

JT. SENATE HEALTH & FAMILY SECURITY COMMITTEE, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET DIVISION AND AGRICULTURE, VETERANS AND GAMING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2005

1:00 P.M.

ROOM 15 CAPITOL

Members present:

Lourey, Chair
Berglin
Higgins
LeClair
Moua
Nienow

Sen. Vickerman convened the meeting at 1:17 p.m.

Sen. Vickerman briefly explained the meeting.

Testifying on the Minnesota Veterans Home – Minneapolis were:

- 1:19 David Giese, Dir., Health Policy, Information and Compliance Monitoring Division, MDH
- 1:31 Fred Brumm, Former Assistant Administrator, MN Veterans Home – Minneapolis
- 1:33 Mark Gaughan, St. Paul Attorney representing Mr. Brumm
- 2:18 Erin Murphy, RN, Exec. Dir., MN Nurses Association
- 2:25 Margaret Skoy, RN, MN Veterans Home – Minneapolis
- 2:45 Kathleen Quinn, RN, Former employee at MN Veterans Home – Minneapolis
- 2:50 Maria Ockenfels, RN, Former Director of Quality Management, MN Veterans Home – Minneapolis
- 3:00 Kirk Larson, Family Support Group, MN Veterans Home – Minneapolis
- 3:12 Dennis O’Gorman, Project Manager, MN Veterans Home – Minneapolis
- 3:22 Steven Musser, Exec. Dir., MN Veteran’s Homes Board
Dr. Frank Budd, Board Chair, Duluth
- 3:23 Sen. Berglin took the gavel
- 3:25 Steven Musser continued his testimony
- 3:26 Sen. Vickerman took the gavel.

Discussion followed.

- 4:15 Dr. Robert Cook, Resident, MN Veteran’s Home – Minneapolis
- 4:20 Steven Musser continued his testimony

Sen. Vickerman adjourned the meeting

For additional committee minutes look in Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee book.

Respectfully submitted by,

Senator Becky Lourey, Chair

Pat Wallner, Legislative Assistant

The Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming, Health and Family Security and Health and Human Services Budget Committees met on Wednesday, September 21, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 15, Capitol. The following members were in attendance:

Berglin, Chair
Lourey, Chair
Vickerman, Chair
Dille
Higgins
LeClair
Moua
Nienow
Skoglund

Senator Vickerman called the meeting to order at 1:18 p.m.

David Giese, Director, Health Policy, Information and Compliance Monitoring Division, Minnesota Department of Health. "SEE ATTACHMENT A." Mr. Giese stated their oversight is regulatory and they provide the licensing for this home. He stated there have been no administrative fines issued since 1989. He added there were 29 complaints founded relating to the nursing home itself and 27 correction orders issued. There were also four complaints in the in-home board care. They inspected the facility between July 26 – 29, 2005.

Senator Berglin asked Mr. Giese when they would go back.

Mr. Giese stated it was dependent on additional concerns but it would be well before the two-year time lapse.

Fred Brumm, Former Assistant Administrator Minnesota Veterans Home – Minneapolis and represented by attorney Mark Goggin, St. Paul. Mr. Brumm stated he started his position in August of 2004. At that time they had three licensed nurses and 4 HST's for every 50 people. On January 8, 2005 he was notified there were no funds for pool services. Absenteeism was a problem and the folks were refusing mandation. He stated he was not given the opportunity to resign and was let go for insubordination.

Senator Berglin asked about the passing of medication.

Mr. Brumm stated this was addressed incident by incident – policies were not being following and there was a definite lack of accountability.

Erin Murphy, MN Nurses Association, introduced Maria Ockenfels, Kathleen Quinn and Margaret Skoy.

Ms. Murphy stated the nurses working conditions are deplorable. They have had 22 RN's resign in the last three months and they have the second highest turnover in the state.

Margaret Skoy, RN, MN Veterans Home-Minneapolis. She stated she was employed 15 years at the Veterans Home and four years as a float nurse. She added that what has caused the crisis is a decrease in number of nurses and aides, increased agitation of new residents, alzheimers patients on regular floors and mandation. Ms. Skoy stated they would at times be required to work 16 hours and if they refused, it was grounds for separation.

Kathleen Quinn, RN, Former employee Minnesota Veterans Home-Minneapolis. Ms Quinn stated she quit in June. She stated she was the one who called the Department of Health to come and do an inspection.

Maria Ockenfels, RN, Former Director of Quality Management, Minnesota Veterans Home – Minneapolis. Ms. Ockenfels stated they have a nursing staff crisis.

She added she resigned because of mandatory overtime. Ms. Ockenfels stated that assessment is the key regarding resident care and added that assessments are not being done. She was called in on March 18, 2005 and told she would have to leave because of her opposition to mandatory overtime.

Kirk Larson, Family Support Group, Minnesota Veterans Home-Minneapolis. Mr. Larson stated they may have areas in which to improve upon but in most places it is working and urged the committee members to keep everything in perspective.

Dennis O’Gorman, Project Manager, Minnesota Veterans Home-Minneapolis. Mr. O’Gorman stated he wants to help the board and the new administration move forward. He added that strategic planning has always focused on experience.

Stephen Musser, Executive Director, Minnesota Veterans Home-Minneapolis and Dr. Frank Budd, Chair, Minnesota Veterans Home Board. Mr. Budd presented a letter from Governor Pawlenty asking for a broader review of all veterans’ facilities and the report on the results of the review forwarded to him by January 15, 2006. **“SEE ATTACHMENT B.”** Mr. Budd introduced all board members and executive directors of their other facilities. He stated the board has taken these concerns very seriously and are working to correct them.

Mr. Musser stated it was obvious in March that they had clinical areas that needed assistance. He stated they started implementing staffing changes. He added there are strained relationships between management and staff. On August 29, 2005 there was a special board meeting and they placed the administrator on leave, along with three others who were let go. Mr. Musser presented their “plan of correction.” **“SEE ATTACHMENT C.”**

Senator Berglin asked if it wasn’t true that they had a seven million dollar carry over.

Mr. Musser stated yes and they have two million in reserve.

Senator Berglin stated “you had the money to fill the vacancies – why didn’t you?”

Mr. Musser stated they wanted to review all requests and make sure all positions were necessary. He stated they have not done a good job of keeping track of positions.

Senator Berglin stated she wants an accounting of the 7.8 million in the carry over.

Senator Moua stated she wants Mr. Musser to get back to her on if since 2003 – they have reduced RN’s from 4 to 3 and HSTs from 8 to 4.

Senator Higgins stated she wants more information on monitors and alarms being applied to legs and arms.

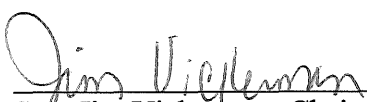
Robert Cook, resident. Mr. Cook complained that veterans’ weren’t asked to speak. He stated mandation needs to stop. He stated the “pool” employees have been great – it’s the regular employees who aren’t. He added he has just filed a 60 page grievance.

Senator Berglin told Mr. Cook he had to have known the facility was not adequately staffed.

Senator Vickerman stated our veterans’ deserve better and this needs to be figured out.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

This meeting was taped.



Sen. Jim Vickerman, Chair

by/ 

Sandi Brown

Joint Health and Human Services Budget Division, Health and Family Security and
Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committees
Wednesday, September 21, 2005
1:00 p.m. Room 15, Capitol

AGENDA

“Survey of Minnesota Veterans Home–Minneapolis” – David Giese, Director, Health
Policy, Information and Compliance Monitoring Division, MN Dept. of Health

Fred Brumm, Former Assistant Administrator, Minnesota Veterans Home–Minneapolis

~~Gary Hjeltnastad, Former Director of Quality Assurance, Minnesota Veterans Home–
Minneapolis~~

Erin Murphy, RN, Executive Director, Minnesota Nurses Association

Maria Ockenfels, RN, Former Director of Quality Management, Minnesota Veterans
Home–Minneapolis

Margaret Skoy, RN, MN Veterans Home–Minneapolis

Kathleen Quinn, RN, Former employee at Minnesota Veterans Home–Minneapolis

Kirk Larson, Family Support Group, Minnesota Veterans Home–Minneapolis

Dennis O’Gorman, Project Manager, Minnesota Veterans Home–Minneapolis, State
Commander, Disabled American Veterans

“Minnesota Veterans Home–Minneapolis MDH Survey Plan of Correction” – Steven
Musser, Executive Director, Minnesota Veteran’s Homes Board