MINUTES
Board of Health Meeting
November 21, 2019

Present: Robert Carangelo, Esq.; Vick Sandhu, Esq., Dr. Marilyn Ross Cahn; Lauren O’Keefe, APRN, FNP-BC; Julia Chiappetta;

Guests: Tracy Schietinger, GEMS Executive Director; Patrick O’Connor, GEMS Deputy Director; Tom Miserendino, GEMS Director of Finance

Staff: Joanna Lipson, Operations Administrator;

Absent: PA-C Maryann Ramos; Dr. Andrew Bronin

Mr. Carangelo called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

Minutes
The minutes of the October 29, 2019 meeting were approved.
(Motion: O’Keefe / Second: Cahn / Vote: 5 in favor – 0 opposed)

GEMS 2020-2021 Proposed Budget
Chairman reported that GEMS 2020-2021 has an increase of only 1% and commended GEMS leadership for continuously keeping the budget mostly flat from year to year. He also noted that the agency’s effective fundraising strategies as well as the ability to offset budget increases with revenue, help maintain the budget unchanged. Mr. Miserendino, GEMS Director of Finance, noted that patient service revenue is projected to increase slightly and the biggest expense driver is the employee benefits.

Chairman moved the Board to endorse the GEMS 2020-2021 Budget as presented by a vote.
(Motion: Chiappetta / Second: Sandhu / Vote: 5 in favor - 0 opposed)

GEMS Quarterly Report
Mr. Miserendino presented the quarterly report offering the following:

- As of October 31, 2019, the year to date change in net assets for GEMS is a positive.
- Income from training, stand-by revenue from special events, and interest income combined were 4% ahead of budget.
- Operating expenses were under budget by 6% for the six months ended October 2019.
- Capital equipment additions are financed by fund raising contributions to GEMS.
- Cash collection on patient receivables for the quarter higher than the quarter ended October 31, 2018.

Ms. Schietinger, GEMS Executive Director, offered the following operational updates:

- GEMS quarter to date calls as of October 2019, were over budget by 226. The annual call budget is based on multiyear historical experience. Year to date, there were 3500 activations and 2200 transports.
- The year to date agency’s “save rate” is 38%.
- The agency was able to renegotiate GEMS headquarters lease agreement, which yielded significant savings as well as improvements to the facility.
• GEMS will be participating in the charity event called “Senior Giving Tree” out of Hill House, during which the ambulance staff will deliver gifts collected from the community to seniors.
• A 911 awareness training is being offered to preschool children throughout the community, with the goal of making young children familiarized with Emergency Medical Services and what they do.
• An outside contractor hired earlier this year to assess IT concluded that the system is secure and no vulnerabilities could be found. GEMS is 98% compliant with staff cyber security training.
• The fall fundraising campaign is currently in progress and on target with all funds being used for capital improvement budget items, such as ambulances and EAD’s.
• GEMS plans to file an application for the National Accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) during the next fiscal year.

Members of the Board suggested that major accomplishments such as the excellent fundraising efforts, community engagements and agencies excellent “save rate”, which is much higher than the national average, were included in all GEMS written report and presentations.

Department of Health 2020 - 2021 Proposed Budget
Chairman noted that the Budget Overview Committee, which included Dr. Bronin, Dr. Marilyn Ross Cahn and himself, met with the Director and Business Office Manager to review the Department’s 2020-2021 Budget. The percentage increase in BET’s Budget Committee guidelines outline increase of no more than 1.75% for town department operating budgets and a 2% increase for the BOED over the FY 19/20 budget. This percentage increase is expressed in the aggregate and the BET Budget Committee Chairman did note that smaller Town departments may not be able to meet the percentage increase independently. Department’s proposed budget of $2,550,731, a $48,247 or 1.93% increase, is slightly over the expected BET Budget Committee percent increase of 1.75%. The budget increase is mainly due to full time and part time union represented contractual salaries and benefits. Also, funds of $1,700 have been added to cover the costs of bank fees associated with the use of credit cards in Environmental Services. Another increase to the budget is funding of $6,240 for an additional mosquito treatment. In FY 19/20 budget, one treatment was eliminated to accommodate BET budget reductions; however, the presence of the Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus (EEE) throughout the State in 2019 could present a high risk for residents in 2020, should the virus reemerge. Chairman noted that the total budget increase includes supplemental funding of $15,608 for the P/PT Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator’s position, which will also be supported by State grant funding. Reductions have been made in the Temporary Service Nurse line item and in the Temporary Lab Assistant line item. Some overtime funding was also reduced slightly.

Chairman moved to approve the 2020-2021 Department of Health’s Proposed Budget as presented.

(Motion: Cahn/ Second: Sandhu / Vote: 5 in favor - 0 opposed)

Department of Health 2020 - 2021 Proposed Fee Schedule
Chairman suggested to explore a possibility of increasing fees to non-residents for selected laboratory services. Members of the board agreed.

Chairman moved to approve the Department’s 2020-2021 Fee Schedule.

(Motion: Chiappetta/ Second: O’Keefe/ Vote: 5 in favor – 0 opposed)
Board of Health 2020 Meeting Schedule Approval
Chairman moved to approve the 2020 Board of Health meeting schedule.

(Motion: O'Keefe/ Second: Chiappetta/ Vote: Unanimous – 6 in favor - 0 opposed)

Other Business
Chairman referred to an email he sent to the members of the Board in regards to the possibility that the Town would not have adequate support from the Metro New York North Region of the American Red Cross and in an event of a geographically widespread disaster, considering the fact that the Town of Greenwich residents are a significant financial supporter of the chapter. He noted that he previously requested Ms. Chiappetta and Mr. Sandhu explore the issue and possible solutions.

Ms. Chiappetta and Mr. Sandhu reported that they met the Metro New York North Region of the American Red Cross acting Director, who confirmed that the Greenwich community is a significant provider of funds and volunteers to the chapter; however, the regionalization of American Red Cross is here to stay. Ms. Chiappetta and Mr. Sandhu also reported that they began to explore other nonprofit organizations that would possibly be able to fill the void of the American Red Cross in the community.

Chairman informed the Board of a letter the Director of Health received from the Greenwich High School student who expressed concern about the unavailability of healthy lunch options in Greenwich High School. Chairman suggested the student be invited to Board's meeting, so she can present her concerns and the issue can be discussed.

There being no further business, Mr. Chairman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM.

(Motion: O'Keefe/ Second: Chiappetta Vote: 5 in favor - 0 opposed)

Respectfully submitted for Dr. Bronin,

Marilyn Ross Cahn, M.D.