

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: AUGUST 24, 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS MASON
SHEEHAN
F. THOMAS
TESSIER
CHAMPAGNE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS HASKELL
SOKOL

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

PATRICIA AUER, DIRECTOR, HEALTH SERVICES
GINELLE JONES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH
SHARON SCHALDONE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, HOME CARE
TAWN DRISCOLL, FISCAL MANAGER

HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES

JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD

NICHOLAS CAIMANO, BUDGET OFFICER

JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES

AMANDA ALLEN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Mason called the meeting of the Health Services Committee to order at 2:15 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from both the August 1, 2007 and August 10, 2007 Committee meetings, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Patricia Auer, Director of Health Services, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Prior to beginning the review of the agenda, Mrs. Auer apprised that two positive rabies cases and one meningitis case had been reported earlier in the week and her Department had been very busy tracking them. She noted that the rabies cases had been reported in the Town of Queensbury and Lake George and had involved a stray cat and a raccoon.

Discussion ensued with respect to the rabies cases reported.

Mrs. Auer advised that because the meeting was intended primarily for discussion of the 2008 Budget proposal, review of the items pending from prior meetings would be postponed until the next month's meeting.

Proceeding with the New Business portion of the agenda, Mrs. Auer advised that the first item listed was a request for referral to the Personnel Committee and a notice of intent to fill the vacant position of a Community Health Nurse, with a base salary of \$39,948, was included in the agenda. She explained that the position had been vacated due to resignation because the nurse in the position found that the required paperwork involved was overwhelming.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Community Health Nurse, grade 20, with a base salary \$39,948, or to reclassify the position to that of a Registered Professional Nurse, grade 19, with a base salary of \$38,308 if it could not

be filled appropriately, and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer stated that the second request listed was for an amendment to the 2007 Disease Control Budget in order to purchase Zostavax, the Shingles Vaccine, with the appropriations to be listed as follows:

Appropriation code -	A4018.0030.435 - Disease Control	\$7,267.50
Revenue code -	A4018.0030.1613 - Disease Control	\$7,267.50

Mrs. Auer noted that because this was a new vaccine they had not included funding for it in the 2007 Budget and had only purchased a small amount; however, there were a lot of people interested in obtaining the vaccination and therefore they needed more. She said that they had accounted for the costs of the vaccine in the 2008 Budget request, but did not want to delay the vaccinations until 2008. Mrs. Auer added that they would realize a slight increase in revenues from the distribution of the vaccine.

Mr. Mason asked if the Shingles vaccination was for preventative measures or if it was to be administered upon the onset of symptoms and Mrs. Auer replied that it was a preventative vaccine. Mr. Champagne asked if the vaccination would be available to anyone and Mrs. Auer explained that it would be available to any person wanting it, for a fee of \$163.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the 2007 County Budget as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing with the agenda review, Mrs. Auer apprised that the next request was for authorization to renew the contract with NYSDOH (New York State Department of Health) Division of Nutrition, Bureau of Supplemental Food Programs to authorize the acceptance of continued funding for the WIC (Women, Infants & Children) Program in the amount of \$477,497 for the period October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. She noted that this was more than had been received in the prior year and they were not anticipating any County contribution to the WIC program for the coming year, as reflected in the 2008 Budget request.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to renew the contract with NYSDOH Division of Nutrition, Bureau of Supplemental Food Programs to allow receipt of funding for the WIC Program in the amount of \$477,497, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer explained that the agenda included a request to amend the NYSDOH contract for the Children with Special Health Care Needs grant to allow the acceptance of a COLA (Cost of Living Allowance) in the amount of \$259 for the current contract year of October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the NYSDOH contract for the Children with Special Health Care Needs grant to allow the acceptance of a COLA increase in the amount of \$259, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

The next request, Mrs. Auer apprised, was to renew the contract with NYSDOH to allow continued receipt of funding for the Children With Special Health Care Needs Program in the amount of \$18,883 for the period commencing October 1, 2007 and terminating September 30, 2008.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the request to renew the contract with NYSDOH to allow continued receipt of funding for the Children With Special Health Care Needs Program, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing, Mrs. Auer said that the agenda included a request to authorize renewal of a contract with NYSDOH to allow continued receipt of funding for Early Intervention Program Administration in the amount of \$41,805.00 for the period commencing October 1, 2007 and terminating September 30, 2008. She noted that this was the same amount that had been received for the prior contract year.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to renew the contract with NYSDOH to allow continued receipt of funding for the Early Intervention Program Administration, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

The final resolution request, Mrs. Auer apprised, was for permission to renew the contract with Health Research Inc. to authorize receipt of funding for the Emergency Preparedness grant cycle commencing August 31, 2007 and terminating August 8, 2008 in the amount of \$73,060. She noted that this figure represented a decrease from the prior year's grant amount of \$85,000 as funding to all counties and New York City had been decreased. Mrs. Auer stated that she anticipated a decrease in funding for the next contract year as well; however, she added, the decrease would not be detrimental to the Department as they had not significantly increased staff to deal with the Emergency Preparedness plan.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to renew the contract with Health Research Inc. to authorize the receipt of funding in the amount of \$73,060 in connection with the Emergency Preparedness grant, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 21st Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

With respect to the Public Health Rabies Program, Ginelle Jones, Assistant Director of Public Health, advised that they intended to forward a letter to each of the Towns and Animal Control Officers asking that all correspondence subsequent to animal bites be provided in writing. She explained that the current procedure was for the Animal Control Officer to contact the Public Health Department via telephone to give a verbal accounting of the follow-up action taken pursuant to an animal bite. Ms. Jones apprised that they had developed a form which would be completed and forwarded in place of the verbal communication to make the system more accurate. She said that this information was being provided for the Committee member's edification as copies of the correspondence would be forwarded to each of the Supervisors in the coming weeks.

Proceeding with the Budget request, privilege of the floor was extended to Tawn Driscoll, Fiscal Manager, who distributed copies of the 2008 Budget proposal to the Committee members. *A copy of the 2008 Budget proposal is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Driscoll apprised that along with the Budget proposal, she had provided each of the Committee members with a document entitled 'Requested Personnel Changes for 2008', the second page of which included items never before included in the salary schedules. She directed the Committee to item number one, which indicated that overtime costs listed in the payroll documentation for the CHHA (Certified Home Healthcare Administration) Health Services, LTC (Long Term Care) Nursing, Family Health and Disease Program codes was incorrectly reflected as a total of \$84,150 for all four codes, while it should have been \$169,500; a difference of \$85,350. Ms. Driscoll stated that the overtime was necessary to offer continuous 24-hour coverage to patients. Mrs. Auer added that when per-diem nurses were available they were used, because they were not paid overtime; however, in cases where they were unable to attract an appropriate pool of per-diem nurses, the Health Nurses were used to offer services to patients. Ms. Driscoll stated that many of the per-diem nurses had been used to cover sick and disability leave for the Health Nurses out of work.

Ms. Driscoll stated that the second item listed referred to Bio-Terrorism call pay and she noted that the salary sheets showed only the salary of one part-time person and there should have been two full-time and one part-time. She reminded the Committee that they were on call 24-hours per day for Bio-Terrorism issues, incurring an annual cost of \$7,800, which had not been included in the salary schedules and needed to be added. Mrs. Auer added that this cost was grant funded and in the event that the funding ceased, the Bio-Terrorism call pay would also cease. She noted that several years ago these positions had been approved by resolution; however, the funding for the positions was not being entered in the proper place.

The third item listed, Ms. Driscoll explained, had absolutely no impact on the Budget, and pertained to a part-time WIC Dietician who also worked with the CHHA, LTC and EI/PS (Early Intervention/Pre-School) divisions. She noted that although the total salary of \$8,000 should be broken up and allocated to the CHHA, LTC and EI/PS Budgets, unfortunately, the total was being allocated to the CHHA Budget. Ms. Driscoll stated that although there was no bottom line impact to the Budget, the salary needed to be broken up and distributed to the Departments where the services were being utilized.

Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, noted that no salary was indicated for services provided to the WIC Department and he asked what that salary was. Ms. Driscoll replied that she was unsure of the salary received through WIC services as the Health Services Budget only included \$8,000 for the services given in their divisions. Mrs. Auer estimated that salary to be in the range of \$2,000 - \$3,000 annually for WIC services.

Ms. Driscoll apprised that the fourth and final item listed on the addendum referred to the number of IV Nurses listed on the salary schedules. She said that as per Mrs. Auer's recollection, a resolution had been approved authorizing ten IV Nurse slots, while only nine were listed in the salary schedule. Ms. Driscoll noted that IV Nurses received a stipend of \$1,500 for their specialty and for being on-call 24-hours per day. Mrs. Auer verified Ms. Driscoll's statement, noting that the resolution had authorized ten IV Nurses and there had never been another lowering that number.

Mr. Champagne asked if the stipends for the IV Nurses were funded by the State and Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director of Home Care, replied in the negative, noting that their services were billed to the patients insurance carrier if applicable. Mr. Champagne asked if all ten IV Nurse positions were necessary and Ms. Schaldone replied affirmatively, adding that the number was necessary to meet the demands of the patients without overworking the Nurses themselves.

Moving on to the 2008 proposed Budget review, Ms. Driscoll apprised that the first page of the request was a summary of the request, listing all of the divisions and their Budgets, as well as totals for mandated expenses and State, Federal and other revenues. She noted that of the total appropriation request of \$12,668,964, mandated expenses accounted for \$4,951,126. Ms. Driscoll advised that after accounting for State, Federal, insurance and private-pay revenues anticipated, the total cost to the County for 2008 would be \$1,006,144, as compared to the \$329,348 appropriated for 2007 and the 2006 actual costs of \$590,086. She noted that the impact to the County was not unreasonable, considering that the agency initially incurred expenses in the neighborhood of \$12 million annually.

Referring to the figures representing the costs to the County, Mr. Champagne pointed out that the costs for 2008 were more than triple the figure listed for 2007 and he asked for an explanation of the increase. Ms. Driscoll explained that the majority of the increase was due solely to the implementation of the Point of Care program, the costs of which had been included in the 2008 Budget request. Mr. Caimano noted that he felt the revenues anticipated for 2007 were much higher than those expected for 2008, which was part of the increase. However, he said, the Point of Care program costs should not have been included in the 2008 Budget request because they intended to bond the Point of Care program costs of \$554,000. In light of this, Ms. Driscoll stated that if the \$554,000 for the Point of Care program was removed, the impact to the County for 2008 would be in the neighborhood of \$450,000.

Mr. Caimano pointed out significant increases in the Other Equipment (A.4010 260) and Data Processing & Internet Fees (A.4010 428) codes and Ms. Driscoll explained that the increases in both of these codes was attributed to the costs of the software and hardware required in connection with the Point of Care program.

Mr. Caimano then questioned the amounts listed for WIC Food Vouchers (A.4013 446), which reflected \$870,000 for both the 2007 appropriation and the 2008 request, while the 2006 actual balance was \$0 and he asked if this figure was entered on the wrong line as in 2006 and 2007 the code above it, Foods (A.4013 445) reflected figures similar to the 2008 request. Ms. Driscoll apprised that this was not a mistake and she explained that the County Auditor had previously created the Foods code to account for food purchases and supplies necessary to teach with and so the Treasurer's Office had created the WIC Food Vouchers code strictly for those WIC vouchers that came in and out of the Department. She noted that she had included only \$411,000 of the \$477,497 WIC funding previously approved as approximately \$50,000 of this amount was not guaranteed. Ms. Driscoll stated that the funding had been included in the 2008 Budget request to cover all expenses and supplies and to show no impact to the County for the WIC program.

Referring to anticipated revenues received, Mr. Caimano apprised that only 51% of anticipated revenues for the LTC division had been received in 2006 and he said they were having difficulty in determining where the Department revenues were going. He added that there were several other codes with similar occurrences. Ms. Driscoll stated that funds were being received; however, the information forwarded along with the funds was minimal and it was possible that the funds were being appropriated to the wrong codes.

Mr. Mason stated that this was happening in many other Departments as well and Mr. Caimano agreed.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Caimano stated that even in removing the Point of Care program costs, the 2008 Budget request was still 6% higher than the 2007 appropriation and he suggested that a meeting between Ms. Driscoll, Mr. Payne and

JoAnn McKinstry, Deputy Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, be held to revise the request to remove the unnecessary items, such as the Point of Care program costs, to get a true picture of the 2008 Budget request and a subsequent meeting be scheduled to revisit the Budget request. Mr. Caimano reminded the Committee that the costs of the additional salary issues presented by Ms. Driscoll at the start of the Budget review, which totaled approximately \$110,000, also needed to be accounted for along with the 2008 Budget request.

As the Committee was in agreement with Mr. Caimano's suggestion, Ms. Driscoll was directed to meet with Mr. Payne and Mrs. McKinstry to revise the 2008 Budget request for presentation at another meeting to be scheduled during the following week.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Sheehan and seconded by Mr. Champagne, Mr. Mason adjourned the meeting at 3:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist