

October 31, 2008, LUARC Commission Meeting

Roll Call was Read.

LUARC Commission members present: John H. Fisher, III, Chair; Joseph V. Doria, Jr.; Marvin Reed; Robert F. Casey; Joe Donahue (for State Treasurer David Rousseau) and Steve Cozza

Gary Passanante and Jane Kenny were absent.

Sunshine Notice was read by the Secretary.

a. Public Health Service Delivery – Future Research

Hannah Shostack, Executive Director, began the general discussion on public health service delivery and where the Commission should head. She had asked the Commission whether we should continue with the research or wait for Rutgers.

Casey indicated that there are many studies currently completed and that the issue has been well studied. He said that public health is a State issue and that health has been driven from the bottom up. This should be reversed with a local implementation. Data shows that if you look at services rendered they are rendered more economically. Data indicates that there are less services for smaller areas and that there is a threshold according to size. Mr. Casey also indicated that state statutes should be amended to remove impediments to additional consolidations and mergers in the health field.

Mr. Fisher indicated that he did not think such changes would adversely impact on existing health professionals given the vacancies that currently exist and the probably growth in employment with larger jurisdictions and expanding health services being provided.

Mr. Casey would like to get a better definition on what is required.

Mr. Reed concurs with Mr. Casey and indicated that we can reinforce what the people in health are trying to accomplish. Reinforce that the minimum population should be 25,000.

Mr. Fisher was startled that there is not an assessment as to whether or not they are getting essential services.

Commissioner Doria indicated that we need to get input by the State Department of Health. We can offer them resources to see what is necessary but will need their input and buy in. We can then move

forward with research delivery mechanism. Look at better methodology, better way of delivering the services.

- b. Update on State of Data Collection Efforts was reported by Dennis Smeltzer.

Mr. Casey indicated that much of the relevant information that we need is right here in DCA regarding property and tax data. He said that we need to look at population and land area on the gross level.

Commissioner Doria said that it is hard to look at the whole state and suggested looking at a county. The Commission would need to be careful on why we would look at one county and not another.

Mr. Casey would like to look at the populations under 25,000.

Mr. Fisher suggested a sample.

Mr. Casey said we can take a county with attributes that reflect the State as a whole. The purpose is to identify variety. Pick one that has enough jurisdictions with a focus on criteria that the geography would present.

Suggestion was to see if municipalities might request to be part of a pilot. Mr. Cozza suggests having freeholders adopt a resolution and also suggested that we approach Somerset. Hannah Shostack will follow-up with Somerset.

Mr. Donahue suggested looking at three regions.

Three regions that the Commission will approach are Somerset, Gloucester and Morris.

- c. Review of Relevant Public Opinion Surveys and Next Steps was reported by Hans Goff.

Commissioner Doria would like to include a benchmark poll and suggested that we also conduct focus groups in the three counties to supplement the polls.

Hannah Shostack indicated that the next meeting will revolve around Emergency Dispatch. Attending will be two counties and OIT.

Mr. Reed would like presenters to answer the question: If a county covers a wider range would the dispatch take the call and then be able to communicate directly to the person closest to that scene.

Also do they also cover police, fire, EMS, OEM and homeland security.

General Public Comments:

Chuck Aughenbaugh, NJ DOP Fire Chiefs Association spoke. He made a few comments and indicated that he would be at the November 17 meeting when a full discussion on Emergency Dispatch will be discussed. He mentioned that the problem is that everyone wants to be the king. He would recommend centralized dispatch and he thinks others would also but that there would still need to be some redundancy.

Dave Henry from the Princeton Regional Health Department NJHOA also addressed the Commission. He indicated that he echoed the testimony of Mr. Tabbot.

Adjournment unanimously approved.