

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: APRIL 28, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS LOEB
KENNY
BENTLEY
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
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS TAYLOR
THOMAS
CHAMPAGNE
ROBERT IUSI, DIRECTOR OF PROBATION
STEVE BAYLE, JUVENILE SUPERVISOR
MARC KOKOSA, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY
DAVID SAFFER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COUNCIL FOR PREVENTION
MIKAYLA SUDERS, YOUTH COURT MEMBER
MELISSA GIRARD, YOUTH COURT ASSISTANT
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
JOANNE COLLINS, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 11:19 a.m.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood, seconded by Mr. Kenny 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.*

Addressing Personnel issues, Ms. Weaver apprised that the Department was at a crisis level in some units which had necessitated an increase in the use of overtime and temporary strategies to provide staff, she said, would no longer be sufficient.

Ms. Weaver presented a request to fill the position of Social Welfare Examiner #3, base salary of \$30,230, Employee No. 10563, due to resignation; the position was 100% Federally reimbursed. Ms. Weaver advised there were 1,559 chronic care cases and noted a budget savings of up to \$1,615.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Social Welfare Examiner #3 as outlined above and 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 #24 in the Child Protective Unit, base salary of \$35,385, Employee No. 11868, due to resignation, with Federal (50%) and State

(25%) reimbursements totaling 75%. Mrs. Weaver informed there were 13.5 child protective cases per staff member which exceeded the State recommendation of ten to twelve. She noted that one employee was currently on medical leave and one was in training for six weeks.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker #24 as outlined above and 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 explained that the third and fourth Agenda items pertained to requests to create and fill three Social Welfare Examiner positions, one in the Food Stamp Unit, and two in Temporary Assistance, at a base salary of \$30,230. She noted a 29% increase in Food Stamp services in the past year with over 4,000 cases and explained that the Temporary Assistance Unit had utilized two staff persons from the Medicaid Unit for a five month period who had to return to their original duties to address the increasing Medicaid caseload. The Medicaid and Temporary Assistance positions, she stated, were 100% Federally reimbursed; and the County was responsible for a 50% local share for salaries in the Food Stamp Unit.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Strainer to approve the request to create and fill three Social Welfare Examiner positions as outlined.

Mr. Kenny stated that with the uncertainty of the State mandates, and news of State funding reductions in many areas, he was not willing to impose any additional burden on taxpayers at this time. He acknowledged that staff were overburdened; however, he said, he favored filling only positions which were 100% funded by the State and/or Federal Government. Mr. Loeb cited Ms. Weaver for her efforts to move staff and strive to complete the necessary work while working within budget parameters. He said the lack of staff would result in the County's inability to provide services and noted training was difficult in light of the workload. Mr. Kenny advised that action in this manner be held until additional funding information was received from the State. Mr. Sokol asked the County Administrator for his opinion. Mr. Dusek stated he had met with Ms. Weaver and it was his understanding that she would submit requests only for positions which were 100% federally funded; and requests for temporary staff would be requested for positions requiring local share funds, with a follow-up needs analysis completed at the end of a 90 day period. Mr. Strainer asked if the savings in overtime would offset the cost for temporary staff. Ms. Weaver pointed out the relationship between Food Stamp and Heating Emergency Assistance Program (HEAP) benefits whereby authorizations for HEAP benefits were derived from Food Stamp qualifications. Ms. Weaver apprised that HEAP benefits which were 100% reimbursed, would be exhausted on May 15, 2011; therefore; she said, she could no longer use HEAP funding for overtime in the Food Stamp Unit. Mr. Kenny noted that although reimbursement for Food Stamp salaries was 50% of local share, the Temporary Assistance positions were 100% reimbursed.

Mr. Sokol withdrew his motion and Mr. Strainer withdrew his second to the motion to approve the requests to create and fill three Social Welfare Examiner positions.

Mr. Loeb suggested that Ms. Weaver present Agenda Items 5 and 6 at this time as discussion may also pertain to Items 3 and 4.

Ms. Weaver presented Agenda Items 5 and 6, requests to create and fill the position of Caseworker in the Adult Protective Services Unit and she referenced the vacant CASA Caseworker position which was approved by the Committee in March 2011 and held open contingent upon review of the departmental workload and needs. She said the original vacancy resulted from a retirement in the

CASA Unit earlier this year. Ms. Weaver cited an increase in referrals in the Adult Protective Unit as well as one staff reduction and recommended that one full-time position be shared between the Adult Protective Services and CASA Units. If the change were approved, she noted, the local share would be 38%. She informed that the County had one of the largest aging populations per capita State-wide and apprised of an increase in the number of CASA cases. Ms. Weaver explained that CASA pertained to personal care for in-home services and noted that the State had increased the reassessment requirement from four to six months. She further noted that the State was considering that personal care services be offered through Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO)'s within next two to three years, thereby necessitating an eventual reduction in the number of CASA positions.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried by majority vote, with Mr. Kenny and Mrs. Wood voting in opposition, approving the request to create and fill two Social Welfare Examiner positions in the Temporary Assistance Unit as outlined above and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.*

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt and seconded by Mr. Bentley to authorize one Social Welfare Examiner position on a temporary basis in the Food Stamp Unit, subject to review and re-evaluation in three months.

Mr. Geraghty asked the length of the necessary training in the Food Stamp Unit and Ms. Weaver advised that one week of training was required.

Mr. Loeb called the question and the motion was carried by majority vote, with Mr. Kenny and Mrs. Wood voting in opposition, authorizing a temporary Social Welfare Examiner position in the Food Stamp Unit as outlined.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. McDevitt to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker in the Adult Protective Services Unit and to abolish the vacant position of Caseworker in the CASA Unit.

Ms. Weaver noted one caveat was a reduction in funding for the position as the CASA position was 100% funded and the Adult Protective position was 62% funded. Discussion ensued and it was consensus of the Committee to oppose such a change in light of the reimbursement level for the Adult Protective Caseworker. Mr. Loeb asked Ms. Weaver how she would proceed without the position and she stated that she would continue her full effort with the staffing resources available. Mr. Bentley withdrew his motion and Mr. McDevitt withdrew his second to the motion approving the request to create and fill the position as outlined above.

Addressing travel requests, Ms. Weaver requested that Tammy Breen attend the New York State Police (NYSP) Sex Offense Seminar in Albany, NY, from May 23 -27, 2011, at meal costs of \$15 and \$24.50 per day for lunch and dinner.

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

Ms. Weaver presented a request for Lisa Zulauf, Elizabeth Burke and Grace Maranville to attend the New York Welfare Fraud Investigator Association (NYWFIA) annual Training in Albany, NY, from June 13 - 15, 2011, at a room rate of \$121 and a meal cost of \$15 per day for two days for lunch and \$31 for one dinner.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Kenny to approve the request for travel as outlined. Mr. Kenny stated his opposition to overnight stays in Albany and he expressed the need for a written policy to address the issue.

Mr. Strainer withdrew his motion and Mr. Kenny withdrew his second to the motion to approve the request for three staff members to attend NYWFIA training in Albany, NY, based on the fact that the request included overnight accommodations.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request for travel to NYWFIA training as outlined, which would not include overnight accommodations. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Dusek recommended that Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, refer the issue regarding changes to the Travel Policy to the Personnel Committee for consideration of a written policy regarding overnight stays within established distances.

Ms. Weaver requested permission for Anne O'Neil and Janet Baker to attend Achieving Permanency Through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights training in Albany, NY, from June 7 - 9, and June 14, - 16, 2011, at a room rate of \$50 per night and a meal cost of \$15 per day for lunch.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Sokol to approve the request for travel as outlined.

Mr. McDevitt noted that mileage costs plus travel time (overtime) could offset the cost for overnight accommodations. Ms. Weaver stated that employees are paid for one hour of overtime each way for travel to and from Albany. She further noted that there was no cost to the County for double/shared rooms to attend mandated training. The \$50 room night cost, she explained, was for single rooms. She suggested that the travel policy allow only double occupancy which would incur no cost to the County. Mr. Dusek noted the policy was included in the Union Contract and any changes would require negotiation. Mr. Geraghty noted there was no mileage cost with the use of a County vehicle. Mr. Loeb noted the need to amend all travel requests and eliminate overnight travel. Mr. Sokol asked which option presented a greater savings and Mr. Loeb stated the cost of the hotel must be considered as well as overtime pay for travel required. Ms. Weaver advised that the State paid for breakfast and dinner, and the County paid for lunch.

Mr. Loeb called the question and the motion failed due to the lack of a majority vote.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried by majority vote, with Mr. McDevitt voting in opposition, to approve the request for travel as outlined, which would not include the cost for overnight accommodations and would include the use of a County vehicle if available. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Next, Ms. Weaver requested permission for herself to attend Preparing Workers for Middle-Skill Jobs training in Albany, NY, on June 10, 2011, at a meal cost of \$15 for lunch.

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

Mrs. Weaver presented Agenda Item 11, a request for Sharon Figler to attend Eating Disorders and Pregnancy training in Glens Falls, NY, on May 26, 2011.

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

Ms. Weaver presented a request for Katie Dion to attend Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training in Albany, NY, from June 15 - 17, 2011, at a room rate of \$44.50 per night and a meal cost of \$15 per day.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Bentley to approve the request as outlined above and the motion failed due to the lack of a majority vote.

Mr. McDevitt pointed out that adequate training was essential in order for staff to carry out specific functions and he underscored the need to define policy in this manner.

Mr. Kenny withdrew his motion and Mr. Bentley withdrew his second to the motion to approve the request for travel as outlined above.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried by majority vote, with Mr. McDevitt voting in opposition, to approve the request for travel as outlined, without overnight stays.

Ms. Weaver presented a request for herself to attend the New York State Commissioner's and Fiscal Meetings in Albany, NY, from October 19 - 20, 2011, at one day meal costs of \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch and \$29 for dinner. Ms. Weaver stated the overnight request would be removed.

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

Agenda Item 14, Ms. Weaver stated was a request for Carrie Mosher to attend the Third Age Committee Conference in Albany, NY, from May 19 - 20, 2011, with a meal cost of \$15 for lunch. She said she there was no cost to the County for the overnight accommodations.

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

Ms. Weaver requested permission for Sharon Figler and Deborah Bombard to attend Institute for Temporary Assistance training in Albany, NY, from June 6 - 10, 2011 and June 20 - 24, 2011, with no meal costs and a room rate of \$40 per night.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Wood to approve the request for travel without overnight stays as outlined.

Mr. McDevitt asked Ms. Weaver to confirm that mandated training was required by the State and therefore there would be no question regarding their attendance. Ms. Weaver replied affirmatively and Mr. McDevitt stated that the question was regarding overtime pay for travel and hotel costs. Ms. Weaver noted that the room cost was 100% reimbursed. Deana Park, Director of the Countryside Adult Home pointed out that four different training sessions were scheduled for the

same day, and therefore, she said, four County vehicles would not be available. Mr. Loeb deferred all transportation details to Ms. Weaver. Mr. Loeb stated that some overnight stays were fully reimbursed; therefore posed no cost to the County. Mr. Kenny opined that variations regarding overnight stays could cause issues among employees and reiterated that a policy was needed.

Mr. Loeb called the question and the motion was carried by majority vote with Mr. Strainer voting in opposition, to approve the request for travel as outlined, without overnight stays. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Conference is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver requested permission for Elizabeth DeVit to attend the Aging Concerns Unite Us (ACUU) Conference in Albany, NY, on June 7 and 8, 2011, which included meals with no overnight stays.

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

The last travel item, Ms. Weaver stated, was a request for permission for Maureen Taylor to attend Child Protective Services Supervisory Code Module IIA training in Canandaigua, NY, from August 1 - 4, 2011 and August 15 - 18, 2011, at a room rate of \$47.50 per night and meal costs of \$11 and \$23 per day for lunch and dinner.

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

Pertaining to old business, Ms. Weaver advised that pending items one and two would be carried forward.

Addressing the Overtime Report, Ms. Weaver reported a steady increase over the past month which she expected to decrease once new staff in the Food Stamp and Temporary Assistance Units were trained. Mr. Loeb apprised that although some use of overtime was preventable, most were not preventable costs and he cited many calls received after hours. Mr. Loeb further cited a Foster Care supervised visit which was necessary in the Buffalo, NY region for which there were no options to reduce costs. Mr. Kenny agreed and opined there were other considerations that could be made when new positions were created such as staggering shifts.

Ms. Weaver stated the Budget Status Report reflected good news for the Department relative to the Revenue Budget for 2010. She informed the State reported revenue for 2010 to be 105% of the anticipated revenue. Expenses, she noted, were 104% of budget. Ms. Weaver reported 2011 Expenditures included overtime at 36%, which would be reduced by additional staff. She said hospitalization was high, and one adjustment would be made by the Treasurer due to an overcharge.

Ms. Weaver announced she had received notification from the State of a 40% reduction for Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Nutrition programming, and noted funding would sustain until May 2011. She apprised that she would send a letter to terminate the contract and stated that Supervisors may get phone calls related to the matter. Mr. Loeb noted that the CCE staff was aware of and distressed by the reduction to services provided to the community.

In concluding, Ms. Weaver informed she had met with the NYS Department of Health regarding the takeover of Medicaid by the State, and the original five year takeover plan would be completed in

three years. She explained that the State would assume all Medicaid cases by July 2012 and the Counties would continue to process eligibility determinations for the blind, elderly and disabled (Chronic Care and Supplemental Security Income populations). The State, she said, was confident that all takeover activities would be completed by January 2014.

Mr. Geraghty asked if staff reductions would be made as the Medicaid takeover progressed and Ms. Weaver stated that staff reductions were anticipated and staff relocations would be made whenever possible. She expounded that the State would contract with a vendor to hire staff at minimum wage to be trained by County staff. She said there would be no change to the Medicaid cap until at least 2013, however, she said, as the takeover progress, she anticipated the take over of administrative costs as well but did not have specifics.

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 stated that Pending Items 1 through 3 would be carried forward as confirmed by Mr. Dusek. Mr. Dusek stated he had met with JoAnn McKinstry, Assistant to the Administrator, Barbara Taggart, Westmount Administrator, and Betsy Henkel, Financial Administrator, to discuss cost saving ideas with regard to the laundry fee procedure, which necessitated review by the accounting firm. Additionally, he said, review of the entire facility was necessary.

Ms. Park reviewed the current census figures and monthly statistics. She apprised that the Meal Site relocation details were still issue which was still being worked out regarding space utilization.

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.*

Mr. Loeb said that Agenda Item 3, which pertained to funding for the Warren County Youth Court would be addressed first. He stated that Youth Court funding was in jeopardy and recommended alternative funding options be sought to help subsidize the program which had a measurable benefit to the local community. He said it was his understanding that Youth Board funding could be allocated for the Youth Court Program and he recommended a cost benefit analysis be completed. He said members of the Probation Department were present today to speak about cost benefit, as well as the Youth Court Program's role in the law enforcement system.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Robert Iusi, Director of Probation, who advised that a brief history of assessment procedures used in the juvenile justice system would be helpful to the Committee in assessing the value of the program. He stated there were currently four Juvenile Probation Officer's (PO) housed in the Department of Social Services and he noted strong collaboration between the Probation and Social Services Department's with many common families in need of services. The close proximity of the Juvenile Justice Unit and the DSS in the Human Services Building has resulted in improved communications and more seamless efforts and services. Mr Iusi stated that Steve Bayle, Juvenile Supervisor, was present today. Mr. Iusi explained that two populations comprised the Juvenile Justice Services recipients; Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) and Juvenile Delinquents (JD). PINS, he said, were comprised of youth between the ages of 8 and 18 who had not committed a crime but who showed incorrigible truancy. He further explained that Juvenile Delinquents were youth under the age of 16 who had committed crimes. Mr. Iusi stated that all PINS and JD youth (Juveniles) were entered into the Probation Department as per Articles 3 and 7 of the Family Court Act.

In terms of assessment, Mr. Iusi articulated that the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) was a comprehensive screening and assessment tool completed for all youth who entered into the Department. He further explained that the YASI used triage methodology to assign a risk level to each individual; thereby providing a basis for determining which services would provide optimum benefit. The assessment, he said, focused on family, mental health, alcohol and substance abuse issues, and aggressive behaviors. He noted the Probation Assistant completed the assessments which included a public safety risk analysis as well.

Mr. Iusi apprised the Department's philosophy that low risk youth should not be engaged further into the system unless it was absolutely necessary, was proven and noted that such involvement could have a negative impact on low risk cases. The best outcomes for low risk youth, he stated, were derived from referrals made which included Youth Court. He noted some low risk truancy and low level JD cases were referred to the Youth Court. He informed that Juvenile PO's were stationed throughout schools in the community and noted that the Glens Falls and Queensbury School Districts each had one full-time PO, and most other area schools were assigned a part-time PO. The PO's, he explained, provided a significant benefit to both the schools and students by addressing pre-PINS and JD behaviors, one of the most significant benefits offered by the Department. Preventive measures, he asserted, minimized or eliminated the likelihood that youth would enter into the Court system.

Medium risk juvenile's, Mr. Iusi stated, were assigned to a PO, and some were also referred to the Youth Court Program providing there were no significant mental health, substance abuse, or aggression issues. Regarding high risk juvenile cases, he said they were assigned to a Probation Officer and not referred to Youth Court. As a result, he stated, the Youth Court handled some low and medium risk juveniles.

Regarding the benefits of the Youth Court involvement, Mr. Iusi stated that research clearly indicated that youth listen better to their peers as opposed to adults. The Youth Court setting, he added, provided a vehicle by which youth were judged by their peers and included non at-risk students, in a non-government agency format. Such a setting, he said, offered a comfort level which typically leads to further program engagement, motivation, engagement in new opportunities and success. Mr. Iusi stated that the possibility existed that participants could participate as a juror and also as a Youth Court member in the future.

Addressing detention costs, Mr. Iusi said the program saved \$300 per day in detention costs and noted that out of home placement cost approximately \$80,000 per year. The success of the Juvenile Justice Department, he said, was measured by a reduction in placements and detention home placements. He added that the State was continually changing the formulas, thereby penalizing good results achieved at the County level. He advised that the cost for the Probation Department to supervise youth was a \$1.1 million budget which cost approximately \$1,500 per youth. He said the benefits exceeded the costs by preventing youth from engaging further into the criminal justice system. Relative to the screening of individuals, Mr. Iusi expressed that youth must be linked to resources, and the pool of resources was shrinking; however, he stated, the number of youth in need of services had not declined.

Although the Probation Department would continue to evaluate and refer cases, Mr. Iusi stated that the absence of the Youth Court would cause an increase in the number of cases referred to PO's and the long term outcomes for low and medium risk juveniles under these circumstance was unknown.

Mr. Iusi noted a relationship between the Juvenile and Adult Probation cases in Probation. He stated that youthful offenders between the ages of 16 and 18 were treated as an adult, a method which did not address individuals from a developmental perspective. He remarked that brain development

in youth was not complete until the age of 24 and he opined that such individuals should be supervised as a child for optimum outcomes. The Youth Court enabled that process, he said. Mr. Iusi further advised that the cost per day to the County for juvenile detention was approximately \$300, and the annual cost per youth for out of home placement was approximately \$80,000. He stated the collaborative efforts the Probation and DSS clearly reduced the number.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Steve Bayle, Juvenile Supervisor, who underscored the effectiveness that the peer-to-peer accountability of the Youth Court enabled. Mr. Stec asked for the annual Youth Court Budget figure and Mr. Dusek stated it was \$72,929 with a \$23,000 gap. He stated the County must be judicious in selecting the items to challenge the State and decisions must be made based on the current fiscal situation. He further stated that although the Youth Court Program showed good use of funds, it could have fiscal implications for the long term if the County challenged the State on the matter. Mrs. Wood asked where the \$23,000 would be derived and opined that it was better to offer fewer well run key programs than many programs which were hastily put together.

A short discussion ensued.

Mr. Stec asked how many youth were served per year and Mr. Iusi stated a total of approximately 60 juveniles in both program areas were served.

A discussion ensued with regard to incurring a fee to Youth Court members to sustain the program. Mr. Dusek confirmed there was not a legal obstacle for charging a fee in this manner. Mr. Stec encouraged other ideas for subsidizing the program such as the fee for participants and he suggested a portion be derived from the municipalities. Mr. Stec pointed out that the City of Glens Falls and the Town of Queensbury financially supported the program. Mr. Taylor agreed with Mr. Stec and suggested that an ad hoc committee be formed to seek viable funding sources to sustain the Youth Court Program. Mr. Strainer expressed his agreement to consider community outreach efforts for funding options.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Marc Kokosa, Assistant District Attorney, who cautioned that fees may be cost prohibitive to many recipients and he noted that many youth were from lower income rural families. He asserted that Youth Court participation had been a better option than paying a \$225 fine and he said there were many intangible benefits, such as contact at the first incident which raised the likelihood that there would not be further engagements with law enforcement especially through the early 20's. He said other benefits included peer to peer relations, success rates for low level offenders who would not benefit as much from routine counseling, and avoidance of the stigma of having a criminal record. Through his observations, Mr. Kokosa stated, it was clear how the activities within Youth Court programming prevented future offenses.

A discussion ensued relative to the reallocation of other Youth Program funds, such as funding for recreation. Mrs. Wood stated the importance of the recreation funds and such removal could negatively impact some Towns. She said it was the Town of Thurman's only summer youth program. Mr. Stec suggested a \$125 surcharge for Youth Court membership. He stated he would present a request at the next meeting of the Queensbury Town Board to increase Queensbury's contribution from \$7,000 to \$9,000 per year.

Mr. Loeb noted it was consensus of the Committee to form an ad hoc Committee and he volunteered to serve on the Committee along with Mr. Stec, Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Wood and Mr. McDevitt. Mrs. Smith summarized the State Youth Program funding status noting that funding would decrease. She informed of changes in the NYS Department of Health regulations which effected summer day

camps. Ms. Smith referenced the list of issues which the Warren County Youth Board had requested input from the Committee and she thanked the Committee for their support.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Wood, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 1:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanne Collins, Legislative Office Specialist