commissioner Centeno seconded the motion. The motion passed with seven yes votes, one no vote and one commissioner absent.

Commissioner Tinich moved that the Commission follow the advice of our lawyers and also approve Resolution 13-01 and for it to be submitted to the Chicago Board of Elections if deemed necessary by the Commission's legal counsel. Commissioner Spreitzer seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with one Commissioner absent.

Discussion ensued during which Commissioner Tirio questioned whether it might be possible to combine the referendum language into one section to make it clearer and easier for the voters. Commission President Zick asked the PTELL Committee to ask the attorneys about the feasibility of such an idea.

Commissioner Spreitzer, Chairman of the Finance and Tax Levy Committee, reported that a meeting was held several weeks ago at Bill Vaselopulos' office during which he referred to "technical issues that needed to be addressed." He said his office uses the EAV for creating a tax levy (even though his office supplied the aggregate sum of \$601,034 which was arrived at by multiplying the property tax on each parcel by .004.) Commissioner Spreitzer indicated that the legal counsel was in continued discussions with Mr. Vaselopulos and that more information should be available at the January meeting.

Although some commissioners expressed concern that these problems will not be able to be satisfactorily resolved before the December 31 deadline, Commission President Zick noted that, despite repeated stumbling blocks thrown at the Commission and the Coalition before it, the voters have always supported our endeavors and she is optimistic that they will come through for us once more next March.

Commissioner Spreitzer moved that the Tax Levy Ordinance 13-01 setting the amount of the tax levy at a sum not to exceed \$601,034 be approved. Commissioner Centeno seconded the motion. The Commissioners passed the motion unanimously with one absent.

Commissioner Centeno reported on the progress of the Services Committee which she chairs. The Request for Proposals has been posted. Although no proposals have been received as yet, several prospective service providers have made inquiries especially regarding the needs assessment which must be included in the RFP. Two of the inquiries were procedural in nature and each was referred to the Community Expanded Mental Health Services Act and the RFP for clarification on the procedural issues. One additional prospective provider was the Lydia Home. The representative of that institution asked several material questions. Commissioner Centeno reported that she had a conversation with them and answered several of their questions. Commissioner Centeno also indicated that she was in the process of working to report the communication to the online website described in the ethics training. She was having difficulty logging into the system, but had spoken with the help desk to get things fixed.

The process for choosing a Service Provider will be as follows:

Dec. 31 – due date for submitting RFPs

Jan 7 - Services Committee will meet to review the RFPs received. This meeting will take place at 4 p.m. at 5801 N. Pulaski Rd., Building C. Attendance at this meeting by Commission Members not on the Services Committee is encouraged.

Jan 15- The full Commission will meet, review, and select providers to be invited to interview with the Program Services Committee and all available Commissioners at some point before the February meeting.

Feb. 11 (tentative date) - The Services Committee and all available Commissioners will interview providers.

Feb. 19 – The whole Commission will vote for the service provider at this regular Commission meeting.

Commission President Zick introduced the proposed budget that was presented and made publicly available at the October meeting. Notice of this meeting was also posted in the newspaper as required by law. Zick then opened the floor to members of the public to comment on the proposed budget. No members of the public chose to speak on the budget. Commissioner Zick asked if any Commissioners had any further questions or comments regarding the budget. After brief comments, Commissioner Spreitzer moved that Ordinance 13-02 the 2014 Operating Budget be approved; Commissioner Shehan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with one absent. Commissioner Spreitzer was directed to submit Ordinance 13-02 and 13-01 and the required materials to the Cook County Clerk's office as required.

During the New Business portion of the meeting, Commissioner Spreitzer reported that in order to publish the Proposed Tax Ordinance and the Proposed Tax Levy in local newspapers, two commissioners who wish to remain anonymous provided the funds to pay for the ads. These two donors will be repaid by the Governing Commission once funds are received.

Commissioner Tinich disclosed to the Commission that she serves on the boards of two organizations where a fellow board member is also on the Board of a group that may submit a proposal to the Commission. She has decided to resign from both Boards to remove any potential conflict of interest in her role as a Commissioner. Commissioner Spreitzer also disclosed that she serves on a Board where a fellow member is a board member of a group that may submit a proposal to the Commission. Commissioner Zick informed the group that after working for many years in the community she knows many colleagues from service providers throughout Chicago who may submit proposals. Both Commissioner Spreitzer and Zick indicated that they have drawn a clear line separating themselves from knowledge of potential proposals or communications with potential applicants. Swedish Covenant Hospital, may be submitting a proposal but she has separated herself from their drafting of the proposal and would plan to recuse herself from voting on their proposal. Commissioner Liataud informed the Commission again that she is employed by an organization that will likely submit a proposal.

Commissioner Shehan asked if there were not some state or city agency that would give some guidance to a group such as ours that is attempting to do something that has never been done before. Observer Mike Snedeker representing the Coalition to Save Our Mental Health Centers, said that there does not appear to be any staff who deal specifically with setting up a Commission such as this, especially since the Commission is completely new and unique.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on January 15, 2014 at the same location.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Tirio
Secretary