

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: MARCH 30, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS LOEB
KENNY
STRAINER
WOOD
MCDEVITT
SOKOL

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:
SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER
DEANNA PARK, DIRECTOR OF COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
MARGARET SING-SMITH, DIRECTOR OF THE WARREN COUNTY YOUTH
BUREAU
DANIEL STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY/ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISOR THOMAS
SUPERVISOR TAYLOR
SUPERVISOR CONOVER
SUPERVISOR MERLINO
TODD LUNT, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
JOANNE COLLINS, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR BENTLEY

Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 9:31 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of 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 a request to fill the vacant position of DSS Fiscal Manager, base salary of \$49,038, Employee No. 4888, due to retirement effective July 6, 2011. She noted that the position was mandated and 75% reimbursed.

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

Next, Ms. Weaver presented a request to fill the position of Caseworker #1, base salary of \$35,385, Employee No. 1260, due to retirement.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Strainer to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker #1 as outlined.

Ms. Weaver noted her concern relative to the declining number of caseloads and referrals, and she added that in approximately four years these job duties would be taken over as part of the State's plan to assume responsibility for the medicaid administration. She recommended that the position remain vacant contingent upon caseload increases. Mr. Kenny stated he felt there was a significant caseload and pointed out that the position was 100% reimbursed.

Paul Dusek advised if the State's Medicaid takeover were successful, Warren County would remain liable for the cost of early retirees and he noted unforeseen expenses which could arise. He affirmed the goal to minimize the total number of positions within the County and noted this was an opportunity to contain costs. Ms. Weaver stated that approximately 35 staff members would be affected by the State's takeover of Medicaid. She explained that the State would enter into a vendor contract to maintain a call center to process eligibility determinations.

A discussion ensued.

Mr. Kenny withdrew his motion and Mr. Strainer withdrew his second to the motion to approve the request to fill the position of Caseworker #1.

Next, Ms. Weaver presented a request to fill the vacant position of Van Driver, base salary of \$22,897, Employee No. 9962. Ms. Weaver noted that she would not fill the Driver position until the medical leave of the current employee had expired.

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

Ms. Weaver presented a request for a transfer of funds from General Liability, to Travel/Education/Conference, in the amount of \$396, to reflect the receipt of an insurance reimbursement payment as a result of a return check from New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal (NYMIR) to the County.

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

Addressing travel requests, Ms. Weaver presented a request for Maureen Taylor to attend the Child Protective Services (CPS) Supervisory Core Module II training in Rochester, NY, from May 17 - 20, 2011 and May 31 - June 3, 2011, at a room rate of \$48 per night and a meal cost of \$11 per day for lunch, \$12 per day for dinner and \$26 for dinner on the last day.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request for travel as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver presented the following seven in-State travel requests for approval:

- ▶ For Jennifer Burch Dean to attend the Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT) in Albany, NY, from March 16 - 18, 2011, at a meal cost of \$15 per day;
- ▶ For Kerry Watkins to attend the Prevent Child Abuse New York Conference in Albany, NY, from April 11 - 13, 2011;
- ▶ For Betsey Johnson to attend the First Annual Hearing Forum at the Great Escape Lodge, Queensbury, NY, on April 1, 2011;
- ▶ For Meaghan Gorman and Denise Spinosa to attend the Eating Disorders and Pregnancy Seminar at Crandall Public Library, Glens Falls, NY, on May 26, 2011;
- ▶ For Lauren Berry to attend the CPSRT in Albany, NY, from June 6 - 10 and June 20 - 24, 2011, at a room rate of \$50 per night and a meal cost of \$15 per day for lunch;

- ▶ For Cemanda Roberts to attend the PSA New Worker Institute Training in Albany, NY, from May 2 - 5 and May 16 - 19, 2011, at a room rate of \$52 per night and a meal cost of \$15 per day for lunch; and
- ▶ For Suzanne Wheeler to attend the 22nd Annual Foster Care and Adoption Conference in Albany, NY, on May 6 and 7, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve all seven requests for travel as outlined above. *Copies of the Authorizations to Attend Meeting or Convention are on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Merlino questioned the need for overnight stays in Albany, NY and Mr. Loeb explained that the cost for one person to stay overnight was less than the cost of fuel to commute, and he thanked Mr. Merlino for his vigilance regarding expenses.

Addressing overtime, Ms. Weaver reported a substantial decrease over the previous pay period due to one additional staff member in the Child Protective Services Unit, as well as enhanced funding which was nearly expended.

Pertaining to the Budget Performance Reports, Ms. Weaver reported the 2010 figures were not yet final with revenue and expenditures at 77% and 94%, respectively. For the period from January 1 through March 25, 2011, she reported revenue at 1% and expenditures at 16%.

Ms. Weaver noted a copy of the Budget Analysis Report for 2011 as of March 30th was included with the agenda.

With regard to the impact of the State's Medicaid takeover, Ms. Weaver summarized the month by month Expected Timeline for the Hudson Valley Region Transportation Manager Initiative and the New York State Department of Health Preliminary Implementation Timeline, copies of which are included with the agenda. As of May 2011, she said, only one staff member would be effected by the initiative and the County would retain full-time duties related to Medicaid processing. She advised that the State had proposed to take 75% of Medicaid responsibilities; however, she said, she anticipated a percentage closer to 45%. She said the 5-year initiative would effect a total of 35 positions, nine of which were funded through Medicaid. Ms. Weaver explained that the State would set up call centers staffed by minimum wage employees to provide Medicaid recertification services by phone and electronically; thereby eliminating face to face transactions. She noted that changes to Elderly Care services were expected to occur in the fifth year of the takeover and details were not yet available.

Continuing with the review of the Medicaid timeline for 2011, Ms. Weaver said she anticipated notification in October regarding the distribution of State and County Medicaid fund allocation. She noted that eligibility determinations for the elderly and disabled would be made in December. She further noted that prior to finalization of the takeover plan, an advisory group for employee and labor relations would submit a statement to the New York State Department of Health Commissioner.

Mr. Dusek stated that the County would make every effort to absorb staff who might be effected by the initiative into vacant County positions to be managed by the Commissioner and Human Resources Director. He stated although there was not a guarantee of work to all involved employees, it would remain the objective of the County. As a result of these changes, Ms. Weaver noted the possibility that the State might increase temporary assistance funding to 100% and noted

an increase in food stamp requests. She advised that the Department was struggling in some areas and had not requested additional staff. Ms. Weaver advised that if the takeover moved forward as planned, it would reduce her Medicaid funded staff from thirty-five to eight. Ms. Weaver anticipated an actual final staff count of seventeen.

Regarding the Proposed Budget Impact for Safety Net, Ms. Weaver noted a 29% increase in food stamps over the last year and pointed out that Safety Net funded the Countryside Adult Home. She stated that the Governor and State Assembly had differing proposals than the Senate and either scenario would result in an additional expense of between \$330,000 and \$400,000 for the County. She said the local cost would increase by \$300,000 to \$340,000. Mr. Dusek stated that based on the assumption that everything stayed the same, the local share differential would be between \$620,490 (Governor & Assembly proposals) and \$747,691 (Senate proposal) and Ms. Weaver concurred and added the change was retroactive to January 1st.

Mr. Kenny pointed out that many counties no longer offered elder care while Warren County had two adult care facilities. Mr. Stec said the issue involving the reduction or elimination of services provided by the two facilities would require discussion. Mr. Dusek advised that although Ms. Weaver was authorized to provide services, she was not required to operate an adult boarding facility. Mr. Loeb advised that the costs associated with monitoring and regulating the adult homes would require examination and it was the responsibility of the County to care for the elderly. Ms. Weaver noted the State guidelines addressed the operation, changes, and facility closures, and advised that the County's expenses were at 50% as a result of the Safety Net Program. Mr. Sokol cautioned of Westmount Health Facility's contract with Siemens Engineering to which the County was bound and Mr. Dusek said it was likely that the contract was assignable to a future owner, if agreed upon. He said he was currently studying the Co-generation facility and would provide additional information at a future Committee meeting. Mr. Dusek further noted his concern regarding the market for nursing homes with a study currently underway in Washington County. He said he would review their findings as soon as they were available. Additionally, he said, a comparative study must be done relative to the safety net cost as compared to operational costs associated with the facilities which incurred a net annual loss to the County. Ms. Weaver added that the budget could sustain the safety net increase for this year.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Deanna Park, Director of Countryside Adult Home, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Park advised that the pending items regarding the invoice from Technical Building Services, as well as laundry services, would be carried forward to be addressed at a future Committee meeting. She said the contract consolidation initiative pertaining to physical examinations and clinician services for staff was underway.

Ms. Park reported a decrease in overtime by 160.5 hours from the prior year and she reviewed the monthly census statistics. She informed that the advertisement for Countryside Adult Home was prepared for publication in the Glens Falls Hospital Patient Information Guide and she awaited the proof. She advised that she would email the ad to the Committee members. Regarding the Warrensburg Meal Site, Ms. Park reported that planning was underway for relocation of the Meal Site to the Countryside Adult Home. She stated that Christie Sabo, Director of the Office for the Aging, was gathering additional information for further review, which would be followed by a meeting with the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH).

Ms. Weaver added that the usage of space could not be included for maintenance reimbursement from the State. Mr. Strainer noted that fuel and trash removal expenses were reimbursable.

This concluded the Countryside Adult Home portion of the Social Services Committee meeting and privilege of the floor was extended to Margaret Sing-Smith, Director of the Warren County Youth Bureau, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Sing-Smith presented a request for authorization to submit an application to the Junior Tennis foundation for a grant to provide tennis instruction opportunities for youth with limited means in Warren County, for the period commencing April 17, 2011 and terminating December 31, 2011, for a total amount not to exceed \$2,000.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request to apply to the Junior Tennis Foundation as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 15, 2011 Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Sing-Smith said there was a strong possibility of restoration of State funds for Youth Programs. She advised of the significant interest level regarding the Youth Court Program and informed that the contract was prepared for submission to the State. Mr. Dusek explained that the contract was designed to include State funding for the Youth Bureau for an amount up to \$18,000 which was included in the budget and would be used for the continuation of the program. He stated that even if State funds were made available, the program could not sustain to the end of the year. At this point, he stated, the County would await the final State Budget and plan accordingly thereafter. Mr. Kenny suggested that a Budget Committee meeting be scheduled once the State Budget had passed to discuss the impact for Warren County and Mr. Dusek concurred. Mr. Thomas pointed out that the Alternative Sentencing Program had received funding through Youth Program funds and that program would cease to operate without such funding.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Ms. Wood, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 10:17 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanne Collins, Legislative Office Specialist