

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: AUGUST 27, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS O'CONNOR
SHEEHAN
BENTLEY
KENNY
STRAINER

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS TESSIER
MERLINO

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:
SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER
FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL
SERVICES
JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF
ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISORS BELDEN
GOODSPEED
PITKIN
TAYLOR
THOMAS
BUD YORK, SHERIFF
MICHAEL GATES, CAPTAIN, DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
SARAH MCLENITHAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

In the absence of Committee Chairman Tessier, Supervisor O'Connor, as Vice-Chair, called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 10:14 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the previous 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 presented the Overtime Report, which was included with the Agenda. She noted that the average amount of overtime per pay period was 41 hours, which was a substantial decrease from the prior year.

Ms. Weaver requested to abolish the Intake Clerk # 3 position, thereby amending the Department's Table of Organization. She apprised that this was the last of the three positions she had been required to abolish, which would be a savings to the County of \$24,480.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the request to abolish the Intake Clerk # 3 position, base salary of \$24,480, thereby amending the Department's Table of Organization and forward same to the Personnel Committee. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Weaver requested a transfer of funds as follows:

<u>From Code:</u>	<u>Title:</u>	<u>To Code:</u>	<u>Title:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
A.6010.411	Rent-Building	A.6010.220	Office Equipment	\$14,355

Ms. Weaver explained that the transfer was necessary to purchase a new hard drive for the Department's server, as well as a commercial shredder. Mr. Strainer asked how old the current hard drive was and Ms. Weaver said she was unsure.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the request for transfer of funds as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Request for Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver requested permission to begin a bid process for funeral services for indigent people which would limit where a person could be buried, but might reduce the cost to the County. She noted that although a typical burial cost \$2,000, the State reimbursement was only up to \$900 per incident. Mr. O'Connor questioned whether the bid would be limited to responders within Warren County and Ms. Weaver replied she was unsure. Chairman Monroe suggested that she prepare two bids, one for the northern section and one for the southern section of the County.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for funeral services for indigent people.

With regards to the back to school supplement issued by the State, Ms. Weaver apprised that there was an expense of \$327,000; however, she said, the funds were 100% reimbursed by the State. She noted that the reimbursement was received from the State prior to issuing the checks to the recipients. She stated that nine hundred eleven families had received the assistance.

Ms. Weaver advised that the DSS was applying for Community Solutions for Transportation funding in the amount of \$27,277. She apprised that rather than contracting with CWI, they would be providing the services in-house, which allowed for \$5,000 of the funding to be allocated to staff salaries. She explained that the remainder of the funding was used for licensing fees, transit passes and tokens, taxi rides, vehicle insurance payment, vehicle repairs and gas cards for working individuals that were at or below 200% of the Federal poverty level.

Ms. Weaver requested permission for individuals to attend the following training:

- a) Linda Pechette to attend the Selected Topics of the Institute for Temporary Assistance at the Best Western Sovereign in Albany, NY, from October 19 through October 23, 2009;
- b) John Schroeter to attend the Adult Abuse Training Institute at the Marriott Hotel in Albany, NY, from September 16 through September 17, 2009; and
- c) Heidi Knickerbocker to attend the Institute for Temporary Assistance in Albany, NY, from October 26 through October 30, 2009 and November 16 through November 20, 2009.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the Requests to Attend Meeting or Conventions as outlined above. *Copies of the Requests to Attend Meeting or Convention are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver advised that the Welcoming Adolescents in Transition (WAIT) House had received the Homeless Housing Prevention (HPRP) grant in the amount of approximately \$300,000, which would be used for homeless costs in Warren County. She reminded the Committee that during the prior year \$500,000 had been spent in connection with the care for homeless youth within Warren County and she hoped the grant funds received by WAIT House would alleviate some of this financial burden for 2010.

Ms. Weaver apprised that the funding would offset the cost of rental assistance, rental arrears, security deposits, utility deposits and payments, moving costs and hotel/motel vouchers. She explained that the hotel/motel vouchers were used for a half a month while individuals were waiting to move into their apartments. Ms. Weaver noted that due to increased restrictions, the number of homeless individuals served had been reduced from 35 per week to 12 per week.

Ms. Weaver presented the following requests:

- a) Request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker, base salary of \$34,178, Employee No. 11210, due to resignation;
- b) Request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker, base salary of \$34,178, Employee No. 11210, due to resignation;
- c) Request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker, base salary of \$34,178, Employee No. 9286, due to resignation; and
- d) Request to create and fill the position of Community Services Assistant, base salary of \$29,199, and deleting the position of Caseworker, base salary of \$34,178..

Ms. Weaver explained that because she was filling the vacant positions with new employees and creating a new position at a Grade 8 salary level, rather than filling one of the vacant positions of Caseworker, which was a Grade 14 salary level, the cost savings to the County would be \$17,197.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the requests to fill vacant positions and the request to create a new position as outlined above and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the requests to Fill Vacant Positions and the request to Create a New Position are one file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver requested to fill the vacant position of Keyboard Specialist, base salary of \$23,390, Employee No. 11576, due to resignation. She apprised that the position was 100% reimbursable.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Keyboard Specialist as outlined above and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the request to Fill Vacant Position is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver requested permission to allow the DSS legal staff to be moved to the Municipal Center Building to be supervised by the County Attorney upon vacating the Social Services building. Ms. Weaver stated that after meeting with the Family Court Judge and the County Attorney it had been determined that the DSS legal staff should be under the supervision of the County Attorney; therefore, she said, it would be necessary to locate them within close proximity of that Office.

Mr. Kenny questioned Paul Dusek, Count Attorney, where he planned on locating the three members of the DSS legal staff and Mr. Dusek replied that he was working with Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, to make a determination on where these individuals would be located.

It was the consensus of the Committee to allow for the DSS legal staff to be moved to the Municipal Center building to be supervised by the County Attorney upon vacating the Social Services building.

With regards to the listing of pending items from prior Committee meetings, Ms. Weaver provided an update as follows:

- 1) Update on methadone treatment, Mr. Payne apprised that Trip Shannon of Hudson Headwaters Health Clinics had informed him that they were having difficulties signing up providers to participate with the program due to the mandated guidelines set for the methadone clinics, such as the required hours for treatment. Mr. VanNess queried what the

annual transportation costs were and Ms. Weaver replied that the cost was estimated to be over \$100,000. Mr. O'Connor asked how many individuals had to be transported on a daily basis and Ms. Weaver responded that 10 individuals were transported daily, 7 of which required separate transportation due to doctors orders. Michael Gates, Captain, Department of Corrections, advised that he was required to send an armed guard with a registered nurse to Albany to pick up the treatment when inmates were housed in the County Jail that required treatment. Mr. O'Connor stated that he felt if methadone treatments were administered locally it would have a negative impact on the quality of living in the area.

With regards to the legal staff supervised by the County Attorney and the third position being eliminated, Ms. Weaver stated that those items could be deleted from the listing of pending items, as they had been discussed in today's meeting.

Ms. Weaver requested an executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously that an executive session be declared pursuant to Section 105 (f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was declared from 10:40 a.m. to 10:58 a.m.

The Committee reconvened and Mr. O'Connor announced that no action was necessary pursuant to the executive session.

Mr. O'Connor questioned if employees would be able to enter the Human Services Building (HSB) prior to the beginning of their shift and Mr. Payne replied affirmatively. Mr. Payne explained that although employees would not be allowed to clock in until 15 minutes prior to the beginning of their shift they would be provided with keys to access the building at any time.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Sheehan, Mr. O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McLenithan
Legislative Office Specialist