

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: AUGUST 29, 2006

Committee Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Representing Department of Social Services:

Robert Phelps, Commissioner  
Douglas Herschleb, Director of Services  
Michael Jabaut, Director, Administrative  
Services  
Kathy Baker, Fiscal Manager  
Joan Parsons, Commissioner, Administrative & Fiscal  
Services  
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board  
Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk

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Mr. Tessier called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. Tessier advised he would have to leave the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and Mr. O'Connor, Committee Vice-chairman, would continue to chair the meeting if necessary. In view of his timing conflict, Mr. Tessier asked Mr. Phelps to review the Department's proposed 2007 Budget first. Mr. Phelps acknowledged the request.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Phelps, who distributed copies of his agenda packet for the meeting and the proposed 2007 budget package. Copies of the items are on file with the minutes.

Pursuant to Agenda Item No. 3, Mr. Phelps referred the Committee members to the Budget package. He stated to simplify the presentation the details of the budget were in a cover sheet for the Budget and spread sheets instead of the full package. The cover sheet outlined the Type of Assistance or Expense, Appropriation Requested, Revenue Estimated and percent of Estimated Reimbursement.

Mr. Herschleb entered the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

Mr. Phelps reviewed the format of the spread sheet columns in detail with the Committee members. He spoke first on the Administration Division of the Budget (6010). The total 2007 request for the Administration Division was \$7,988,148, compared to the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$7,597,033, an increase of \$391,115 or 5.15%. Mr. Phelps stated the figures for the salaries were provided to them by the Personnel Office. He spoke on the Equipment

(6010.2 code) figures, and he noted there was a 15.84% reduction in the 2007 appropriation request of \$70,000 from the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$84,248. Mr. Phelps stated part of the \$70,000 would be used to purchase 14 work stations. He said they had been replacing work stations annually for 10% of the staff at a time. Mr. Phelps noted this would put them in good shape for the move into the new building (Health and Human Services Building). By that time, he said just about everyone should have a new work station. In reply to Mr. O'Connor's query about what equipment could be moved to the new building, Mr. Phelps said he had been preparing for the move each year for the past five years. The work stations had been considered in the (architectural) plans for the new building, he said.

Mr. Kenny asked what the date was for the year-to-date expenditures. Mr. Phelps replied that could vary with some expenses being four months and some six months. He said it depended on what claims had been processed. Mr. Kenny pointed out in particular there were large differences between the appropriation amounts and the expenses for the Equipment and the Retirement, Social Security line items. Mr. Phelps explained the Equipment figures included two new cars that had just been purchased but not paid for yet so they were not reflected in the year-to-date expenditures. Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Baker, the Department's Fiscal Manager, and she explained the retirement had not been paid out yet. The figures for the hospitalization, Medicare and Medicaid expenditures were up to date, she added.

Mr. Phelps stated the \$1,537,252 request for Contractual Expenses (6010.4) was a 4.37% increase over the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$1,472,955. He explained the request included the two new contracts with the Sheriff's Office for investigations that had been discussed with the Committee at the last meeting. He noted these contracts were a pending item for this meeting. Mr. Phelps advised the State had approved \$30,000 in funds for the contracts. Relative to the Equipment request, Mr. Phelps stated it also included the cost to replace the Veterans' Services van.

Mr. Phelps referred to the fringe items line (6010.8) that included (employee) health insurance with retirement, etc. He apprised most of the 13.30% increase was due to hospitalization costs. Mr. Phelps commented he felt the County employees did not recognize how much the County paid for those costs and how significant a benefit it was. He said he did not know if that information could be included on the employees' paycheck stubs for information purposes but it might be a good idea.

Continuing, Mr. Phelps advised the Countryside Adult Home portion of the budget would be reviewed by the Westmount Health Facility Committee at its meeting tomorrow. Thus, he noted this budget could be approved contingent upon that Committee's review and approval of it. Mr. Phelps said he did not think it was necessary to review this budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the Countryside Adult Home proposed 2007 Budget, as presented, contingent upon its approval by the Westmount Health Facility Committee. Mr. Phelps stated Mr. Payne, Administrator of the

Westmount Health Facility and the Countryside Adult Home, had advised him he was considering asking for one personnel change in this budget that was not part of this budget request. If, Mr. Phelps said that Committee approved the request, it would then be added to this budget. *(Note: The Westmount Health Facility Committee approved the Countryside Adult Home Budget at its meeting on August 30th including the aforementioned personnel change, and it was forwarded to the Budget Officer.)*

Mr. Phelps presented the Public Facility for Children (Detention Home) Budget (6050). The total 2007 request of \$412,475 was the same as the 2006 adjusted appropriation. He explained they had reduced the expenditures for the facility as the need for detention had leveled off and they felt that would continue to be the case.

Mr. Phelps spoke on the Day Care Block Grant line item (6055.4). He stated the 2007 proposed request of \$1,588,000 was based on the amount of that grant which was \$747,882 plus an additional allocation of \$2.4 million from the Flexible Fund to Families. Mr. Phelps apprised from those funds \$775,000 was being put into daycare. He stated except for a small amount of the daycare funds that come from Public Assistance, the remaining funds were 100% federal. Mr. Phelps pointed out the Contractual Expenses request for the Purchase of Services line item (6070.4) was the same amount as the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$412,475.

The assistance programs proposed budget was presented next. Mr. Phelps noted the MMIS (Medical Management Information System) (6100.4) 2005 request was \$11.5 million and the 2006 adjusted appropriation was \$9.7 million. He apprised the \$10,745,710 estimate for 2006 would be the actual expenditure for the year so the budget would need to be amended to increase the MMIS appropriation to cover the difference (\$956,288) before the end of the year.

Mr. Phelps pointed out they had reduced the Medical Assistance (6101.4) request slightly. The 2007 request of \$300,000 was \$140,400, or 31.8% less than the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$440,400. He stated there was also a reduction in the TANF (Aid to Dependent Children) (6109.4) request from \$2,800,000 to \$2,600,000.

Next, Mr. Phelps spoke on the Foster Care requests. He stated those included TANF, Child Care (Foster Care) 6119.4, Aid to Juvenile Delinquents Private Facility (6123.4) and Aid to Juvenile Delinquents State Training Schools (6129.4). Mr. Phelps explained the funds flow among those four codes depending on the category of the child in foster care which did allow the opportunity to transfer funds among the codes. He pointed out there was a significant increase in the 2007 Child Care (Foster Care) request. The 2007 request of \$3,600,000 was a \$1,030,000, or a 40.08% increase from the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$2,570,000. Mr. Tessier asked what the reimbursement rate was for those costs. Mr. Phelps replied it varied by the category and it was typically around 75%. In reply to Mr. Barody's query on what the services were, Mr. Phelps said they were for the foster parents who board the foster children. He explained one of the reasons for the shortfall was that they had recently increased the rate to flow with the State's rate as the State adjusts it because they had been under the State's maximum.

Mr. Phelps noted the request for the Aid to Juveniles Delinquent Private Facility (6123.4) reflected a decrease and the Aid to Juvenile Delinquents State Training Schools (6129.4) was maintained the same as the 2006 adjusted appropriation. That was also the case with the Safety Net (Home Relief) (6140.4) request, he added.

Mr. Phelps spoke on the HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) (6141.4). He explained the request had been reduced significantly because they were looking to code and process these payments in a way that the State would make the payments to the vendors involved. That would mean the County would not have to upfront the payments and then be reimbursed, he said. The 2007 HEAP request of \$30,000 was a decrease of \$1,692,000, or 98.26%, from the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$1,722,000.

The Emergency Aid to Adults (6142.4) for SSI clients showed a slight increase, Mr. Phelps noted. The increase of \$5,000 between the 2006 adjusted appropriation of \$15,000 and the 2007 request of \$20,000 was 33.33%.

Mr. Phelps apprized the Grand Total Budget request, excluding the Countryside Adult Home Budget, reflected an overall increase of 1%. He stated that did not take into account the current MMIS shortfall. The Grand Total Budget request was \$30,360,912, an increase of \$466,057 over the \$29,894,855 2006 adjusted appropriation. Mr. Phelps referred the Committee members to the last spread sheet which he said would provide a better picture of what the 2006 and 2007 budgets would look like. He stated the necessary adjustment in the MMIS appropriation and the actual fixed amount they would have to pay this year were shown on this page. Mr. Phelps stated the actual decrease would be 2.3% from the 2006 amount.

Mr. Phelps stated the budget request included some personnel change requests which were outlined in a summary sheet that was attached to the packet of the requested personnel change forms that were distributed with the budget package.

Mr. Phelps stated the first two requests were for the new positions of a Caseworker and an Intake Clerk in the CASA Program because the positions are needed to support the developing Point of Entry (POE) Program. A local share was not required because of the Medicaid cap, and there was 100% reimbursement, he said.

Mr. Phelps pointed out the remaining requests were all to add and delete positions and he reviewed the proposed changes with the Committee members. He explained he was asking to delete Account Clerk positions and reclassify them as Senior Account Clerk positions because his review of the job duties of a Senior Account Clerk title showed that was a considerably more appropriate classification for the current staff who are in the Account Clerk positions. Mr. Phelps noted the Account Clerk title was used mostly in schools and it was rarely used in County departments any longer.

Mr. Phelps apprized the total impact of these requests to the County based on the revenues that

would be received would be \$4,465. He offered to review the details of the justifications for each of the requests if the Committee members wished him to do so. In reply to Mr. Barody's query, Mr. Phelps confirmed he had reviewed the requests with both Mrs. Parsons, County Administrator, and Mr. Kelly, County Personnel Officer. He stated Mr. Kelly had also reviewed and identified the appropriate classifications for the positions. Mrs. Parsons agreed there was discussion on the requests. However, she said the reclassifications were not discussed so she was seeing them for the first time. Mrs. Parsons stated she understood the basis for the CASA position changes was because the Department was going to be in the lead with the aforementioned POE. Mr. Phelps confirmed that was correct.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to approve the Department of Social Services' proposed 2007 Budget requests, including the personnel changes, as presented, and to authorize the Committee Chairman to sign them and forward them to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Phelps stated he had an informational item for the Committee members that had not been included on the agenda. He advised there was a need to submit a Warren County Youth & Family Services Plan for 2007 through 2009 to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Mr. Phelps explained the plan required his signature as the Department's Commissioner, along with those of the County Youth Bureau Director and the Director of the County Probation Department. He advised the request to approve the submission of the plan had been brought to the Youth Programs Committee where it was approved and the necessary resolution to authorize its submission was authorized for the next board meeting.

Review of the agenda resumed and Mr. Phelps spoke on the Pending Item concerning the contract with the Sheriff's Office for investigation services. He stated a copy of Sheriff Cleveland's proposal for the services was included in the agenda packet. A copy of the proposal is on file with the minutes. Mr. Phelps said he had also received copies of similar contracts for such services from other Counties that Mr. Dusek, the County Attorney, was currently reviewing. He stated Mr. Dusek would like more time to review the contracts so this item would remain as pending.

Agenda Item No. 1, Mr. Phelps said was the Medicaid Weekly Shares update that was distributed with the agenda. A copy of the update is on file with the minutes. He briefly reviewed the update with the Committee members.

Concluding the agenda (Item No. 2), Mr. Phelps requested approval of a resolution to amend Resolution No. 395 of 2006 to add Hamilton County to the Point of Entry (POE) for Long Term Care Services. Mr. Phelps advised that Mrs. Kelly, Director of the Warren-Hamilton Counties Office for the Aging, would like the POE to include Hamilton County. He advised the Warren County member agencies of the POE would only serve Warren County residents and the Hamilton County member agencies would only serve Hamilton County residents.

Mr. Phelps responded to questions from the Committee members on the request. He confirmed for Mr. Kenny that there were no budgetary or personnel requests in connection with the request. He stated the agreement would allow for a smoother administration of the services by Mrs. Kelly as only one plan for the services instead of two separate ones would have to be prepared. Mr. Phelps apprised the total appropriation of \$104,000 would be divided equally between the two Counties.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. Copies of the resolution request form, Resolution No. 395 of 2006 and Appendix B of the interagency agreement are on file with the minutes.

Mr. Tessier recalled at the last Committee meeting a resolution to approve Mr. Phelps' reappointment as Commissioner of the Department of Social Services had been authorized for the August 18th board meeting. However, Mr. Tessier explained the Resolution did not go through that meeting because he had asked that it be held because he was going to be absent from the meeting. He stated the resolution would go through the September 15th board meeting if the Committee members agreed. The Committee members concurred the Resolution should be handled at the September 15th board meeting.

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk