

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: OCTOBER 23, 2008

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| COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: | OTHERS PRESENT: |
| SUPERVISORS TESSIER | REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES: |
| O'CONNOR | SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER |
| SHEEHAN | MICHAEL JABAUT, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES |
| BENTLEY | HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL |
| KENNY | SERVICES |
| STRAINER | JOAN SADY, CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS |
| | SUPERVISOR GERAGHTY |
| COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT: | SUPERVISOR VANNESS |
| SUPERVISOR THOMAS | SARAH MCLENITHAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST |

Mr. Tessier called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 10:38 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the September 26, 2008 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Sheila Weaver, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver apprised that Agenda Item 1 referred to the overtime report for the DSS, which was included in the agenda packet. She pointed out that 45 hours of overtime were incurred during the pay period ending September 18, 2008 and 72.2 hours during the first pay period in October. She noted that the increase in hours was due to two foster children being transported by a Case Worker to Albion, New York for a final visit with their parent as part of an adoption surrender agreement. Mr. Tessier questioned how the current overtime was in comparison to prior figures and Ms. Weaver replied that since October of 2006 the average overtime had been estimated at 98 hours per pay period and the present amount of overtime was significantly below that figure.

Proceeding to Agenda Item 2, Ms. Weaver presented a spreadsheet with the names and the expenditures of the Programs and Contracts offered by the DSS and the resulting cost to the County per month; *a copy of which is on file with the minutes.* She stated that although many of the programs were not mandated they were necessary to prevent placements of children in foster care.

Mr. VanNess queried what the Emergency Aide to Adults referred to and Ms. Weaver replied that the program assisted elderly individuals that were in receipt of Social Security and had their heat shut off prior to the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) commencing.

Ms. Weaver apprised that Agenda Item 3 was in reference to the notification that the DSS had received from the State of New York pertaining to a refund that would be forthcoming in the amount of \$39,641 from the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) for maintaining expenditures below the Medicaid Local Share Cap. She noted that in New York State, Warren County was one of six Counties that had been

eligible for the refund.

Continuing with the Agenda review, Ms. Weaver advised that Item 4 consisted of a request for authorization to attend a meeting or convention. She stated that the DSS had employed a new Caseworker that would need to attend the PSA New Worker Institute, a mandated training for new Adult Protective Caseworkers that would be taking place in East Syracuse, New York on various dates in November. She added that the training was offered on a bi-annual basis and the next training would not be scheduled until March of 2009.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to attend a meeting or convention as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend a Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Agenda Item 5, Ms. Weaver stated, pertained to the Committee Solutions for Transportation- 9 (CST-9) Grant funds that would be received from the Federal Government in the amount of \$25,281, enabling Community Work & Independence, Inc. (CWI) to enhance their local Welfare-to-Work efforts. Mr. O'Connor questioned whether the entire amount of the grant would be disbursed to CWI and Ms. Weaver replied affirmatively. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, inquired as to whether CWI had completed an application and Ms. Weaver responded affirmatively and interjected that the DSS had submitted the application on behalf of CWI to the State and when the funds were received they would be disbursed to CWI.

Ms. Weaver briefly touched on Item 6, which consisted of a request for permission to enter into a contract with CWI for the CST-9 funds for the enhancement of the local Welfare-to-Work program, commencing on November 1, 2008 and terminating September 30, 2009. She added that she would like to renew the contract on an annual basis without seeking Committee approval, as long as the funds were available.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with CWI for the Welfare-to-Work Program and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 21, 2008 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing to Agenda Item 7, Ms. Weaver requested permission to enter into a contract with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services for the prevention of detention and services to youth at risk of becoming a person in need of supervision (PINS) or entering the Juvenile Justice System, commencing on November 1, 2008 and terminating June 30, 2009. She apprised that the estimated funding would be in the amount of \$129,973.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to enter into a contract with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 21, 2008 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver apprised that Agenda Item 8 pertained to a request for permission to enter into a contract with the Youth Advocacy Program, Inc. (YAP) for detention prevention funding commencing on November 1, 2008 and terminating on October 31, 2009. She stated that the contract was necessary to reduce the number of children in the foster care system.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with YAP for detention prevention funding as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 21, 2008 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver stated that Agenda Item 9 consisted of apprising the Committee that November was National Adoption month and Saturday, November 15, 2008 was National Adoption Day. She added that two adoptions would be finalized during the month.

Concluding the Agenda review, Ms. Weaver presented Agenda Item 10, which consisted of items pending from prior Committee meetings. She detailed the pending items as follows:

- 1) Ms. Weaver apprised that she was still awaiting further information from Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings, regarding the profitability of purchasing vehicles versus mileage reimbursement. It was the consensus of the Committee that Mr. Tessier contact William Lamy, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, and request that he schedule a meeting with Mr. Morehouse to determine whether it was more cost effective to purchase vehicles as opposed to mileage reimbursement.
- 2) Regarding the liability issues present in connection with transporting children in County vehicles used by DSS staff, Ms. Weaver apprised that she had contacted Paul Dusek, County Attorney, but had not received a reply. It was the consensus of the Committee that Ms. Weaver should contact Mr. Dusek again with respect to the matter.
- 3) Ms. Weaver contacted a representative from ProAct on October 3, 2008 and was awaiting a reply.
- 4) With regards to the possibility of instituting random polygraph and drug testing for applicants and individuals receiving Safety Net and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits, Ms. Weaver advised that she had spoken to a representative from the State on October 3, 2008 and was informed that the DSS did not have the authority to conduct these tests. Mr. Bentley suggested that this item be referred to the Legislative and Rules Committee for further review.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to refer to the Legislative and Rules Committee the recommendation that the State allow Counties to administer random polygraph and drug testing to applicants and individuals receiving Safety Net and TANF benefits.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Sheehan and seconded by Mr. Strainer, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah McLenithan
Legislative Office Specialist