

**NHLWAA
Executive Board Committee
Minutes**

January 16, 2014

Present: Pat Murphy, Denise Greig, Marilyn Cereillo Bresaw, Jackie Whatmough, Charlene Michaud, Sue Benoit, Suzanne Carr, Jill McLaughlin, Bob Mack, Todd Marsh, Ellen Tully and Elizabeth Sayre.

Guest: Judy Silva from the NHMA.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:40 AM. Meeting location was at the Local Government Center.

1. Minutes were reviewed from 10/15/13 Executive Board Committee Meeting. Jackie Whatmough made a motion to accept minutes and this was seconded by Denise Grieg. Motion carried.

2. NHLWAA:

a. Executive Committee:

i. Treasurer's Report. Balance is \$37,157.43. BDS is due another \$7,500 more when the Executive Committee approves the final product of General Assistance Program (GAP) Software.

Sue reported to Bob that the Association has paid \$3,067.54 over the past 9 months. Bob commented that going with Cornerstone did save the Association money because if we had stayed with LGC it would have cost us \$600 per month. Sue noted that this month's cost from Cornerstone was only \$21.

Bob suggested that we considered having Cornerstone do the Tax Report for the Association. This was an extra service that Cornerstone does offer to us at an extra cost if we want to have them do the Taxes. Since we now need to keep our non profit tax status current, we have to file taxes every year.

Motion was made to accept the Treasurer's Report by Charlene Michaud and seconded by Jackie. Motion carried.

b. Committees.

i. Technology – NH GAP.

Bob asked Liz Sayre to give an update. Liz said the software is usable. There are tweaks that still need to be made. The challenge is going to be in the process.

Liz said that there were some conversion problems from MAPs. Notice of Decision and vouchers improved. Reimbursement is still a sticky problem. Interview takes more time to go through the screens than the simple process of MAPs.

Liz stated that she has really appreciated Steve from BDS. He has a good understanding of the Welfare Process and has really listened to make a lot of progress in the last 6 months.

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ii. Legislative Affairs.

1. Senate Bill 203 was discussed regarding the use of the EBT card for cash assistance. The group was in consensus that the inability to withdraw large enough sums to pay rent and utilities were the biggest concern.
2. Senate Bill 146 APTD/OAA law change was discussed when Judy Silva joined our meeting at 10:05 AM.

The Committee shared their views that the letter from the Disabilities Right Center mailed to all municipalities brought to light that the State Law was in conflict with Federal Discrimination Laws.

Judy stated that their Lawyers have pined over the letter that we received and the State Law change. She said that the shift of focus has been moved from the State to the Municipality. If Municipalities were challenged in court Judy and their lawyers at NHMA think that the Municipalities might lose.

Pat Murphy asked about the State law including a reference in our Guidelines to the law change or if we could just eliminate any reference. Pat did read the State SB146 amendment to NH RSA 167:27:

” Notwithstanding paragraph 1, a municipality may provide assistance under RSA 165 to a person who is also receiving old age assistance or aid to the permanently and totally disabled if the guidelines adopted by the governing body under RSA 165:1 authorize assistance to such persons,...

Judy said after hearing this, she did not feel it would be a problem to eliminate any reference to RSA 167:27 in the Guidelines.

There was consensus in the Committee and Judy that the State Law RSA 167:27 and the amendment SB146 was in conflict with Federal Discrimination Law.

Judy left the meeting to get the Model Welfare Guidelines and returned with them. She recommended updating them by ending the paragraph on p. 17 under “IX. Determination of Eligibility. C.3.” by eliminating the sentences starting with “No person receiving cash payments from Old Age Assistance (OAA) or Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled (APTD)...”.

The Committee agreed with this recommendation and the NHMA would update the book by adding a edit note to the front until it can reprint the

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books. The Committee also agreed that elimination of any reference to RSA 167:27 or APTD or OAA would be recommended. Applicants who receive these benefits should not be treated differently from any other applicant.

Bob said that each Municipality will have to determine the appropriate language to their Guidelines and should seek out their own Municipal Counsel.

Todd Marsh asked how they should handle this new insight on the RSA 167:27 law until each Municipality has had a chance to update it in their Guidelines. Judy suggested that municipalities allow APTD/OAA applicants to apply and receive assistance as anyone else on the idea that the Federal Law supercedes the State Law.

Judy asked what kind of fiscal impact this would have on Municipalities. Jackie and Bob stated they were not sure. They had received numbers from Terry Smith from NHHHS in Concord and Nashua respectively but there are many factors to consider like the amount of cash assistance that they were receiving and that in some cases some people receiving this assistance may be living within households where they were just excluded from the household.

1. SB 203 EBT Cash Assistance Proposal. Returning discussion back to this bill, Bob asked Judy if we could use the “deeming of income” if this bill passed and State Welfare Clients were “penalized” for not using EBT cards as allowed. Judy thought we would be able to use this “deeming of income” allowed by law.

We explained our concerns of inability to withdraw large amount of cash to pay rent and utility bills. The State said that Direct Vendor payments would be too costly to implement to solve this problem.

3. Conferences/Training:

a. Meetings.

i. June Workshop. Bob asked Judy about NHMA’s commitment to continue the Art of Welfare Conference in June either at LGC or at another location. Judy confirmed that they were still committed to this training.

Judy Silva left the meeting after this discussion.

ii. Next General Session- February 20, 2014. Charlene explained that we originally had planned on Managed Care on this training session. She is concerned about what information will be ready.

There was discussion about moving Managed Care to April training because we may have more information on Medicaid Expansion too. There was

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concern about the deadline at the end of March and whether clients would be eligible.

Denise said that if clients make over \$11,000 they will be eligible but if they make less than that they will not be eligible.

There was discussion regarding when should GAP training be scheduled. After several scenarios were discussed it was decided that the February training should be:

1. Morning training: Managed Care with Bernie Cameron which Charlene will arrange.
2. Afternoon training: GAP demonstration and Question and Answer time with Liz's staff working with BDS on the demonstration. Bob will coordinate this with BDS.

There was a suggestion that we look at the Agreement that BDS is providing that Municipalities will need to sign before they can use the GAP software after The Executive Committee approves its usage. There may be questions and changes that we can deal with BDS if Municipalities are going to have the same questions or concerns.

Pat said that she would email the GAP agreement to the Committee Members for their review.

iii. April General Session. Nothing definitive decided.

b. NHLWAA Executive Committee schedule. Next meeting before the February 20, 2014 meeting at LGC.

4. Other/General Discussion:

Bob will write something on the APTD/OAA law change and send it out to the Committee for approval and then he will have it posted on the website.

Motion to adjourn was made and passed for 12:00 PM.

Minutes prepared by Patricia Murphy, co-secretary.