

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: JULY 26, 2013

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS LOEB
KENNY
BENTLEY
STRAINER
SOKOL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS WOOD
WESTCOTT

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:
SUZANNE WHEELER, COMMISSIONER
MAUREEN SCHMIDT, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
JULIE MONTERO, FISCAL MANAGER
KAREN PARKER, INTAKE WORKER
JIM CONVERSE, SENIOR SOCIAL WELFARE EXAMINER
JOANN MCKINSTRY, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS MASON
TAYLOR
ROBERT IUSI, DIRECTOR OF PROBATION
ADAM STEPHENSON, PROBATION SUPERVISOR
AMY BARTLETT, FIRST ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
MORGAN MUELLER, INTERN, COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
JON ALEXANDER, *THE POST STAR*
SARAH MCLENITHAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 9:46 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Strainer 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 Suzanne Wheeler, 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. Wheeler announced the Team Player for the month of July was Karen Parker, Intake Worker in the Medicaid Unit, and the Team Leader was Jim Converse, Senior Social Welfare Examiner for Community Medicaid. She noted attachment #3A reflected comments from co-workers praising Ms. Parker and Mr. Converse. The Committee members responded with a round of applause.

Ms. Wheeler asked Robert Iusi, Director of Probation; Adam Stephenson, Probation Supervisor; and Maureen Schmidt, Deputy Commissioner of DSS, to explain the Supervision and Treatment Services for Juvenile (STSJP) Program 2013-2014 Annual Plan. She pointed out attachment #5A included a copy of the plan. Mr. Iusi advised that the Probation Department and DSS worked collaboratively in conjunction with juvenile delinquents and the Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) population in Warren County. He noted that the PINS Probation Officers were stationed in the Human Services Building with the DSS Department to ensure more efficient communication amongst the Departments, as well as to enhance services for affected families.

Mr. Iusi explained the plan was developed to prevent kids from being placed in detention homes. He said the plan included services offered to prevent detention such as the work performed by the DSS, as well as having a Probation Officer stationed in the City of Glens Falls School to deal with Pre-PINS and PINS Cases. He stated the majority of Pre-PINS and PINS cases occurred during the school year; therefore, he said, having a Probation Officer located at the school was more effective.

Another portion of the program, Mr. Iusi apprised, pertained to electronic monitoring through KMG Monitoring Services. He explained that a court order could be obtained requiring the youths to wear an electronic monitoring device, which allowed them to remain in their home rather than be placed in a detention home. He pointed out that the cost for this was significantly less than placing youths in detention homes.

Mr. Iusi advised a portion of the funding was allocated to the Wait House, which was a local homeless youth shelter. He said that over the last few years they had utilized the Wait House as a respite-type facility. He explained that particularly with PINS cases, situations occurred where the youths could be sent to the Wait House to give themselves and their families a break from each other. He pointed out that CAPTAINS Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter in Clifton Park was utilized as well, with the only difference being the age requirements. He stated that CAPTAINS Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter accepted youths ages 13-17, whereas the Wait House accepted youths ages 16-21.

He reiterated the goal of the STSJP plan was to prevent youths from being placed in detention homes. He noted that although this year the number of youths in need of detention had increased, overall the numbers were consistently lower over the past few years. He pointed out that due to the decline in placements State-wide, Berkshire Farm Center was closing their location in Queensbury, New York.

Mr. Iusi stated the last portion of the plan included identifying where the youths coming into the system originated from. He said this assisted with identifying where the time and resources were needed. He noted the majority of the youths were from Southern Warren County.

Mr. Loeb questioned if any other school districts besides the City of Glens Falls had Probation Officers in their schools and Mr. Iusi replied affirmatively. He explained that there were Probation Officers located within the majority of the schools in Warren County. Mr. Stephenson added there were four Probation Officers diversified throughout the Warren County school districts that had requested assistance.

Ms. Wheeler requested authorization for the Chairman of the Board to approve and sign the Supervision and Treatment Services for Juvenile (STSJP) Program for the New York State Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Annual Plan.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr Sokol and carried unanimously to authorize the Chairman of the Board to approve and sign the sign the Supervision and Treatment Services for Juvenile (STSJP) Program for the New York State Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Annual Plan as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 16, 2013 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

With regards to agenda items 5B through 5G, Ms. Wheeler apprised, they pertained to personnel requests which resulted in an annual savings of \$3,818 due to a retirement. Agenda item 5B, she said, referred to a request to amend the Departmental Table of Organization to abolish the position of Caseworker #17 in the Foster Care/Adoption Unit, Grade 14, annual base salary of \$35,385, due to resignation and create and fill the position of Sr. Caseworker #6 in the Foster Care/Adoption Unit, Grade 15, annual base salary of \$36,410, as well as to back-fill any vacancies created by promotion. She said the justification was included with agenda item 5B.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Request to*

Create New Position and Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.

Referring to item 5C, Ms. Wheeler requested to fill the vacant position of Case Worker #10 in the Foster Care/Adoption Unit, Grade 14, annual base salary of \$35,385, as well as back to back-fill any vacancies created by promotion.

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

Agenda item 5D, Mrs. Wheeler stated, referred to a request to abolish the Grade 14 position of Caseworker in the Family Preservation & Youth Development Unit, annual base salary of \$35,385 and create and fill the position of Sr. Caseworker #7 in the Family Preservation & Youth Development Unit, Grade 15, annual salary of \$36,410, as well as back to back-fill any vacancies created by promotion. She advised the agenda included a copy of the justification for the position, and summarized an increase in the workload, created by taking on the Youth Bureau responsibilities and the need to monitor the Daycare Unit program for fraud cases more frequently, justified the need for the position. She noted there had not been any issues with the County's Daycare Unit; however, she said, there had been an increase in the number of State-wide fraud cases. Mr. Loeb commended Ms. Wheeler for her continued effort in monitoring and making changes to the DSS Organizational chart when required to create a more proficient and effective Department.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Request to Create New Position and Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Wheeler said item 5E requested to abolish the position of Fraud Investigator in the Fraud Unit, Grade 11, annual salary of \$33,026, and create and fill the position of Sr. Fraud Investigator #1 in the Fraud Unit, Grade 13, annual salary of \$35,564, as well as back to back-fill any vacancies created by promotion. She pointed out a review of the Fraud and Support Unit had just commenced and an evaluation would be completed.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Request to Create New Position and Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.*

Agenda item 5F, Mrs. Wheeler apprised, referred to a request to abolish the position of Sr. Intake Clerk #2 in the Temporary Assistance/Reception Unit, Grade 5, annual base salary of \$26,370, and create and fill the position of Intake Worker #5 in the Temporary Assistance/Reception Unit, Grade 4, annual salary of \$25,344, as well as back to back-fill any vacancies created by promotion.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Request to Create New Position and Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Wheeler said item 5G requested to abolish the vacant position of Social Welfare Examiner #1 in the Temporary Assistance/Welfare to Work/Foodstamp/HEAP Unit, Grade 8, annual base salary of \$30,230, and to create and fill the position of Sr. Social Welfare Examiner #9 in the Temporary Assistance/Welfare to Work/Foodstamp/HEAP Unit, Grade 11, annual base salary of \$33,026. She said they had re-evaluated the Department and there was additional support needed to review the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program applications, as well as training, which this position would provide.

Mr. Loeb questioned what the difference between the positions was and Mrs. Wheeler replied that a Sr. Social Welfare Examiner reviewed the majority of the work performed by frontline employees, and also handled any staff issues or consumer complaints. Mr. Loeb asked whether a Sr. Social Welfare Examiner could perform the work of the frontline employee and Ms. Wheeler replied affirmatively.

Motion was by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Request to Create New Position and Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms are on file with the minutes.*

Moving to item 5H, Ms. Wheeler requested authorization for Jane Aldous and Colleen Mosher, both Social Welfare Examiners to attend the Statewide Health Insurance Programs Training on Chronic Care in Albany, NY from August 13-16, 2013 utilizing a County vehicle.

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

Concerning item 5I, Ms. Wheeler presented a request for Christina Matriani, Caseworker in the Foster Care Unit to enroll in the following job related course:

1. Course: Abnormal Psychology
Institution: Sage Graduate School
From: 8/29/13 -12/12/13
Cost: \$1,980

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Application for Approval to Enroll in Job-Related Courses by Employee is on file with the minutes.*

With regards to the overtime analysis, Ms. Wheeler pointed out that in comparison to last year the number of hours of overtime had decreased from 92 to 55. She advised the overtime was due to on-call child protective work. Mr. Loeb noted that the overtime fluctuated from month to month.

Ms. Wheeler apprised a copy of the Budget Analysis was included within the agenda, but said there were no areas of concern to report. Mr. Loeb advised that there had been a discussion at the July 25, 2013 Health Services Committee meeting about adding a column to the report to include the previous year, as well as a variance column. Mr. Sokol commented that the budget looked great. Mr. Loeb reminded Ms. Wheeler the Budget meetings would be conducted in August.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Sokol, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 10:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McLenithan, Legislative Office Specialist