

## WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES**

**DATE: AUGUST 27, 2013**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS LOEB  
KENNY  
BENTLEY  
STRAINER  
WOOD  
SOKOL  
WESTCOTT

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:  
SUZANNE WHEELER, COMMISSIONER  
JULIE MONTERO, FISCAL MANAGER  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISOR MASON  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 11:31 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, 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 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 introduced the Team Player and Team Leader of the Month, as follows:

- ▶ Team Player - Ashley McKinney, Social Welfare Examiner in the Temporary Assistance Unit; and
- ▶ Team Leader - Lorrie Mosher, Senior Support Investigator in the Child Support Unit.

The Committee responded with a round of applause and Mr. Loeb requested Ms. McKinney and Ms. Mosher to provide a brief description of their job duties. Ms. McKinney said she worked in the Temporary Assistance and Employment Unit where she enrolled and assisted clients in employment activities. She added that she also assisted the homeless and those with difficulty paying utility bills. Ms. Mosher stated she assisted the Director in interpreting various documents and materials for the Child Support Program. She said she acted as a liaison between Family Court and Child Support.

Ms. McKinney and Ms. Mosher exited the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

Ms. Wheeler requested authorization for the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and the County Treasurer to sign the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Resource Allocation Plan. She explained this was an additional document which had been inadvertently omitted from the paperwork for the Children and Family Services Plan.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and the County Treasurer to sign the Resource Allocation Plan as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 20, 2013 Board Meeting.*

Ms. Wheeler requested to appoint members to the Warren County Youth Board, as follows:

- ▶ Annie McMahan, Town of Lake Luzerne, for a term commencing January 1, 2013 and terminating December 31, 2013;

- ▶ Mindy Conway, Town of Chester, for a term commencing January 1, 2013 and terminating December 31, 2013;
- ▶ Jack Binder, Youth Representative, Town of Warrensburg, for a term commencing upon approval of the Board of Supervisors and terminating December 31, 2013; and
- ▶ Brooke Viele, Youth Representative, City of Glens Falls, for a term commencing upon approval of the Board of Supervisors and terminating December 31, 2013.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to appoint members to the Warren County Youth Board as outlined above. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 20, 2013 Board Meeting.*

Ms. Wheeler requested the following referrals to the Personnel Committee:

- ▶ to fill the vacant position of Caseworker #6 in the Foster Care Unit, Grade 14, annual base salary of \$35,385, Employee No. 10202, due to resignation and to backfill any vacancies resulting from promotion to this position. This was a Union position which was mandated and reimbursed 50% by the Federal Government and 23% by the State; and
- ▶ to create a new position of Resource Assistant in the Resource/Recovery Unit, Grade 12, annual base salary of \$33,540, effective November 1, 2013 by deleting the position of Resource Coordinator, Grade 14, annual base salary of \$35,385, thereby amending the Department's Table of Organization; and to fill the vacant position due to creation and to backfill any vacancies resulting from promotion to this position. This would be a Union position which was mandated and reimbursed 50% by the Federal Government and 23% by the State.

Mr. Loeb mentioned that Paul Dusek, County Administrator, had previously initiated a policy in which all vacant positions were reviewed prior to filling to determine their necessity and appropriate salary. He asked if this policy had been successful and Mr. Dusek replied affirmatively.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker #6 in the Foster Care Unit and to backfill any vacancies resulting from promotion to this position; to create the new position of Resource Assistant in the Resource/Recovery Unit by deleting the position of Resource Coordinator, thereby amending the Department's Table of Organization; to fill the vacant position of Resource Assistant due to creation and to backfill any vacancies resulting from promotion to this position; and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position forms and the resolution request form are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Wheeler requested authorization to fill any vacant positions in the Medicaid Unit as needed and to backfill any vacancies caused by promotion or lateral transfer to the Medicaid Unit. She said she recently found out that three of the Department's Medicaid staff members were being offered employment packages by the State and three other staff members were being interviewed for positions. She said the Medicaid Unit would be unable to function with the loss of six employees. She advised all positions within the Medicaid Unit were 100% reimbursable by the State until December 31, 2014. Mr. Dusek apprised he had suggested a resolution authorizing the Commissioner of the DSS to fill vacant positions in the Medicaid Unit as needed, similar to the resolutions previously approved for the Sheriff's Department and Westmount Health Facility. He said timeliness in the filling of certain positions had made these resolutions necessary, as vacancies in these positions would disrupt operations. Mr. Dusek explained that since New York State was in the process of taking over the Medicaid Program, they were seeking experienced employees by recruiting them from the counties. He added the close proximity of Warren County to Albany meant that more of the DSS's Medicaid staff members were being recruited for the new positions with the State. He said it would

be necessary for Ms. Wheeler to fill the vacant positions in the Medicaid Unit as quickly as possible in order to maintain normal operations.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. Sokol to authorize the Commissioner of the DSS to fill any vacant positions in the Medicaid Unit as needed and to backfill any vacancies created by promotion or lateral transfer to the Medicaid Unit.

Mr. Bentley asked if the State was doing anything to assist the counties from which they were recruiting employees. Ms. Wheeler explained the Medicaid employees were being hired by the State in anticipation and preparation of the State assuming the responsibility of the Medicaid Program. She added the State was assuming the operations of the Medicaid Program a little bit at a time making it necessary to continue the Medicaid Program on the County level.

Mr. Strainer asked if the County employees who assume these State jobs would retain their Tier level within the State Retirement System and Julie Montero, Fiscal Manager of the DSS, replied affirmatively. Ms. Montero pointed out in Counties where the State had commenced responsibility for Medicaid operations, the State had since given those responsibilities back. Mr. Strainer asked what would happen after December 31, 2014 if the Counties were still performing the operation of the Medicaid Program. Ms. Wheeler responded that the Commissioners of the DSS from the Counties met monthly to discuss the future of the Program and there was a lot that was still unknown. Mr. Strainer asked if the County would need to layoff the Medicaid employees in 2015 when the State ceased reimbursements and Mr. Dusek replied affirmatively. Mr. Westcott asked if the employees would be hired as Temporary employees and Ms. Wheeler replied in the negative as they would be hired as regular full-time employees.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Loeb called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to authorize the Commissioner of the DSS to fill any vacant positions in the Medicaid Unit as needed, to backfill any vacancies caused by promotion or lateral transfer to the Medicaid Unit and to forward same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Wheeler requested authorization for attendance at training, as follows;

- ▶ for three Caseworkers in the Foster Care Unit to attend Achieving Permanency Through Surrender & Terminations of Parental Rights Training in Albany, New York on September 17-19, 2013 and October 1-3, 2013 using a County vehicle; and
- ▶ for three Social Welfare Examiners to attend the New LDSS (Local Department of Social Services) Worker Training in Albany, New York on September 9-13, 2013 and September 23-27, 2013 using a County vehicle.

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

Ms. Wheeler requested to amend Resolution No. 458 of 2012, which authorized a contract with Warrensburg Laundry and Dry Cleaning to provide laundry services to Countryside Adult Home for a term commencing August 20, 2012 and terminating August 19, 2013, in order to increase the amount not to exceed from \$19,000 to \$21,000 due to the total poundage of laundry for the year exceeding the amount anticipated. Mr. Strainer asked the reason for the increase in the contract cost and Ms. Wheeler responded the cost per pound of laundry had remained the same; however,

she added, the facility had produced more laundry than had been anticipated for the year. A brief discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 458 of 2012 as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 20, 2013 Board Meeting.*

Ms. Wheeler said the next item on the agenda pertained to the Overtime Analysis Report. She pointed out there was an increase in overtime usage compared to the same time period in 2012 due to the Child Protective Services Unit which had one employee on Maternity Leave and one in training. Concerning the Budget Analysis Report, Ms. Montero commented that she had added columns to the Report as requested by Mr. Sokol at a prior Committee meeting. A brief discussion ensued.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mrs. Wood, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist