

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2014

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS WESTCOTT
WOOD
SOKOL
FRASIER
STROUGH
VANSELOW
SIMPSON

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:
MAUREEN SCHMIDT, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
JULIE MONTERO, FISCAL MANAGER
DEANNA PARK, DIRECTOR OF COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BEATY
BROCK
CONOVER
KENNY
SEEBER
TAYLOR
GRETCHEN STEFFAN, COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
KATHLEEN HOGAN, WARREN COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
SAMANTHA HOGAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

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

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Ms. 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 Paul Dusek, County Administrator, who gave an update on the progress of the video recording, which he explained continued to be a work in progress. Mr. Dusek noted that he had received feedback on the sound quality of the video indicating that it varied depending on the device used to view the recordings. He added that pursuant to discussions with Mike Colvin, Director of Information Technology, they had decided that adding hanging microphones would alleviate some of the audio concerns; however, he stated, they would still need to try and remember to always use a microphone when speaking during the Committee meetings.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Maureen Schmidt, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), who distributed copies of the DSS Agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the Agenda review, Ms. Schmidt introduced Cynthia Schrock Seeley, DSS Attorney, and Sarah Merry, Assistant DSS Attorney, followed by which the Committee offered a round of applause welcoming the two new employees. Ms. Schmidt pointed out that the Agenda packet included a short biography outlining the backgrounds of both Ms. Schrock Seeley and Ms. Merry; copies of the biographies are on file with the minutes.

Moving onto Agenda Item 4A, Personnel Requests, Ms. Schmidt presented the following requests:

1. Request to fill the vacant position of Intake Clerk #6 in Reception, *Grade 4, Annual Base Salary \$25,851*, due to resignation and back-fill any vacancies created by promotion.
2. Request to fill the vacant position of Keyboard Specialist #2 in Reception, *Grade 3, Annual Base Salary \$24,699*, due to promotion and back-fill any vacancies created by promotion.

3. Request to fill the vacant position of Social Services Investigator #2 in the Fraud Unit, *Grade 11, Annual Base Salary \$33,687*, due to resignation and to back fill any vacancies created by promotion.
4. Request to Amend the Table of Organization to make department changes for several Social Welfare Examiner (SWE) and Intake Clerk positions, as follows:
 - Change SWE#24 from Department No. 11 to Department No. 06
 - Change SWE#06 from Department No. 00 to Department No. 06
 - Change SWE#21 from Department No. 06 to Department No. 11
 - Change SWE#41 from Department No. 06 to Department No. 00
 - Change Intake Clerk #01 from Department No. 03 to Department No. 00
 - Change Intake Clerk #06 from Department No. 00 to Department No. 03

Mr. Strough inquired about the changes to the Table of Organization, asking why the positions were being moved from one Department to another. Ms. Schmidt answered this was being done to properly organize positions. Mr. Strough questioned if this was a Civil Service arrangement, and Ms. Schmidt replied affirmatively.

Motion was made by Mr. Vanselow, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve Items 4A(1-4), as outlined above and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.*

Moving on to Agenda Item 5, Countryside Adult Home, privilege of the floor was extended to Deanna Park, Director of Countryside Adult Home, who distributed copies of the Countryside Agenda to the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Park began by presenting a request to renew an agreement with Hudson Headwaters Health Network for Clinician Services for the term commencing January 1, 2015 and terminating December 31, 2016. She noted the cost of the contract would be \$13,260.42 for the first year and would increase by 3.5% to a total of \$13,724.52 for the second year.

Ms. Wood asked if the 3.5% increase in the contract cost would pose a problem in the future and Ms. Parks replied that a 3.5% increase was typical for this contract.

Motion was made by Mr. Vanselow, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 17, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing, Ms. Park presented a request to fill the vacant position of Institutional Aide/P #3 (32 hours per week), *Grade 3, Annual Salary \$24,699.00*, due to resignation. She noted that this position received 50% State reimbursement.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant Institutional Aide/P #3 position 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.*

Returning to the DSS Agenda, privilege of the floor was extended to Julie Montero, DSS Fiscal Manager, who reviewed the Overtime report for DSS. She pointed out overtime use for the last two pay periods had been high and she explained this was attributed to training for five (5) Caseworker positions; she added that the overtime use should level off once the training was complete. Ms. Montero also pointed out increased overtime expenses in the Food Stamp Division which she said was caused by a lack of staffing. She advised that regardless of the increase in overtime use, they were operating within budget.

Next, Ms. Montero reviewed the DSS Revenue and Expenditure Reports for August 2014 which were included in the DSS Agenda packet. She stated that expenses reflected for August were high, but said this was because double payments had been made for certain contracts that had come due; she added that she expected the expenses to level off for the coming months.

Ms. Montero stated that at the last Committee meeting, Ms. Seeber had inquired about the actual cost savings attained when a position was filled. In answer to this inquiry, Ms. Montero noted the Agenda packet included a document outlining the formula used to determine the actual cost savings when filling a vacancy, which she proceeded to review. She advised the document provided actual figures for three vacancies filled within the DSS, specifically the Social Services Investigator #3, Support Investigator #5 and Social Welfare Examiner #6 positions, which were filled by promotions and one at entry level.

Ms. Seeber pointed out it appeared the Social Services Investigator #3 position had been filled by the promotion an existing employee who had already earned longevity pay, leading to an additional cost to the County. Ms. Montero responded Ms. Seeber's assessment was correct, but explained the total cost savings had been obtained when the Support Investigator #5 and Social Welfare Examiner #6 positions were filled at lower salary levels. Ms. Seeber thanked Ms. Montero for providing this information but opined that this inquiry had become somewhat complicated. She continued that her intent had not been to require someone to spend a lot of time figuring out cumulative costs when filling a series of positions, but rather simply to identify either the cost or savings of filling individual positions. She noted that she felt it would take a considerable amount of time for either the Human Resources Division or DSS staff to review positions in the manner presented, especially when they were filled in a series of promotions. Mr. Westcott stated that this was something that should be checked into from time to time to make sure that the net cost was less than what was budgeted.

Mr. Westcott advised an executive session would be necessary to discuss the employment history of a particular person.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously to enter into an executive session pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officer's Law.

Executive session was held from 9:49 a.m until 11:02 a.m.

Supervisor Kenny entered during executive session.

Upon reconvening, Mr. Westcott announced that no action had been taken during the executive session.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Ms. Wood and seconded by Mr. Strough, Mr. Westcott adjourned the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Samantha Hogan, Assistant Secretary to the Clerk of the Board