**Cook County Health (CCH) System - LWVCC ANNUAL MEETING 5/2/2022**

Background: The Cook County Health System has been providing patient care to the residents of Cook County for over 180 years. Locations include Stroger Hospital, Provident Hospital, Ruth Rothstein HIV-AIDS clinic, and 12 ambulatory health locations. CCH also provides health care at the Cermak Jail, the Juvenile Temporary Detention Center and through its Managed Care Plan. It reported that over 500,000 patients received services in 2021.

In 2008, an independent board of eleven members was set up to govern the entire system as listed above. The Ordinance governing the Independent board was changed in 2020 to provide more financial and management oversight by the Cook County President and Commissioners, and Mr. Israel Rocha, Jr. was hired as the new CEO. In 2021 a new board member, Lyndon Taylor, was made the board chair within a month of being appointed to the board.

**Challenges:**

* Between COVID, increased meetings with the CC Board and Committees, several new members to the management team and board, as well as a strong mandate for more health equity throughout the county, the System has had and will continue to need to stretch its resources.
* Restore staff to the Public Health Department to meet todays and future needs of the county.
* Charity patients – CCH serves between 45% and 50% of the entire Cook County pool of patients.
* Cancel or go forward with replacing the old Provident Hospital.
* Keep more of its Managed Care patients from going to other providers.
* Convert its current Medicaid patients to Medicare when eligible.
* Revisit its marketing strategy for “*More Care”*, a Medicare Advantage health plan, which continues to fall below revenue and membership expectations.

**The League’s Role - Observe, Educate, and Advocate:**

* Met virtually with CCH Budget leaders for a presentation of its proposed 2022 budget of $3.889 billion dollars. We questioned the estimated cost of the State requirement to provide Medicaid coverage for not only 65+ undocumented seniors; but starting later this year, those 55 to 65 are also eligible.
* We also requested that this and future annual budgets include three years of historical data as context; asked if/when the System will separate the Managed Care Budget [County Care] from the system-wide budget; and again urged that future budget hearings with the League also include other good government organizations in the same meeting.
* Observed all monthly board meetings, several committee meetings, and two 2023-25 Strategic Plan Town Hall meetings. (*We welcome new observers and provide orientation*).
* Added observing the monthly Cook County Commissioners Health & Hospital Committee’s monthly meeting for updates from CCH Management and the Public Health Department.
* CCH Board/Staff interviews which were put on hold due to COVID-19 will resume in the fall of 2022.
* Work with the Civic Federation on issues of mutual interest. After 4 years of League advocacy for live streaming and taping, the CCH Board is live streaming on You-Tube; and the Board Secretary will post the audio tape to You-Tube after each board and committee meeting.

***Diane Edmundson [Chair], Gwen Maxie-Brown, Susan Kern, Lisa Slankard, Peg Moster, Michele Niccolai. Cook County Health Interest Group***