

11/14/24 – Human Resources Committee

Good morning. When I see an empty agenda like this one, I wonder if it means that there's a lot going on behind the scenes rather than in front of the public. After I retired from the county and started speaking publicly, I was invited by several management level county people to meet with them privately to get the inside story. That insider perspective can feel very warm and friendly. I advise you, as legislators, not to get stuck in the weeds by listening exclusively to the county manager's insider view. It's up to you to steer the ship.

I recently learned that the Roscoe Nursing Home is now rated a five-star facility, up from 3 stars. They deserve congratulations and acknowledgement for their very hard work to achieve that best score from Medicare. As you know, our own nursing home, the Adult Care Center, is still rated one star, far below average, as it has been for over 16 months now. There have been a lot of excuses for that, including its transitional status, since Infinitecare has failed to be awarded their certificate of need for the last two years, COVID, and a poor local labor pool. From the perspective of human resources; in the ACC, there's a staff that's made up largely from subcontractors, through at least 18 different agencies, over which the county has apparently no oversight at all. Foremost is the Administrator, who is a part time county employee for 8 hours per week but is employed for the rest of the time by Frontline, Infinitecare's own agency, although her salary of course is totally paid for by Sullivan County taxpayers like me. The Administrator position is supposed to be like the CEO of a business. Roscoe has an amazingly experienced and dedicated administrator, Joy Wood, wife of the Chairman of our Sunset Lake LDC. Those 5 stars are hers.

The ACC's Administrator was recruited and trained by Infinitecare and receives all oversight from Infinitecare alone. If she meets with our commissioner, or receives at least yearly evaluations, I'm unaware of it. She is also evidently not held accountable for her performance by county HR. She's been excused from reporting to the legislature by Sol Klein, CEO of Infinitecare, due to her fear of being bullied at these meetings, so her subordinate reports for her. Speaking as an ex-insider, if any management level county employee I knew had failed to perform like the current Administrator of the ACC, that person would have received a progressive series of counseling and disciplinary procedures and been ultimately brought up on charges of incompetence. The ACC Administrator is supposed to be a competitive position and has been posted for years on the county HR website. I wonder if there have been any applications. Why doesn't the county hire a person of experience and proven capability to fill that position and resume the county's proper oversight of the ACC? I would like to see some discussion about HR at the ACC on this committee's agenda next month.

Thank you for your time.