

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES - SOCIAL SERVICES, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME & YOUTH PROGRAMS

DATE: MAY 26, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: OTHERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS LOEB
KENNY
BENTLEY
STRAINER
WOOD
MCDEVITT
SOKOL

SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEANNA PARK, DIRECTOR OF THE COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
MARGARET SING-SMITH, DIRECTOR OF THE 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
JON ALEXANDER, *THE POST STAR*
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 9:30 a.m.

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

Commencing the agenda review, Ms. Weaver requested authorization for 30 DSS staff members to attend "Solving the Mystery of Communication" training on June 29-30, 2011 at the Human Services Building at an approximate cost of \$3,989. She noted the trainer had completed training with supervisory staff a few weeks prior and had provided similar training five years ago for the previous DSS Commissioner. Ms. Weaver pointed out that the trainer had informed that the Warren County DSS staff were in the top 3% nationwide as far as morale. She added that the trainer had completed training in 43 separate counties in New York State.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol and seconded by Mr. Kenny to authorize attendance at the training as outlined above.

Mr. Sokol asked if the cost of the training was reimbursable and Ms. Weaver responded that as long as the Department remained under the training cap, the cost was 100% reimbursable. She pointed out that at least 14 staff members had undergone the training in the past. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Loeb called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to authorize 30 DSS staff members to attend "Solving the Mystery of Communication" training as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver requested authorization for a newly hired Child Protective Services (CPS) Caseworker (CW) to attend CW/CPS Common Core Training on June 27 through July 1, 2011; July 11-15, 2011; July 24-29, 2011; and August 8-12, 2011 in Buffalo, NY at a cost of \$44.50 per night for lodging plus the cost of meals. She noted that the State mandated that CPS Caseworkers attend the next available training following their employment and the cost of the training would be reimbursed at

75%. Mr. Strainer questioned how long the employee had been with the County and Ms. Weaver replied that the employee had not yet been hired and would be employed for less than a month prior to the training. Mr. Loeb asked the total cost to the County and Ms. Weaver replied approximately \$850.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize attendance at the training as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver requested authorization for twelve DSS staff members to attend the NYPWA (New York Public Welfare Association) Summer Conference in Saratoga, NY on July 25-27, 2011. She noted this was one of the most effective training sessions that was available to staff and there would be State representatives present. She pointed out that the total cost was approximately \$2,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to authorize attendance at the training as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver stated there were no updates on the pending items at this time. She reviewed the overtime report with the Committee members and pointed out there had been an average of 76.44 overtime hours per pay period in 2011 compared to 49.93 overtime hours per pay period in 2010. She noted that the caseloads had increased in several of the units and Mr. Loeb noted the majority of the overtime usage was for CPS after hours cases. Ms. Weaver responded there was little control over the overtime usage for CPS after hours cases as this involved calls received between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. the following morning. Mr. Kenny commented there had been previous discussions pertaining to the possibility of creating a position that would cover the majority of the after hours calls. Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator, said the discussions had been held more than a year ago but no action had been taken. Ms. Weaver pointed out that a supervisor would need to be on the same shift as the staff member. Mr. Dusek noted the possibility of creating a shift to accommodate the after hours calls would have to be evaluated by Ms. Weaver, as well as the Union.

Following further discussion on the matter, it was the consensus of the Committee to direct Ms. Weaver to evaluate the staffing needs of the CPS Unit as it pertains to handling the after hours calls to determine if it would be feasible to create positions that could handle those calls to avoid incurring overtime costs and to report back to the Committee.

Referring to the Report on Revenues and Expenditures for 2011 as of May 23, 2011, Ms. Weaver said that expenses were 31% of the amount budgeted and overtime was at 46% of the amount budgeted. She advised that revenue was 15% of the amount budgeted which was expected because the State was usually three months behind on reimbursements.

Ms. Weaver distributed copies of the Warren County Department of Social Services 2010 Annual Report to the Committee members; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.* She encouraged the Committee members to review the Annual Report and to contact her if there were any questions. She pointed out that page seven of the Report showed that there had been a 22% increase in Temporary Assistance applications in 2010 compared to 2009. On page 30, she continued, it was noted that there had been a 12.35% increase in 2010 of CPS reports filed as compared to 2009. She advised that the purpose of the Preventive Services Unit was to keep children out of the foster care

system and in 2010 only 2.8% of the children served had entered into foster care.

Mr. Sokol stated that a constituent had questioned why there was only one full time Fraud Investigator employed by the DSS and Ms. Weaver countered that there were three full time Fraud Investigators employed by the DSS in addition to the one full time Investigator in the Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Bentley suggested that properties being foreclosed upon by the County be evaluated prior to the County Land Auction to determine if they were suitable locations for homeless housing. Mr. Dusek said he would contact Mike Swan, Director of Real Property Tax Services, to request that he keep the homeless housing issue in mind when reviewing properties for foreclosure.

This concluded the DSS portion of the Committee meeting; the Countryside Adult Home portion of the meeting commenced at 9:55 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Deanna Park, Director of the 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 asked Mr. Dusek if there were any updates to the pending items for the Countryside Adult Home. Referring to the second pending item which pertained to laundry services obtained from Westmount Health Facility, Mr. Dusek said the issue had been resolved and a modified invoice dating back to January would be issued to correct the billing. He expounded that an agreement had been reached and Countryside Adult Home would no longer be charged for salaries of the laundry workers. Referring to the first pending item pertaining to invoices from Technical Building Services, Mr. Dusek reported he had begun working on the issue but would need further information in order to continue. He advised he was unsure of the status of the third pending item pertaining to the possibility of consolidating contracts for employee physicals and clinician coverage.

Ms. Park reported there had been 10.8 overtime hours used for the last two pay cycles and overall the facility had decreased by 213 hours compared to 2010. She said the current census of the Countryside Adult Home was 39 residents: 15 and 24 women. She stated there had been six referrals this month: two of which required a higher level of care; two of which were from outside of the County; one would be evaluated later this week; and one was not interested in an adult home setting. She noted there had been one admission and two discharges this month; however, she added, one of the residents who had been discharged was expected to return.

Mr. Strainer questioned the status of the possibility of locating a mealsite at the Countryside Adult Home and Ms. Park replied she was waiting for further information from Christie Sabo, Director of the Office for the Aging. Mr. Strainer said one of Ms. Sabo's concerns was that the County was still considering the possibility of selling the Countryside Adult Home, making it necessary to relocate the mealsite a second time. Mr. Loeb pointed out that the majority of the Supervisors had been in support of retaining the Countryside Adult Home. Mr. Kenny noted the budget status for the future was unknown and the County had no way of knowing which non-mandated facilities they could afford to retain. Mr. Dusek announced that he had been conducting a financial review of the Countryside Adult Home with the intent of continuing his review with other County facilities. He said that he would present the report, which would include cost projections for the facility, at the next Committee meeting. A discussion ensued.

This concluded the Countryside Adult Home portion of the meeting, the Youth Programs portion of the meeting commenced at 10:05 a.m.

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.*

Commencing the agenda review, Ms. Sing-Smith pointed out that the agenda contained a recommendation for a funding plan utilizing the 2011 Resource Allocation Plan funding. She advised the State Office of Children & Family Services funding through the Youth Bureau had been reduced by 30% in the adopted State budget. She noted that the reduction in the State budget resulted in a decrease of funding to Warren County of approximately \$21,000 for 2011. She said the attached funding plan was approved by the Warren County Youth Board on May 18, 2011 and she was seeking Committee approval, as well. It was the consensus of the Committee to accept the 2011 funding plan as presented.

Mr. Loeb pointed out that an Ad Hoc Youth Court Committee had been recently established and had held their first meeting following the May 20, 2011 Board meeting. He added the next meeting would be held following the June 17, 2011 Board meeting.

Ms. Sing-Smith requested authorization for continuation of the contractual agreements with various agencies, as listed, for the Youth Development Delinquency Prevention Programs and Special Delinquency Programs, for a term commencing January 1, 2011 and terminating December 31, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize continuation of the contractual agreements as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 17, 2011 Board meeting.*

Ms. Sing-Smith requested to amend the 2011 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$14,982 to reflect the receipt of State funding.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the 2011 County budget as outlined and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Sing-Smith noted an update on the status of funding for the Warren County Youth Court was provided on the agenda and she commented there was sufficient funding to sustain the Program through October 2011. She distributed copies of a Youth Court Comparative Analysis to the Committee members and stated the Analysis had been completed by Robert Iusi, Director of the Probation Department; *a copy of the Youth Court Comparative Analysis is on file with the minutes.* She explained that this was the information requested by the Committee pertaining to the impact of the Warren County Youth Court on the County's Criminal Justice System.

Mr. Strainer asked how a not-for-profit group would apply to have the Youth Court participants provide a community service and Ms. Sing-Smith replied they would apply directly to the Youth Court Program and indicate the scope of the work which would be required. Mr. Strainer questioned if the not-for-profit groups were aware that this was available and Ms. Sing-Smith replied affirmatively.

Brief discussion ensued.

Chairman Stec suggested a project for the Youth Court participants would be to clean up the paper debris which had been disbursed near Tech Meadows and Luzerne Road in the Town of Queensbury as a result of the capping of the former landfill.

Mr. Loeb stated that the additional funding for the Warren County Youth Court which had been provided by some of the Towns was appreciated. Mr. Geraghty stated that the community services provided by the Youth Court participants were valuable and he recommended the Towns who utilized the services contribute towards the Program.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. Strainer, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist