

The Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee met on Wednesday, March 1, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 112, Capitol. The following members were present:

Vickerman, Chair
Skoe, Vice Chair
Day
Dille
Hann
Johnson, Dean
Koering
Lourey
Murphy
Nienow
Rest
Sams
Solon
Wergin

Senator Vickerman called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. and stated we would be hearing the report on the comprehensive review of the Minnesota Veterans Homes, Veterans Homes Board of Directors and Veterans Homes Board Staff.

Jeff Johnson, President, Minnesota Veterans Homes Board, "SEE ATTACHMENT A."

Mr. Johnson is the newly appointed board chair and explained the events leading up to the Governor's request for a system-wide review.

Steven Musser, Executive Director, Minnesota Veterans Homes Board

Sergei Shvetzoff, Principal, Health Dimension Group, stated they were hired to do the comprehensive review of all Minnesota Veterans Homes. The main objectives were: are the veterans getting the care they need, evaluate the organizational issues at the board office and at each home, skills and expertise of board staff, assess the effectiveness of board of directors, conduct an organizational/financial assessment of each home and perform a financial management review.

Lynn Peterson, Quality and Regulatory Clinical Consultant, Health Dimension Group, recommended additional direct care staff at Hastings and Luverne. He stated the clinical staffing shortages at Minneapolis have been resolved which has resulted in direct staffing levels appropriate to meeting the needs of residents. They found Fergus Falls to be among the best nursing home they review in Minnesota and Luverne was also a very strong performer. He added that chronic employee performance problems have been tolerated.

Steve Nussbaum, Senior Consultant, Logic Opera, stated role confusion is occurring between the facility administrators and the board office staff. He stated the facility administrators outside of the Minneapolis location feel they are required to implement solutions that are suitable for the complexity of the Minneapolis facility and not appropriately scalable to their needs. Also, he stated there is a lack of alignment between employees and management as it relates to management modeling, building teams, coaching, empowerment, employee feedback and information communication.

Mr. Shvetzoff, stated the critical recommendations are: create an 18-month turnaround plan for Minneapolis, recruit a top quality Minneapolis management team, and use external experts for mock surveys, implement changes to Minneapolis structure into smaller distinct operating.

Mr. Nussbaum, stated other recommendations were to operate the board of directors as a governing board – not an advisory one, clarify roles between board office staff and facility administrators, establish a shared strategic agenda and priorities at the board level, utilize board committees and possibly recruit ex-officio members, and establish and

monitor select key performance metrics that support strategic direction of the Minnesota Veterans Homes.

R. Doug Britain, Long Term Care/Senior Housing Consultant, referred to recommendations on Page 6 and stated Fergus Falls employees are paid very well, Minneapolis employees are not.

Mr. Johnson, stated they now have the report complete and submitted to the Governor, the recommendations are meant to be directional and not judgemental and the action plans have been developed, refined and implemented in response to the most critical recommendations. He also introduced the interim administrator **Jack Williams**.

Nancy Dahl, Director of Nursing, Minneapolis Veterans Home, testified they are doing better and that they are permitted to use mandatory overtime.

Senator Johnson asked how much money the home receives?

Mr. Musser replied 30 million from the state and that has not changed since 2002. They receive 12.4 million from federal program; 2.2 million was earmarked in last bonding bill.

Senator Johnson asked if they have put in a supplemental budget.

Mr. Musser stated they put one in, prior to the budget forecast, for an additional 12.6 million. He stated they would help with additional positions, heating costs, wage and benefit packages and recommendation in health report.

Senator Johnson asked for the cost of the report?

Mr. Musser stated it was \$150,000. It was \$75,000 for mock surveys and will cost \$47,300 for search firm for administrator.

Erin Murphy, MN Nurses Association, asked that nurses be included at the table for redesign. Recruitment must be a higher priority, she said the state refuses to debate mandatory overtime for contract negotiations.

Molly Ross, Minneapolis, nurse at the Vets Home, stated if they refuse to work the mandatory overtime – they are told their jobs may not be secure.

Bill Poole, family member of resident, stated basically the home does a good job, but they need to communicate more between departments and residents. He also asked for better dental care.

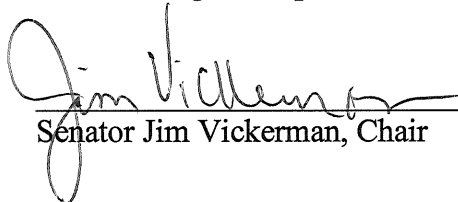
Nick Kakos, Minneapolis, 5th District American Legion, stated the Board's staff has kept their organization very informed on what is happening at the home.

Senator Vickerman asked for a monthly report on how things are going.

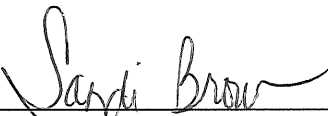
Mr. Johnson stated communication is the key.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

This meeting was taped.



Senator Jim Vickerman, Chair

by 

Sandi Brown

Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee

Wednesday, March 1, 2006

3:00 p.m.

Room 112, Capitol

A G E N D A

Jeff Johnson, President, Minnesota Veterans Homes Board

Steven Musser, Executive Director, Minnesota Veterans Homes Board

Sergei Shvetzoff, Principal, Health Dimension Group

Steve Nussbaum, Senior Consultant, Logic Opera (subcontract with Health Dimension Group)

Lynn Peterson, Quality and Regulatory Clinical Consultant, Health Dimension Group

R. Doug Britain, Long Term Care/Senior Housing Consultant (subcontract consultant working for Health Dimensions Group)

Erin Murphy, RN, Executive Director, Minnesota Nurses Association

Margaret Skoy, RN, Minnesota Nurses Association

Bill Poole, family member of resident