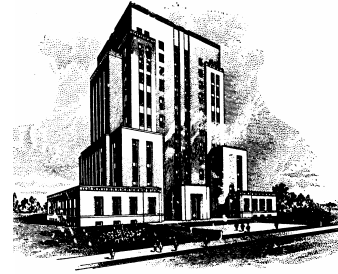


Racine County Office of Racine County Board

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February 23, 2008

Racine County Health and
Human Development Committee
Ridgewood Board of Trustees

Dear Chairperson Bellante:

I am writing to follow up on the conversations we had in early February regarding the Superior Health Linen contract. You had agreed to my request to speak at the Ridgewood Board of Trustees meeting for the February 25th meeting, but after the last County Board meeting on February 12th, you declined to do that when we spoke again. Instead, you requested that I put these concerns in writing and send them to Corporation Counsel and the Ridgewood Nursing Administrator. The following is a brief summary of my concerns regarding the September 2007 contract between Superior Health Linens and Racine County for services to Ridgewood Care Center. There is a disturbing pattern of events that begins with Superior's implicit misrepresentation on the original contract about its adherence to linen standards, and includes the County Executive's signing an amendment under troubling circumstances.

- On September 1 2007, the County signed a contract with Superior for the provision of linen services to Ridgewood Care Center. Section 9.2 of this contract states, "Upon request, Superior shall provide to customer copies of its Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Counsel (HLAC) audits and certification as evidence for meeting state and/ or JACHO standards as they pertain to linen service." (HLAC is the only independent body that investigates and accredits healthcare laundries. Because HLAC has expertise that customers lack, accreditation is an important assurance that companies are complying with industry standards.)
- After receiving information that suggested that Superior was not certified, on January 11, 2008, I sent an e-mail to Jon Lehman, Racine Corporation Counsel (copied to Geoffrey Greiveldinger Chief of Staff for the County Executive) asking Mr. Lehman to look into this.
- Also on January 11, 2008, I sent an email inquiry to HLAC requesting a confirmation of Superior's status.

- On January 16, 2008, five days after I contacted Mr. Lehman and the County Executive Chief of Staff to express my concerns, Mr. Lehman appeared to suddenly sign an amendment to the contract with Superior Health Linens that removed the HLAC certification requirement. (The amendment had been signed over a month earlier by Scott Reppert of Superior.)
- County Executive McReynold's signature is also on the amendment, although not dated. And while the amendment is also notarized, the notary did not date it either.
- Neither Mr. Lehman nor Mr. Greiveldinger responded to my communications regarding Superior.
- On January 23, 2008, Judy Reino, Chair of HLAC, confirmed to me that Superior Health Linens is not HLAC accredited and had not been inspected.
- I have confirmed, through the HLAC website, that Hospital Laundry Services (HLS), a company that had also bid on the Racine contract in August 2007, is in fact, HLAC certified.

Superior's implicit misrepresentation of their HLAC accreditation raises serious concerns about its business practices and its linen standards. It is very disturbing that the County continues to contract with this company.

It is also deeply troubling that County Executive McReynolds and Mr. Lehman signed the amendment, particularly *after* I began to raise questions about Superior's accreditation. They have, for reasons unknown, agreed to change Superior's contract rather than insisting that nursing home residents receive linens from a company in which we can have confidence about their ethics, regard for the law, and their linens.

Please schedule this request for further discussion at your next meeting.

Sincerely Yours,
Diane m. Lange
Supervisor Diane M. Lange
2908 Ruby Ave.
Racine, WI. 53402-4208

cc: Jon Lehman, Racine County Corporation Counsel
Fran Petrick, Ridgewood Nursing Home Administrator
Members of the Racine County Board