

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF EASTERN HEALTH BOARD
HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, ST. BRENDAN'S HOSPITAL, ON
THURSDAY 15th FEBRUARY, 1979 at 6 p.m.

PRESENT; Cllr. Mrs. J. Barlow Cllr. Mrs. A. Glenn
Cllr. D. Browne Cllr. A. Groome
Cllr. M. Carroll Cllr. D. Kinsella
Cllr. J. Connolly Deputy C. Murphy
Cllr. H.P. Dockrell Cllr. E. Stagg
Ald. A. FitzGerald Cllr. J. Sweeney

APOLOGIES; Dr. J. O. Behan Prof. J. McCormick
Prof. J. S. Doyle Sr. Columba McNamara
Cllr. P. Hickey Deputy Dr. A. Meade
Mrs. E. Lemass Dr. B. Sheehan
Deputy T. Leonard Dr. J. Walker
Mr. J. J. Nolan Prof. I. Browne
OFFICERS: IN Mr. F. Donohue Mr. H. Dunne
ATTENDANCE Mr. T. Keyes Mr. J. Doyle
Mr. R. N. Lamb Mr. T. McManus
Mr. F. Elliott Mr. C. Mansfield
Mr. J. Reynolds Mr. M. Cummins
Mr. J. Sadlier Miss R. Carolan
Mr. P. I. Lyons Miss B. Kelly
Mr. J. Clarke

IN THE CHAIR

Alderman Alexis Fitzgerald

At the commencement of the Meeting, the members were asked to keep in mind that the present difficulties in relation to postal and telephone services would seriously affect the arranging of meetings and the circulation of documents.

Report No. 11/1979 on the Board's Capital Allocation for 1979 together with a table of average daily costs, some bed utilisation statistics and the book of Estimates for 1979 were circulated to the members at the Meeting.

On a proposal by Councillor Carroll seconded by Councillor Sweeney it was unaniamously agreed to end the meeting at 7.30 p.m. because of the inclement weather.

Introducing Report No. 9/1979 which had been circulated with the notice and Agenda Mr. Nolan drew attention to:-

- (1) Page 2 of the report which listed ideas not included in the allocation. He said it was hoped that some provision would be made for most of these ideas at a later date. Page 3 sets out details of the allocation and shows the relativity of the three Programmes and some details of the breakdown within each Programme. While it is felt that estimated income might be less than shown because of changes in hospital charges as from April 1st it was expected that the Department would make up the difference.
- (2) Allocation for Capital Expenditure as contained in letter 12/2/79 from the Department. £890,000 was provided for new starts in 1979 and £400,000 for Minor Capital Schemes (jobs not exceeding £50,000).
Page

3 of the Department's letter shows how the new starts are distributed.

Statistics and the estimated average daily costs. These were being provided to the Board as part of a programme for developing information services. The extract on bed utilisation was from a journal of hospital statistics.

Job Creation. The allocation for 1979 had not yet been made.

In reply to Deputy Murphy, Mr. Reynolds said that the initial allocation last year was £55.8 million and in December 1978 it was increased to £62 million, the revision being based on the Board's earlier projections of spending within that year. In reply to Cllr. Browne Mr. Keyes said that the ad-hoc Committee and the Board had recommended an allocation of £250,000 in addition to the £165,000 needed for fire precautions etc. at St. Brendan's Hospital. This report had recently gone to the Minister and there might be more information on the funds that will be available after the Board's Deputation met the Minister on the following Monday.

In reply to Cllr. Connolly, Mr. Donohue said that grants were paid to organisations catering for the training and rehabilitation of handicapped, also the Board of the Blind and the Wheelchair Association, - any Commitment that made an application and submitted its accounts to the Board would be considered for a grant.

In reply to the Chairman Mr. Donohue said that it would be possible to continue support for Voluntary Agencies already getting help from the Board but the Board might not be able to undertake support for new agencies. In regard to services he pointed out that certain statutory services have got to be funded once a person is entitled and this leaves the other services, without a clear statutory entitlement, at risk. He would need enough money to contain and develop all services to a uniform level while meeting increased demands.

Regarding health centres the meeting was told that the Department had agreed that the centres at Rowlagh and Ballybrack were on-going and it was expected that there would be an allocation to proceed with the work. With regard to the Health Centre at Maynooth it was stated that tenders had been received and it was hoped to start work at an early date. Regarding the Health Centre and Offices at Naas the site was available and the schedule of accommodation is being prepared. In Athy it was hoped to buy the site soon and start work this year.

In reply to the Chairman, Mr. Nolan said that the £400,000 for Minor Capital Schemes was divided as follows:

Special Hospital Care £160,000 for six projects General Hospital Care
£130,000 for seven projects Community Care £110,000 for four
projects

The £890,000 for new starts was being allocated as follows:

Special Hospital Care £595,000 for ten projects General Hospital Care
£120,000 for three projects Community Care £175,000 for six projects

He said that the Department would not know at this time the full extent of the funds which could be made available to the Board. The initial allocation was for the Board's most urgent needs. There was a prospect of other funds becoming available later in the year and it would be necessary to keep the Board's requirements before the Department.

In reply to Cllr. Groome's enquiry about the loss of 50 beds at Athy on reconstruction, Mr. Nolan said that Department Officials on a visit to Athy had decided that no further development be undertaken there except possibly a unit of twelve beds for, say, terminal cases etc. The treatment would look more favourably on provision of a hundred bed Unit at Naas together with a 30 bed assessment unit. This work will depend on the Departments ability to fund it and the Board will continue to press the Department on the matter.

In reply to Cllr. Glenn Mr. Donohue said that improvements of centers in wicklow would depend on the allocation made for maintenance work which was less than had been requested and it might not be possible to undertake the full Programme required in which case the Board might have to establish priorities in this area.

Councillor Browne expressed the fear that the allocation would leave the rd's services static without taking care of trends or inflation. On staff side he expressed concern that relief's would not be provided for sick and annual leave absences. He asked if there was money available to staff units coming into service. It was evident that with extension of services, particularly the area of Home Helps and Meals on wheels and with increasing medicines costs and refunds, a considerably greater sum of money than allotted would be required. He said there was not adequate time to examine the documentation distributed to the members and to make a final

decision and that the meeting should be adjourned to allow members to examine the figures in depth and to get an estimate of the additional costs of extensions of services envisaged in the coming year.

following motion proposed by Cllr. Browne and seconded by Cllr. Connolly s agreed

"That this meeting be adjourned to allow further discussion of the Board's capital allocation and that the Programme Managers detail the projects which the Board had supported and recommended to the Department and which do not figure in the allocation".

Deputy Murphy noted that the 1979 Capital Allocation included a planning provision for Newcastle. He enquired as to whether there was provision in the £50,000 for acquisition of sites for the purchase of a site at Greystones and proposed that the £400,000 allocated for minor capital (homes should include the provision of Health Centres at Shillelagh, Blessington, Coolatin, and Baltinglass. After a discussion the following motion was proposed by Deputy Murphy and seconded by Cllr. Kinsella.

"That the purchase of a site at Greystones be included in the £50,000 for acquisition of sites"
"That the minor capital works of £400,000 include the Health Centres at Shillelagh, Blessington, Knockanama and Baltinglass"

the motion was put to vote, the members present voting as follows:- For - four, Against - seven. The motion was declared lost.

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

Signed:

CHAIRMAN