

## Warren County Board of Supervisors

**Committee: Social Services**

**Date: May 30, 2012**

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**Committee Members Present:**

Supervisors Loeb  
Kenny  
Strainer  
Wood  
Sokol

**Others Present:**

Representing the Department of Social Services:  
Suzanne Wheeler, Acting Commissioner  
Julie Montero, Fiscal Manager  
Margaret Sing Smith, Director, Youth Bureau  
Daniel G. Stec, Chairman of the Board  
Paul Dusek, County Administrator  
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board  
Supervisor Conover  
Supervisor Dickinson  
Supervisor Mason  
Supervisor McDevitt  
Supervisor Thomas  
Steve Bayle, Probation Supervisor  
John Strough, Queensbury Town Councilman  
Don Lehman, *The Post Star*  
Nicole Livingston, Second Deputy Clerk

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**Committee Members Absent:**

Supervisors Bentley  
Westcott

Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 9:33 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2012 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Margaret Sing Smith, Director of the Youth Bureau, who distributed copies of her agenda to the Committee members; a copy of the agenda is also on file with the minutes.

Commencing the Agenda review, Mrs. Smith provided an update on the Warren County Youth Court, including statistical information on the program and the current financial position of the 2012 Youth Court budget, and said information was included in the Agenda. She referenced a letter included in the Agenda from Steve Bayle, Probation Supervisor, regarding Youth Court outcomes. She informed that \$17,282 in State funds had been awarded to the Youth Court program for 2012; thereby leaving a deficit of \$16,303 to continue the operation of the program for the remainder of the year.

Paul Dusek, County Administrator, apprised that approximately \$6,000 a month was needed to operate the Youth Court, which meant that there was no funding available for the last three months of the year. He reiterated the importance of informing the Youth Court in advance if there was no funding available to continue its' operation, noting a decision needed to be made either this month or next as to whether or not the Youth Court program would continue.

Mr. Kenny expressed his support of the Youth Court program and questioned if there was enough money available in the Contingent Fund to continue its' operation and Mr. Dusek replied affirmatively.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Sokol to authorize a Contingent Fund transfer in the amount of \$16,303 to fund the Youth Court for the remainder of 2012.

Mr. Strainer recalled recommendations that had been made by the Committee to reduce certain line items in the Youth Court budget, such as the telephone, rent and travel expenses. Mrs. Smith acknowledged said recommendations and added it had also been recommended that the individual towns be asked for donations, some of which had been received and greatly appreciated.

Mr. Dusek asserted that Dave Saffer, Director of the Council for Prevention of Alcohol & Substance Abuse, had pursued the idea of relocating to available office space in the Human Services Building (HSB); however, he said, the amount of square footage needed exceeded the amount available in the HSB. Katherine Chambers, Director of Youth Court, confirmed that there was not enough space in the HSB to relocate the Youth Court staff from the Council for Prevention of Alcohol & Substance Abuse. She further discussed the benefits of the Youth Court operations being administered in conjunction with the Agency. Suzanne Wheeler, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, added that the idea of bringing the Youth Court employees under the purview of the County had also been considered, although it had been determined that such action would cost the County more money than it would to continue the operations as they were.

Mr. Sokol stated his support of the program and wondered if it would be possible to operate the Youth Court for nine months a year as opposed to twelve. Ms. Chambers advised that operating the Youth Court for nine months a year would change the way the program operated in its entirety, citing specific examples with regard to the referral process and service requirements. Mr. Dusek pointed out that if the program only operated for part of the year, Mr. Saffer had said he would have to lay off staff, with no assurance that he would have the staff when the program was re-instituted.

Mrs. Wood recognized the benefits of the Youth Court program; however, she said, last year and again this year, there had been a struggle attempting to continue a funding stream for the program and she suggested that during the budget process a decision be made as to the future of the program. Mr. Conover expressed his support of the Youth Court and for providing the funding for the continuation of the program for the remainder of the year.

Following discussion, Mr. Loeb called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to authorize a Contingent Fund transfer in the amount of \$16,303 to fund the Youth Court for the remainder of 2012, and to refer the same to the Finance Committee. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Item 2 on the Agenda, Mrs. Smith said, was the 2012 Resource Allocation Plan which listed the programs proposed for the 100% State youth funds that were awarded for municipal and community agency youth programs. She noted the award was a 35% reduction from 2011. She pointed out that these funds would be used to focus on the areas of physical health, through the recreation programs run by the towns, citizenship

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and family development. She requested approval to submit the 2012 Resource Allocation Plan to the New York State Office of Children & Family Services in the amount of \$50,515 as well as authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign the agreement and to allow her to sign interfund transfers for the programs.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request to submit the 2012 Resource Allocation Plan and to authorize Mrs. Smith to sign interfund transfers for the programs in the plan, as outlined above, and the necessary resolutions were authorized for the June 15, 2012 Board meeting. A copy of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Smith advised Item 3 on the Agenda was a request for authorization for the continuation of contractual relationships with the Council for Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc.; Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany; Warren-Hamilton Counties Action Committee for Economic Opportunities, Inc.; and Catholic Charities of Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties, for Youth Development Delinquency Prevention and Special Delinquency Programs, commencing January 1, 2012 and terminating December 31, 2012.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request for the continuation of contractual relationships as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 15, 2012 Board meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Next, Mrs. Smith requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$5,500 from Code A.7311 470 Youth Bureau-Contract to A.7313 470 Youth Court-Contract to allocate the 100% State funds for contractual youth programs.

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

Mrs. Smith requested to amend the 2012 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$546 to reflect receipt of 100% State funds for community agency contracts.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the 2012 County budget as outlined above, and to refer the same to the Finance Committee. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Wheeler who distributed copies of her agenda to the Committee members; a copy of the agenda is also on file with the minutes.

Commencing the Agenda review with Announcements, Ms. Wheeler informed that the Team Leader selected for the month was Kelly Barker, Principal Social Welfare Examiner, who was unable to attend the meeting today. She further reported that the Team Player

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for the month was Ann Hayden, Social Welfare Examiner, who was present and she congratulated Ms. Hayden. She noted that the Agenda included praising comments from Ms. Barkers' and Ms. Haydens' coworkers. The Committee members responded with a round of applause.

Item II on the Agenda, Ms. Wheeler said, was the DSS Program Information and Education, and she stated that this month's presentation would be provided by Tammy Breen, Case Supervisor B in the Child Protective Services (CPS) Unit. Ms. Breen advised she had been with the Department for fourteen years. She stated that DSS was mandated through the New York State Office of Children & Family Services to provide a Child Protective Services Unit. The Unit, she said, was comprised of herself as a Supervisor, ten Caseworkers, two Senior Caseworkers and a Child Services Clerk that also worked with Foster Care and Preventive Services. Ms. Breen explained that all reports regarding Child Protective Abuse and Maltreatment came through the State Central Registry (SCR) in Albany and were allocated to the appropriate county. She asserted that in 2011, Warren County received 1,440 reports from the SCR; and from January to April 2012, they had received 525 reports, which was an increase of 65 reports compared to the same time in 2011. She noted they had recently seen a slight increase with false reporting, which was a misdemeanor, and they were working with the Sheriff's Office on those issues. Ms. Breen apprised that once a report was received, her Unit had twenty-four hours to assess the safety of the child and determine if abuse or maltreatment was occurring. In 2011, she said, the State did a review of the CPS Unit and its' cases to make sure that regulatory standards were being practiced by the County and the review determined that the Unit required no corrective action plan by the State. Ms. Breen discussed the CPS Units collaboration with many support agencies in the County. She distributed a handout that provided statistical information from the State on CPS reports that were processed during 2011 and 2012, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. She informed that the State recommended an average caseload of twelve investigations per worker and her Unit was at fifteen investigations per worker.

Returning to the Agenda review, Ms. Wheeler presented nine requests for authorization to attend meetings or conventions as follows:

- 1- Director of Child Support/Fraud, Lillian Hayes, to attend the New York Welfare Fraud Investigators Annual Training Seminar in Syracuse, NY on June 4-6, 2012;
- 2- Case Supervisor B of the Adult Protective Unit, Julianna Pearl, to attend Aging Concerns Unites Us in Albany, NY on June 5-6, 2012;
- 3- Caseworkers, Andrea Corbin, Christina Mastrianni, Tina Murray and Maureen Taylor, to attend Sexual Abuse Dynamics & Intervention Training in Albany, NY on June 13-15, 2012;
- 4- Caseworkers, Stephanie Coulman, Kristy Neel and Melissa Wilkins, to attend Physical Abuse: Head Trauma & Fractures, et al, at Saratoga County DSS on June 18, 2012;
- 5- Acting Deputy Commissioner, Maureen Schmidt, to attend the Staff Development Coordinators Annual Meeting in Albany, NY on June 19-21, 2012;

- 6- Keyboard Specialist, Jodimarie Rowland, to attend the Welfare to Work Caseload Management System Training in Albany, NY on July 18-19, 2012;
- 7- Social Welfare Examiners in the Temporary Assistance Unit, Heidi Knickerbocker, Josette Kill, Linda Pechette, Ana Kerst, Genevieve O'Brian, Ashley McKinney, Cynthia Cameron and Ann Hayden, to attend the Mental Health Awareness Training in Albany, NY on July 31, 2012;
- 8- Foster Care Caseworkers, Janet Baker, Joanna Brierton and Heather Ranado, to attend Helping People Change: Techniques for Engaging and Motivating in Albany, NY on September 7, 2012; and
- 9- Foster Care Caseworker, Heather Ranado, to attend Child Protective Services Response Training in Albany, NY on November 26-30, 2012 and December 10-14, 2012.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the nine requests for training as outlined above. Copies of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention forms are on file with the minutes.

Ms. Wheeler stated Item IV on the Agenda was the Overtime Report, which consisted of on-call hours, a foster care placement, the preparation for a New York State Office of Child & Family Services review, and Medicaid reviews.

The next Item, Ms. Wheeler said, was the Budget Status Report, and noted the State was behind in the processing of claims which resulted in the Department being a little behind in revenues.

Mr. Loeb advised the last item on the Agenda was for discussion regarding the filling of the position of Commissioner of Social Services. He recommended an executive session to discuss the appointment of a particular person.

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

Executive session was declared from 10:20 a.m. to 10:44 a.m.

The Committee reconvened, and Mr. Loeb announced no action was necessary pursuant to the executive session.

There being no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mrs. Wood, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Second Deputy Clerk