

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: JULY 28, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Tessier
O'Connor
Sheehan
Bentley
Kenny
F. Thomas
Barody

Representing Department of Social Services:
Robert Phelps, Commissioner
Douglas Herschleb, Director of Services
Michael Jabaut, Director, Administrative
Services
Kathy Baker, Fiscal Manager
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
JoAnn McKinstry, Confidential Secretary,
Commissioner, Administrative & Fiscal Svces.
Supervisor Champagne
Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk

Mr. Tessier called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Barody, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Phelps, who distributed copies of his agenda packet for the meeting which included a copy of the Department's Weekly Shares Report. Copies of the Department's 2005 Annual Report and the Annual Statistical Report for 2005 (a supplement to the Annual Report) dated February 2006 were also distributed. Copies of the items are on file with the minutes.

Mr. Phelps proceeded with review of the Agenda, and pursuant to Item No. 1 he referred the Committee members to the Weekly Shares Report. He apprised it showed the projected cap savings as a result of the Department's cost containment initiatives was \$985,880. Mr. Phelps explained that would be the amount they would save every year into the future because that was the figure used in calculating their base. In addition, he apprised the local cap adjustments from the State to date have come to \$1.4 million. Mr. Phelps stated between the cap savings and the cost containment initiatives they project savings of \$3.5 million in 2006. He apprised that will be the amount saved every year into the future.

Continuing, Mr. Phelps apprised the report also showed their projected shortfall for the year of \$956,277. He explained that was because the appropriation was \$9.7 million and their final cap was \$10.3 million plus \$116,011 in IGT (Intergovernmental Transfer) funds.

Mr. Phelps apprised a letter had also been received from the State Department of Health (DOH) that additional funds in the amount of \$3,932 would be recovered relative to the 621 overburden

reconciliation. He apprised that after paying for the contract with Nancy Rose Stormer (for services to identify and recover Medicaid revenue maximization for 620/621 eligibles) the County's total net amount of the overburden reconciliation would be close to \$80,000 this year.

Mr. Phelps stated Agenda Item No. 2 was the presentation of the Annual Report for 2005. He noted the Committee members would recall that at the February 24, 2006 Committee meeting he had provided copies to them of the Annual Statistical Report which, he said is a supplement and complement to the Annual Report. (Note: Subsequent to the meeting copies of these reports were also provided to the other members of the Board of Supervisors). Mr. Phelps encouraged the Committee members and Board members to review the Annual Report as it contained information on the Department's various programs and services and reflected the size of the case loads and trends in case loads and costs.

Mr. Phelps reviewed the report in detail with the Committee members. During the presentation, he responded to questions from the Committee members on various aspects of the report.

Mr. O'Connor praised the comprehensiveness of the Annual Report and commended Mr. Phelps and all the Department's staff for such an outstanding report. Mr. Phelps acknowledged the remarks.

Mr. Champagne entered the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Pursuant to Agenda Item No. 3, Mr. Phelps discussed the issue of a possible financial contract with the Sheriff's Office for enhanced investigator services for cases that might have a criminal element pertinent to both departments. He stated such cases would involve fraud, Child Protective Services (CPS), sexual abuse, serious abuse and neglect, and financial exploitation cases in APS (Adult Protective Services). Mr. Phelps stated they believed having an investigator co-located in the Social Services Department would improve the relationship between the departments, enhance the investigation process and move it along more quickly.

Continuing, he explained the billing would be based on the type of case and there were funds available that would cover the majority of the cases. For example, he said Medicaid fraud cases would be 100% reimbursable. Mr. Phelps apprised they also have a State grant for \$26,193 to improve CPS case and staff ratios that could be used for those particular investigations. If, he said the bulk of the cases were of those types then there would be 100% reimbursement for the contract, but perhaps there would be a little bit of a local share. Mr. Phelps commented he felt this would also benefit the Sheriff's Department by giving them some relief in these areas and the County would receive some additional revenues.

Mr. Tessier asked if the proposal had been discussed with Sheriff Cleveland. Mr. Phelps confirmed it had been. He advised that Mr. Dusek, the County Attorney, was reviewing it to see if it would be legally appropriate. Mr. Phelps noted he had contacted other counties and had received several contracts of this type that Mr. Dusek was currently reviewing.

Mr. O'Connor advised this proposal was discussed somewhat at yesterday's Sheriff & Communications Committee meeting. However, he said because the Sheriff did not have all the facts that Committee agreed to wait until this Committee met today before discussing the issue in depth. He stated the Sheriff had indicated he might be able to do something like this for the rest of the year. Mr. O'Connor advised the contract would mean another full-time employee in the Sheriff's Office and access to the Sheriff's computer and records, etc. The employee would have to be located in the Social Services Department which would incur some costs, he added. Mr. O'Connor noted Supervisor VanNess, who is a former employee of the Sheriff's Office and who is now a member of that Committee favored the proposal. He stated he probably would support the idea but he felt a lot more information was needed about it. Mr. O'Connor suggested perhaps a joint meeting of the Committees was not needed but that there should be a way to have Sheriff Cleveland and Mr. Phelps answer the supervisors' questions about it. He stated the Sheriff did say he would be willing to do this and the costs would be for one extra person on top of the 12 staff members he is looking to add to the Office.

Mr. Tessier asked if the position would be full or part time. Mr. Phelps replied from their discussions they felt it could go either way i.e., one full time, two part time or one part time depending on the demand. However, he said they felt it would probably be a full-time position. Mr. Tessier suggested Mr. Phelps, Sheriff Cleveland and Mr. Dusek put something together to bring back to the Committee. There could be a special meeting or a joint meeting when necessary, he added. Mr. Tessier asked for the Committee members' input; and they concurred with the suggestion. Mr. Bentley, Chairman of the Sheriff & Communications Committee, advised Sheriff Cleveland was waiting to hear from Mr. Dusek on the matter.

Mr. O'Connor stated Sheriff Cleveland had also mentioned there was a new law concerning CPS cases that when it has been determined that a child has to be removed from a home that a police officer has to remain in the home with the child until placement to another location is made. The Sheriff had said that would affect his office more than the Department of Social Services, he added.

Mr. Tessier stated it would be left that Mr. Phelps would work the situation out with the Sheriff and the County Attorney and then come back to the committee with the information. Then, he said if needed a joint Committee meeting would be held.

Mr. Phelps recognized the Department's staff who were present and he introduced Kathy Baker, Fiscal Manager, Douglas Herschleb, Director of Services and Michael Jabaut, Director of Administrative Services. He stated without their leadership the Department would not be in the position it is in today. Mr. Phelps also expressed his personal thanks to them. The staff members acknowledged the remarks.

Concluding the agenda, Mr. Phelps said was that his reappointment as Commissioner of Social Services would expire on September 30th. He stated a resolution request form for the appointment was included in the agenda packet. (A copy of Resolution No. 531 of 2001, the prior

Social Services
July 28, 2006
Page 4

appointment resolution was also included in the agenda packet.)

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Sheehan to approve the request, as presented.

Mr. Kenny requested an executive session to discuss the work history of a particular employee. Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Barody and carried unanimously to declare executive session pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive Session was held from 11:10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

Committee reconvened.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve a resolution to reappoint Mr. Phelps as Commissioner of Social Services for a term of October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2011. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk