

**Sullivan County NH**

**Type of meeting: Board of Commissioners Public Hearing  
Nursing Home Name Change Issue**

**Date / Time: Thursday, December 1, 2005; 7 PM**

**Place: Newport County Complex, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Jury Assembly Room**

**ATTENDEES:** Commissioners Donald S. Clarke - Chair, Ben Nelson - Vice Chair and Ethel Jarvis - Clerk; Ed Gil de Rubio - County Manager; Sharon Johnson-Callum (minute taker)

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Patti Koscielniak, *Sullivan County Nursing Home External Care Coordinator*; Brenda Temple – *Sullivan County Nursing Home Admissions Director*; *State County Delegates* - Rep. Larry Converse, Tom Donovan and Beverly Rodeschin; Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Geer; Robert Hemenway; Richard Breed; James Lowe - *Argus Champion Staff Reporter*; Rebecca Miller – *Eagle Times Staff Reporter* (arrived later).

**7 p.m. The Board of Commissioner Chair, Donald Clarke, brought the meeting to order.**

**PUBLIC HEARING PURPOSE**

Commissioner Clarke noted the purpose of the evenings meeting was to discuss the Sullivan County Nursing Home name changed issue and take public comments and suggestions.

**OTHER COUNTY OFFICIAL AND EMPLOYEE REMARKS**

Mr. Gil de Rubio thanked all for attending. He noted the confusion that came up during the first public hearing (November 15<sup>th</sup> @ 1 PM) about the proposed name change, but that the intention of the County Commissioners and Manager is to keep the words "Sullivan County" in the name. He added, their intension is to embellish the name to make the facility more marketable. He briefly noted referral agency suggestions, the Nursing Home census of 151, and the increase of skilled care. He noted the County is trying to better identify the Nursing facility services and bring nursing home in to a more marketable situation eliminating the stress of cost from taxpayer.

Mrs. Koscielniak read from the following letter, signed by her the Administrator and D.O.N.

We, the undersigned, fully support Sullivan County Health Care and Rehab as the name change for the Sullivan County Nursing Home.

While we are committed to providing superior nursing care at all times for our long-term residents, we acknowledge that resident demographics and needs are changing and we are recognizing these changes for post-acute, short-term rehab clients. We have added the appropriate services to care for these needs. However, the perception of younger clients, when given the choice of a facility with "Nursing Home" in its title, is negative.

It is imperative for Sullivan County to maintain a long-term care facility to provide for the medical care of those individuals who cannot receive adequate care in their homes and communities. To address taxpayer concerns, we seek the way for this facility to remain viable on revenues received and not taxpayer dollars. Therefore, we must attract more short-term, rehab clients who will not automatically reject the option of admission to our facility based solely on the name.

We believe the name Sullivan Health, Care and Rehab accurately reflects what we do at our facility. We feel that this name will encourage prospective clients to take advantage of the opportunity to receive outstanding care in a place that they may not have previously chosen due to preconceived notions based on name alone. This is a "Win-Win" situation for both the short and long-term residents that we serve, as well as the taxpayers of Sullivan County.

Respectfully submitted,

*Christina Marshall*  
 Christina Marshall, Administrator  
 Ed Gil de Rubio, Director of Nursing  
 Richard S. Johnson-Callum, Ed, DCS  
 Patti S. Koscielniak, RN, MS, External Care Coordinator  
 Brenda Temple, Director of Admissions

2005-12-01-001

Mrs. Koscielniak noted their facility name suggestion is "**Sullivan County Healthcare and**  
Dec 1, 2005 Sullivan County Commissioners – Public Hearing: Nursing Home Name Change Issue minutes approved @ 12/20/05 meeting.

**Rehab**".

7:05 *Rebecca Miller arrived.*

**CHAIR OPENED THE MEETING TO PUBLIC COMMENT(S)**

**Robert Hemenway** - Indicated he was from Newport and former Nursing Home Administrator at Sullivan County. He spoke about prior thoughts on changing the name as they thought the community still considered it as a "poor house" and the community survey he performed, of which they discovered the County Nursing Home had an excellent reputation. He indicated he felt the rehab department does an excellent job and is best in Sullivan County. He noted he applauds the County and recommended the County enter in to the assisted living business. He pointed out Cheshire County has Maple Wood Assisted Living and a separate Nursing Home, but the complex is still called the County. He suggested keeping "***Sullivan County Nursing Home***" and designate names for other sections, unites, or buildings, but the entire complex be labeled "of Sullivan County" representing a continuum of care. He added the reputation, which is excellent, is based on current staff.

**Ms. Koscielniak** - Indicated she wanted to address one other issue, that referrals from Dartmouth are received via e-discharge forms, which lists the names of the facilities one can be referred to. She indicated, through this format a facility is not given a chance to talk face to face with the referred person. She noted younger people when they see "Sullivan County Nursing Home" on the discharge form say no automatically to the discharge planners because it shows it is a nursing home.

**Tom Donovan** - Indicated he was from Claremont. He likes the idea of changing the name and keeping "***Sullivan County***", as it has a historical sense; but does not get hung up on. He noted the Nursing Home provides excellent care, but that the County still has other areas that need review. He indicated he has the opportunity to visit other facilities often, and with the County has seen a transition over the past six to seven months that is encouraging; through increasing census and accepting respite care. He worries about the resident mix and wants to make sure the County remains cognizant of the poor, to be aware of healthcare demographics, economically, and don't shut the door to the poor population. He noted, if the County looks to the future, they must expand their horizons and plan for the people in years to come. He ended by recommending they add to the name something more reflective of what is going on at the facility.

**Beverly Rodeschin** - Thanked the Board for holding an evening public hearing. Mrs. Rodeschin asked about the status with nursing home names with other counties and what other options were received at the previous hearing.

- Commissioner Clarke spoke about the petition presented by Rep. Converse during the first hearing, and people who's signatures appeared on the petition, but attended the hearing to clarify how the petition was presented and the person's true thoughts.
- Commissioner Jarvis pointed out that there was another meeting prior to the Nov 15<sup>th</sup> hearing, where there was 100% opposition from employees to the name change.
- Mr. Gil de Rubio indicated he wanted to clarify there have been only two public hearings of the Board, Nov 15<sup>th</sup> and tonight. He noted, back in January, when

Genesis came on board, a Nursing Home marketing committee brought forth an idea to change the name. The Nursing Home held an employee contest with names submitted, but it was not a survey. They received opposition at that time. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the name change issue was brought up once again during a Board meeting; accordingly, they scheduled a public hearing during the day and one in the evening to take public comments. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted, one of the staff during the public hearing had pointed out a survey was done, but it was never a survey, it was a contest.

- Commissioner Nelson noted some of the employee contest submissions included names that did not have "***Sullivan County***", which is when opposition was received, so they, the Board, decided to drop the issue at that point.

**Rep. Rodeschin** – Indicated she has no problem with changing the names as long as "***Sullivan County***" is left in part of the name. She pointed out the Board is charged with marketing and if this is a tool which allows them to bring in more, she does not have a problem with it.

**Rep. John Cloutier** – Indicated he was a State representative for Claremont, Lempster, and Unity and also the Delegation Chair. He thanked all for holding the hearing in day and evening. He hopes if they change the name to keep "***Sullivan County***" in it, or at the very least "***Sullivan County Nursing Home Rehab and Respite Center***" as it covers everything. He noted Ms. Koscielniak's idea is very interesting and should be considered also, but "Sullivan County" name is a tradition. He noted they must look at increasing revenue and was fine to change the name to reflect the changing role of Sullivan County.

**Dick Breed** - Indicated he was from Claremont. He noted he was **in opposition** of any name change and disagreed with Mr. Hemenway's remark about the perception of the Nursing Home viewed 40 years ago, that there was a reputation to the Nursing Home that it was a poor farm. However, he feels the County left that image many years ago. He feels the home has had a good reputation over all and increased in census until recently. He asked "Why change if you have a good reputation?" He feels if the name is changed they will forget the facility history, and feels strongly that should not be forgotten. He noted he concurs the care is good, and wants everyone to remember the quality of care is due to the staff.

- Commissioner Clarke concurred the staff was great and noted they strive for this through benefits and compensation.

**Mr. Hemenway** - Indicated he brought a list of all Nursing Home administrators since 1867, and pointed out that in 1931 the name Sullivan County Farm was changed to Sullivan County Home. He showed the Commissioners a copy (copy of list inserted as follows)

*Superintendents and Matrons  
Administrators  
for  
Sullivan County Farm/Sullivan County Home*

*Mr. James W. Dodge 1867 – 1871  
Mr. & Mrs. Jonas Hastings 1871 – 1877  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles F. Carr 1877 – 1879  
Mr. K. J. Wilson 1879 – 1884  
Mr. Thomas Bailey (Annex Building) 1884 – 1885  
Mr. Martin A. Herrick 1885 – 1891  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Willard 1891 – 1901  
Mr. W. E. Perry 1902 – 1904  
Mr. Fred Bean 1904 – 1905  
Mr. & Mrs. H. E. Buswell 1905 – 1906  
Mr. & Mrs. Oliver Putnam 1907 – 1924  
Mr. & Mrs. Luman Grout 1926 – 1944*

*By vote of the County Convention on  
December 12, 1931, the name of Sullivan County Farm was  
changed to the Sullivan County Home*

*Mr. & Mrs. William George 1944 – 1957  
Mr. & Mrs. Omer C. Ahern 1957 – 1984  
Ms. Mary Louise Horn 1984 – 1988  
Ms. Diane H. Pappalardo 1988 – 1989  
Mr. Robert Lawrence 1990 – 1991  
Mr. Robert A. Hemenway 1991 – 2004  
Mr. John Allard 2005 –*

**Dick Breed** - Indicated the official name was the "Sullivan County Home". He indicated in the late 60's nothing was formerly done, but they began calling it "*Sullivan County Nursing Home*". He continued, indicating in the 70's to attain state licensing, the facility could be either a nursing home or hospital, depending on the criteria the facility offered; Sullivan County was eligible to be considered a hospital; therefore it began to be called a hospital on the registration for license for a few years; and then changed back to "Nursing Home".

**Commissioner Ben Nelson** - Suggested they name it "*Sullivan County Health Care*" as they provide services such as: rehabilitation, a special Alzheimer's unit, skilled care and nursing.

**Commissioner Clarke** recommended they refrain from using a long name, discussing the dangers of it being shortened, a comment noted at an earlier meeting.

**Rep. Larry Converse** – Indicated he was from Claremont. He indicated people he talked to have no problem with "*Sullivan County Nursing Home*" and adding anything on the end. Mr. Converse asked the Board of Commissioners what they next steps were after tonight's hearing.

- Commissioner Clarke asked, of the County Manager, who has the authority to change the name. Mr. Clarke noted they certainly would want the blessing of the delegates.

- Mr. Gil de Rubio noted he'd have to research this with the County Attorney, and also noted the Commissioners have jurisdiction over everything but real estate.

**Commissioner Ethel Jarvis** – Noted Rep. Rodeschin had asked earlier if other counties were doing the same with their nursing home names and indicated they were not. She recited names of other County facilities, which included: Mountain View Nursing Home of Carroll County, Riverview Rest Home in Hillsboro County, Coos County Nursing Hospital, Belknap Nursing Home, Riverside Nursing Home of Strafford County and Merrimack County Nursing Home.

**Rep. Cloutier** - Indicated he wanted to clarify for public records, the opinions he expressed earlier in the meeting were his own opinions, not that of the delegation. He indicated he's pleased that he has received the impression from the Board tonight that they will be keeping "*Sullivan County*" as part of the name.

**Rep. Rodeschin** - Indicated she felt the Board should not have to go before the Delegation for a name change.

Commissioner Clarke Chair asked for any further comments. No one had any.

**PUBLIC HEARING OFFICIALLY CLOSED BY CHAIR**

The Board of Commissioner thanked all for their comments and attending.

*Respectfully submitted,*



*Ethel Jarvis, Clerk  
Board of Commissioners*

*EJ/s.j-c.*