

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: BUDGET- *Human Services*

DATE: August 25, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS GERAGHTY
BELDEN
O'CONNOR
CHAMPAGNE
KENNY
SHEEHAN
TAYLOR
STEC

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR MERLINO

OTHERS PRESENT:

FREDERICK H. MONROE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &
FISCAL SERVICES
JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF
ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
REPRESENTING OFFICE FOR THE AGING:
CANDACE KELLY, DIRECTOR
CHRISTIE SABO, FISCAL MANAGER
REPRESENTING VETERANS' SERVICES:
DENISE DIRESTA, DIRECTOR
REPRESENTING YOUTH BUREAU:
MARGARET SING SMITH, DIRECTOR
SUPERVISORS BENTLEY
PITKIN
STRAINER
TESSIER
THOMAS
VANNESS
SARAH MCLENITHAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Geraghty called the meeting of the Budget Committee to order at 11:12 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Candace Kelly, Director for Office for the Aging (OFA), who distributed copies of the OFA 2010 Budget Request, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Kelly apprised that although the re-evaluation of the evening meals had allowed her to decrease the budget in Nutrit. For Elderly-War. Co., (Code A.6773), the Nutrition Program still had the largest expense to the County. She noted that it was not possible to decrease the nutrition budget further.

Ms. Kelly advised that The Cedars meal site had requested an additional \$10,000 annually for reimbursement of expenses they incurred for housing the site, such as trash removal, fire system inspection and pump station maintenance; however, she stated, she had informed them that due to budget restraints she would be unable to accommodate their request. Mr. Geraghty asked what would happen if The Cedars no longer allowed OFA to use their facility as a meal site and Ms. Kelly replied that it would be necessary to secure a new location for the meal site.

Ms. Kelly stated that she had been unable to include an accurate dollar amount for rent, as she had not been informed of what the OFA rental cost would be when they moved into the Human Services Building (HSB); however, she said, she assumed there would be a decrease. Christie Sabo, Fiscal Manager, stated that she had estimated the rental expense for the 2010 Budget to be \$3,200 a month, which was a decrease of \$868.

Ms. Kelly stated that she felt it was necessary to make the Committee aware of the Expanded In-Home Services for Elderly Program (EISEP). She advised that the prior Budget Officer had requested that the funding for the program be reduced by \$160,000; therefore, she stated, an extensive waiting list existed for the program. She explained that the program aided with keeping individuals in their homes instead of placing them in a nursing home. She said that the cost for an individual to participate in the program was \$6,800 annually which was substantially less than the \$93,000 it would cost to house them in a nursing home on an annual basis.

Ms. Sabo apprised that the 2010 OFA Budget Request had a total cost to the County of \$677,349.88, as compared to the 2009 Amended Budget of \$671,399, an increase of \$5,950.88. She explained that the increase was in part due to a decrease in State Aid of 2.67%, as well as a decrease in Federal Aid of 8.23%.

Beginning with Nutri. For Elderly-Ham. Co., (Code A.6771), Ms. Sabo advised that this was the nutrition program for Hamilton County, which she noted, was 100% reimbursed by Hamilton County. She stated that Office for the Aging, (Code A.6772), was the code used for general office expenses which included costs associated with the Office, as well as the majority of the OFA salary expenses.

With regards to the Office for the Aging-Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, (Code A.6772 0350), Ms. Sabo stated that it would be decreased by \$3,300, as Office staff sick leave time had erroneously been included within this portion of the Budget. She pointed out that this program was funded 100% through the State.

Ms. Sabo mentioned that Nutrit. For Elderly-War. Co., (Code A.6773) had the largest cost to the County, which was \$516,656.98. She explained that the Code included The Cedars, Warrensburg, Lake Luzerne and Chestertown meal sites. She noted that the suggested contribution per meal was \$3; however, she said, the average amount received per meal in Warren County was \$0.74.

Mr. Belden asked whether funds were contributed towards the Essex County meal site, as residents of the Town of Hague used their sites because the Warren County meal sites were not within close proximity to the Town of Hague and Ms. Sabo replied in the negative. Ms. Kelly explained that although funds were not contributed to the Essex County meal site, the OFA paid for the transportation costs of the volunteers to distribute the meals to the residents on the Town of Hague.

Ms. Sabo stated that of the \$5.91 meal cost, only \$.019 was received. Ms. Kelly apprised that they had seen an increase in the amount of money received through suggested contributions when the amount was increased from \$2 to \$2.50 the prior year; therefore, she said, she felt by increasing it to \$3 this year more funds would be received.

Ms. Sabo apprised that the only portion of the Budget that included a request for funds for equipment was OFA-Point of Entry, (Code A.6785), which was 100% reimbursable. She said that although no money had been budgeted elsewhere for equipment, it was necessary to have funds available in case equipment was in need of repair or replacement.

Proceeding to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (S.N.A.P.), (Code A.6774), Ms.

Sabo stated that it included the Towns of Bolton Landing and Johnsbury meal sites, as well as some meals provided at The Cedars. She explained that the program was 100% reimbursed. She advised that she had heard that additional funds for the program would be received; however, she said, she did not include it in the Budget because she was unsure if the additional funds would be awarded.

Commodity Foods, (Code A.6777), Ms. Sabo apprised, was a nutrition program that was 100% reimbursed. Ms. Sabo stated that Comm. Serv. Elderly.Warren, (Code A.6778) and Comm. Serv. Elderly.Hamilton, (Code A.6780) pertained to transportation for medical appointments.

Ms. Sabo advised that the Home Energy Assist. Prog., (Code A.6783) was 100% reimbursable and included salary and postage expenses. OFA-Point of Entry-Warren, (Code A.6785) and OFA-Point of Entry-Hamilton, (Code A.6786), Ms. Sabo stated, referred to NY Connects, which was administered in conjunction with the Department of Social Services, as well as Health Services, and was 100% reimbursable.

With regards to the EISEP Program, (Code A.6788 and A.6789) Ms. Sabo advised the program allowed people to remain in their homes instead of being placed in a nursing home. She said that the only two expenses included in this portion of the Budget were salaries and contracts.

Weather.Referal & Pack.Prog., (Code A.6793), Ms. Sabo apprised, aided individuals with purchasing new furnaces or hot water heaters for their homes if they were unable to do so on their own. She explained that the revenues were greater than expenses in this program because fringe was allowed to be claimed.

Title VII Elder Abuse Prev., (Code A.6987), Ms. Sabo stated, pertained to elder care abuse prevention and OFA HIICAP, (Code A.6988), referred to the Health Insurance and Information Assistance Program which were both 100% reimbursable. Health Promotion, (Code A.6989), Ms. Sabo stated, was in conjunction with Hamilton County; therefore, they reimbursed Warren County for their portion of the program.

Mr. Geraghty queried why EISEP-Hamilton, (Code A.6789) revenues and expenditures were equal and EISEP-Warren, (Code A.6788) expenditures exceeded the revenue and Ms. Sabo responded that Hamilton County was responsible for all of the expenses accrued with regards to the EISEP-Hamilton Program regardless of whether State reimbursement was provided.

Mr. Champagne asked if any additional money had been received through Federal Stimulus funds and Ms. Sabo replied affirmatively. She explained that the OFA had received funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which was accounted for in the 2009 Budget. Mr. Pitkin asked what additional funds they anticipated receiving and Ms. Sabo replied that they were SNAP funds. She apprised that they had not accounted for the funds because they were unsure of whether the funds would be received.

Mr. Belden recommended that the OFA resubmit their 2010 Budget request at a future meeting with a zero percent increase. Ms. Kelly apprised that the issue with reducing the Budget further was that it would reduce the services offered to the elderly in Warren County. Mr. Champagne said that no one was in favor of reducing services to the elderly; however, he stated, it was necessary given the current budget crisis.

Mr. Pitkin commented that he was concerned that the County was losing money by under funding the EISEP Program, as it was causing more individuals to enter nursing homes that may have been

eligible to remain in their homes if they could have received services through EISEP. Ms. Kelly pointed out that State funds had been turned down for the EISEP Program because the County could not supply the matching funds necessary. Ms. Sabo stated that she would rather reduce the requested funds from the Nutrition Program than reduce the funding to the EISEP Program, as they were already obligated through contracts to provide services to certain individuals.

Mr. Kenny suggested subsidizing the costs of the meals for individuals who could not afford the suggested contribution through Social Services. Mr. Geraghty asked if Ms. Kelly felt the suggested contributions would increase if the dollar amount was decreased from \$3 to \$2 and Ms. Kelly replied in the negative.

Mr. Belden advised that he felt that the \$10,000 reduction necessary to achieve the zero percent increase from the prior year could be obtained without effecting services to the seniors.

Mr. Geraghty emphasized that it was necessary to reduce the OFA Budget without effecting the services to the seniors. Mr. VanNess apprised that some savings may be achieved in rental costs when the OFA moved into the HSB.

Mr. Champagne asked why OFA was providing HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) when Social Services provided the same service and Ms. Kelly responded that because HEAP was such a large program one Department would not be able to process applications for the entire County. She noted that individuals processing HEAP applications were also providing services for other programs offered through the OFA, as well.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to recommend that the OFA Budget be forwarded on to the Budget Officer for further review.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Denise DiResta, Director of Veterans' Services, who distributed copies of the Veterans' Services 2010 Budget Request, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Ms. DiResta advised that the only changes in the Budget from the prior year were for the purchase of an electronic database and a reduction in salaries. Mr. Geraghty asked whether the Committee had been informed of the expense with regards to the electronic database and Ms. DiResta replied affirmatively. Ms. DiResta explained that she had obtained quotes for the database from three vendors and was awaiting a price from Robert Metthe, Director, Information Technology (IT), as well.

JoAnn McKinstry, Deputy Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, queried why there was an increase in Veterans' Services State Aid, (Code A.6510 3710) and Ms. DiResta replied that she was unsure.

Ms. DiResta pointed out that her 2010 Budget request had decreased from the 2009 appropriations due to a decrease in Salaries, (Code A.6510 110) of \$8,846.02.

Mr. Payne queried if the County would be participating in the VetCop system, which had no cost to the County. Ms. DiResta suggested that the County not participate in the program, as it required the Veteran's Power of Attorney (POA) to be with the State. She explained that she was accredited with the American Legion and worked with the Veteran's of Foreign Wars (VFW) under non-accreditation but was not accredited with the State. She advised that the State Veteran's Representative had VetCop and was able to handle those claims; however, she added, of the

23,000 files, the majority were American Legion or VFW. She said that they could use the VetCop in-house standalone program, which would allow her to use her American Legion accreditation; however, she added, the system would be obsolete by the end of the year, as Warren County would no longer be using Windows 97 programs.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to approve the 2010 Veterans' Services Budget and forward it on to the Budget Officer for further review.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Margaret Sing Smith, Director of the Youth Bureau, who distributed copies of the Youth Bureau 2010 Budget Request, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Smith apprised that there had been a substantial decrease in the Salaries, (Code A.7311 110), as she was proposing to reduce the Youth Bureau Director position from full time to part-time which would be a cost savings to the County of \$26,645. She advised that the State was willing to work with the County to develop a plan to maximize the amount of funding received to provide youth programs within Warren County with the reduction in staff.

Mr. Geraghty asked why there was an increase in Foods, (Code A.7311 445) and Ms. Smith explained that the food was budgeted for the Youth Leadership Conference that took place at Adirondack Community College (ACC). Mr. Geraghty questioned if ACC prepared the food and Ms. Smith replied affirmatively. She noted that ACC provided Facility Student Association Funds to the program, as well as Washington County.

Mr. Kenny advised that he would be inclined to vote in opposition of the 2010 Youth Bureau Budget, as he thought it had been previously determined that the Department would be decreased to one position. Ms. Smith interjected that revenues may be sufficiently reduced if the Department was decreased to one position.

Mr. Pitkin asked how much revenue would be lost if the Department was reduced to one employee and Ms. Smith responded that she estimated the loss to be \$17,000. Ms. Smith reiterated that by decreasing the Department to 1.5 employees, the maximum amount of State funding would be received to maintain the core Youth Bureau functions.

Discussion ensued.

Pursuant to further discussion on the matter it was the consensus of the Committee that the 2010 Youth Bureau Budget request should be resubmitted to the Human Services Committee for further discussion.

As there was no further business to come before the Budget Committee, on motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Geraghty adjourned the meeting at 12:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McLenithan
Legislative Office Specialist

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Mr. Kenny advised that he would be inclined to vote in opposition of the 2010 Youth Bureau Budget, as he thought it had been previously determined that the Department would be decreased to one position. Ms. Smith interjected that revenues may be sufficiently reduced if the Department was decreased to one position.

Mr. Pitkin asked how much revenue would be lost if the Department was reduced to one employee and Ms. Smith responded that she estimated the loss to be \$17,000. Ms. Smith reiterated that by decreasing the Department to 1.5 employees, the maximum amount of State funding would be received to maintain the core Youth Bureau functions.

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Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McLenithan
Legislative Office Specialist

