Present: Dr. Marilyn Ross Cahn; Dr. Andrew Bronin; Julia Chiappetta; Caroline C. Baisley, Director
Absent: Dr. Robert Ailleo; Robert Carangelo; Dr. Michael Franco; Kurt Schaffir
Guests: Charlee Tufts, Executive Director; John Strong, Fiscal Officer, GEMS;
Staff: Ann Augustine, Joanna Lipson

Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

MINUTES

The minutes of the September 29, 2015 meeting were tabled until the November meeting because a quorum was not present.

GEMS QUARTERLY REPORT

John strong offered the following report:

- Call volume was over budget by 77 calls for the fiscal quarter ending July 31, 2015. Budgeted calls were based on a multi-year historical experience and are consistent with the prior year fiscal budget.
- Net receivables for the fiscal quarter ending July 31, 2015 were higher by $24,000 than the fiscal year ending April 30, 2015, reflecting higher patient revenue.
- Payables and accrued expenses were over budget by $31,000 for the fiscal quarter ending July 31, 2015.
- The change in net assets for GEMS’ funds was higher by $87,000; the change in operating net assets for the unrestricted fund was positive by $146,000 for the fiscal quarter ending July 31, 2015.
- Contributions from donors to be used for capital purchases totaled $50,000 for the fiscal quarter ending July 31, 2015.
- Patient care service revenue was $634,000 for the fiscal quarter ending July 31, 2015 - over budget by $24,000. The current State budget will have a negative impact on revenue due to Medicaid not covering Medicare deductibles for dual enrolled patients.
- Total operating expenses were under budget by $112,000 for the fiscal quarter ending July 31, 2015. Personnel expenses were favorable to budget.

Ms. Tufts stated:

- Crossover funding for people who qualify for Medicaid and are on Medicare has been reinstated in the Governor’s budget.
• The Commissioner of Health increased Medicare rates. Crossover funding mainly affects nursing homes for which GEMS has a large call volume.

• A new ambulance has been put into service.

• GEMS is applying for Capital Improvement of $500,000 for Station 4 on King Street.

• Staff changes include 2 retirees and a new Educational Coordinator has been hired and a Technical person will be hired to keep the website current – no change in headcount

• Explorer Post has 35 members

• Fundraising committee is extremely active and fundraising consultant has been hired

Brief discussion ensued and Vice Chair thanked Ms. Tufts and Mr. Strong for their reports.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

Joanna Lipson, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, reported that surveillance of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza is ongoing. She noted:

• The 2015 avian influenza outbreak first appeared in flocks in the Pacific Flyway
• In March it started to appear in the upper Midwest
• There are no human cases to date
• Poultry and wild birds have been affected. Canadian geese are very susceptible.
• Backyard birds are not affected
• Likely that wild birds initially spread the virus and breakdowns in biosecurity led to cases in the Midwest
• Birds from live bird markets and livestock auctions that sell poultry are tested
• There is no danger that consumers would be affected
• No human illness has been identified from exposure but sporadic cases of human respiratory disease have occurred
• Individuals exposed to the viruses should use Personal Protective Equipment
• Responders and exposed persons should receive seasonal influenza vaccine to reduce likelihood of seasonal influenza during monitoring

Brief discussion ensued and Vice Chair thanked Ms. Lipson for her report.

OTHER BUSINESS

2014-15 Flu Season:  Dr. Ross Cahn stated that the Department of Health Flu Clinics were efficient and very well run. She complimented Director Baisley and her staff for a commendable job.
Pets in Food Stores/Pharmacies: Dr. Ross Cahn inquired about regulations that prohibit pets in food stores or pharmacies. Director Baisley stated that State regulations prohibit pets in food stores, restaurants and pharmacies in food stores.

There being no further regular business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Ross Cahn, M.D.
Secretary Pro Tem