

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: JUNE 1, 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TESSIER
O'CONNOR
SHEEHAN
BENTLEY
KENNY
F. THOMAS
MASON

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:
ROBERT PHELPS, COMMISSIONER
MICHAEL JABAUT, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE
SERVICES
DOUG HERSCHLEB, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
WILLIAM MCGARR, DIRECTOR OF VETERANS' SERVICES
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL
SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISORS CAIMANO
GABRIELS
GIRARD
HASKELL
VANNESS
TODD LUNT, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
AMY BARTLETT, FIRST ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF
ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
AMANDA ALLEN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Tessier called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 10:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Robert Phelps, Commissioner of Social Services, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Phelps advised that the first agenda item pertained to a request for permission to fill vacancies. He explained that there had been three resignations within his Department, the first of which was that of the Supervising Support Investigator in the Child Support Division, the second was a Social Welfare Examiner position that had been vacated by an employee moving out of the area and the third was a Caseworker position that had been vacated by an employee transferring to the Probation Department. Mr. Phelps stated that the request would entail the filling of a total of six positions as he would need to fill the three positions that had been vacated due to resignation and also the three positions that would be vacated due to promotion, as he intended to promote employees from within his Department. He detailed that the following requests for permission to fill vacancies, copies of which are included in the agenda:

- 1) Supervising Support Investigator; base salary \$33,970, due to resignation;

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- 2) Senior Support Investigator; base salary \$30,812, due to promotion by backfilling;
- 3) Support Investigator; base salary \$28,203, due to promotion by backfilling;
- 4) Caseworker; base salary \$33,012, due to resignation;
- 5) Social Welfare Examiner; base salary \$28,203, due to resignation;
- 6) Typist; base salary \$22,593, due to promotion.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to approve all six personnel requests, as detailed above, and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Phelps apprised that the second agenda item referred to the replacement of the van used by the Department of Veterans' Services for the transportation of United States Veterans. He explained that although \$20,000 had been budgeted for the purchase of a new van, during recent discussion it was suggested that it might be prudent for the Committee to consider the purchase of a mini-bus rather than a van, due to prevailing safety issues. Mr. Phelps advised that information detailing the preferred mini-bus, which was similar to the one recently purchased by The Westmount Health Facility, was included in the agenda. Mr. Phelps noted that the cost of the mini-bus was approximately \$41,000, which was \$21,000 more than what had been budgeted for the purchase.

Mr. Tessier asked William McGarr, Director of Veterans's Services for his thoughts on Mr. Phelps' proposal and Mr. McGarr replied that he was in favor of purchasing a mini-bus. He apprised that many manufacturers had ceased making the type of van they had initially intended to purchase, due to safety concerns such as the increased probability of roll-over accidents. Mr. McGarr explained that the mini-bus would be a much safer mode of public transportation because it had dual rear wheels and was lower to the ground. He pointed out that the mini-bus would also be a better investment because it had a longer life expectancy than the passenger van used previously. In addition, Mr. McGarr noted, the mini-bus would come equipped with a lift for wheelchair bound Veterans, while the van did not. He stated that although there had not been a pressing need to facilitate wheelchair bound Veterans in the past, that need was growing. Mr. VanNess stated that it seemed to be an unfortunate statistic that more injuries requiring the use of wheelchairs were occurring in injured soldiers returning from the war in Iraq.

Mr. Tessier asked what the average number of Veterans transported on a daily basis was and Mr. McGarr replied that on average they were transporting seven Veterans per day and on occasion that number had risen to ten or more, making for a very uncomfortable ride. Mr. McGarr advised that the mini-bus proposed would have enough room to accommodate twelve riders plus the driver and would have two lifts for handicapped use. Mr. McGarr noted that by keeping the maximum capacity of the vehicle under fifteen individuals, (including the driver), special licensing would not be required to drive the vehicle.

Mr. Phelps stated that although the mini-bus purchase was 100% reimbursable as a medicaid expense, an additional \$21,000 would have to be added to his Department's budget for the initial purchase. He added that once the purchase had been made he would then have the ability to submit the cost for reimbursement.

Upon Mr. O'Connor's inquiry as to the wait time associated with the purchase of the mini-bus, Mr.

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Phelps replied that the vehicle would be delivered approximately four months from the date ordered.

Discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to increase appropriations and revenues in the amount of \$21,000, to be used along with the \$20,000 already budgeted to facilitate the purchase of a mini-bus for the use of the Veterans' Services Department, and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Proceeding with the agenda review, Mr. Phelps advised that a copy of the Overtime Report was included in the agenda and he asked the Committee members to review it at their leisure and contact him with any questions they might have.

Mr. Phelps stated that agenda item number four referred to several requests for authorization to attend meetings and training events, the majority of which were in-state. He detailed the in-state travel requests included in the agenda as follows:

- 1) Adoption Subsidy Training
June 7, 2007 in Rensselaer, NY
Attendees: Kristy Neel
Lynn Leland
- 2) SEMO (State Emergency Management Organization) Regional Summit
June 12, 2007 at the Great Escape Lodge in Queensbury, NY
Attendees: Mike Jabaut
Kelly Barker
- 3) Article 87 Guardianship for PSA (Protective Services for Adults) Clients
June 21, 2007 at The Queensbury Hotel in Queensbury, NY
Attendees: Greg Quinn
Kim George
- 4) NYPWA (New York Public Welfare Association) 138th Annual Summer Conference
May 16th - May 18th, 2007 at The Saratoga Hotel in Saratoga Springs, NY
Attendees: Robert Phelps
Doug Herschleb
Cindy Mulcahy
Kathy Baker
Bart McGee
Kelly Barker
Lisa Zulauf
May 16th or May 17th (*these attendees were approved for one day of the conference only*)
Attendees: Lorrie Mosher
Suki Seybolt
Jamie Brochu
Karen Whitted
- 5) 2007 TOP (Transitional Opportunities Program) Meeting

June 28th & June 29th, 2007 at the Great Escape Lodge in Queensbury, NY

Attendees: Lisa Zulauf
Kelly Barker

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to authorize the in-state travel outlined above.

Mr. Phelps advised that the agenda included one request for out-of-state travel and that was for Karen Judd and Emily Kladis to attend the Child Fatalities & Physical Abuse Conference scheduled for August 20, 2007 through August 24, 2007 in Indianapolis, IN. He noted that this travel would be fully funded for both attendees through the Care Center budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to authorize out-of-state travel for Karen Judd and Emily Kladis to attend the Child Fatalities & Physical Abuse Conference in Indianapolis, IN as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 15th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

The final agenda item, Mr. Phelps stated, pertained to the employment history of a particular person, for which he said an executive session was necessary.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to declare executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officer's Law.

Paul Dusek, County Attorney; Amy Bartlett, First Assistant County Attorney and Messrs Caimano, Gabriels and Haskell entered the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Executive session was declared from 10:15 a.m. to 10:28 a.m.

Committee reconvened. Mr. Tessier announced that no action was necessary subsequent to the executive session.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Mason and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist