Borough of Hawthorne
Board of Health
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Carol Chamberlin-Registrar **Phyllis Wooldridge-Deputy Registrar**

A special meeting of the Board of Health was held on May 12 2008 with the following Commissioners Present: Frank Kabrel Jr., Lucy Pataki, Robin Reade, Thomas Saraffian, Dot Silvestri, Viola Sweeney and Chairperson Laura Michalski. Also in attendance were Sanitarian Jean Mugulusi and Borough Administrator Eric Maurer.

Mr. Maurer gave the open public meetings act statement.

Mr. Maurer explained that the purpose of the meeting was to formulate a recommendation to the Mayor and Council regarding an interlocal agreement for health services – whether to continue with the City of Paterson, or instead to enter into an agreement with the County of Passaic for these services. Mr. Maurer informed the Board that the County was one of several other Health Departments he had approached about providing this service, but the only one who responded positively towards providing the service for essentially the same cost as is being paid to the City of Paterson.

Mr. Maurer introduced Irene Hunt, County Health Officer, and Michael Glovin, Assistant County Counsel. Ms. Hunte detailed her 21 years' experience in public health, with the City of Paterson, the City of East Orange and the State Health Department before assuming her county position a year ago. She also detailed the staff resources in place with the County: an epidemiologist, lead certified staff, a public health nurse, a medical director who is a pediatrician, and two health educators, and explained that service required to be delivered from County offices would be situated at 317 Pennsylvania Avenue in Paterson.

Ms. Hunte also provided the following information in response to Board questions:

- Infant immunizations would be provide in a clinic to be set up at 317 Pennsylvania Avenue using existing staff
- Hawthorne would be the County's first venture in municipal public health
- The flu clinic would continue to be provided in Hawthorne
- Hawthorne's existing health staff would remain in place

Mr. Glovin provided the following information in response to Board questions:

- The County Health Department was established in 1988
- A contract with the County would include all the same services as the present contract with Paterson

After. Ms. Hunte and Mr. Glovin left, Mr. Maurer explained that his biggest concern with Paterson had been that Paterson was not only without a Health Officer for nearly six months, but hadn't even advised the Borough of this fact, and that beforehand, the Health Officer had not been accessible. He advised though that, to the best of his knowledge, this had never created any gaps in necessary services, and that, with Paterson's hiring of a new health officer, the accessibility issue no longer seemed to be a problem. Mr. Maurer reported that the recommendation of the Borough's health staff, who had previously met with Ms. Hunte, Mr. Glovin, and other members of the County Health Department, was to stay with the City of Paterson, due to the continuity it would provide. Ms. Mugulusi added her concern that, in the event she herself was unavailable, the backup environmental health personnel provided by the County may not have the experience in dealing with municipal environmental health issues that Paterson's inspectors so.

In discussion, Board members noted that, while Ms. Hunte was clearly qualified, and the County seemed competent to provide the services, the City of Paterson was already providing the services in an acceptable manner.

The Board voted unanimously to recommend to the Mayor and Council to keep the health services contract with the City of Paterson for the following reasons: a) the continuity it would provide; b) there would be no cost savings or gain in services with the switch; c) the City has procedures and facilities in place that the County would have to develop; d) existing services provided by the City have been satisfactory; and e) the inevitable temporary problems that come with any organizational change could be avoided.