

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: AUGUST 28, 2015

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: SIMPSON
WOOD
SOKOL
FRASIER
VANSELOW
SEEBER

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: STROUGH

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:

MAUREEN SCHMIDT, COMMISSIONER
CYNTHIA SCHROCK SEELEY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER/CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL
JULIE MONTERO, FISCAL MANAGER
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BROCK
KENNY
GIRARD
DAVID STRAINER, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
MOLLY GANOTES, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Simpson called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 10:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mrs. Frasier 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 Maureen Schmidt, 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 with the agenda review, Ms. Schmidt presented a request to change the vacant position of Part-Time Assistant Social Services Attorney, 20 hours per week, salary \$35,000, to Full-Time Assistant Social Services Attorney, salary \$62,500. She added after two failed attempts at posting the part-time position she decided to make the position full-time. She said she was concerned that the addition of another family court judge in 2016 would make it difficult for the one existing attorney to handle.

Mr. Sokol asked if the position change had been discussed with Paul Dusek, County Administrator. Mr. Dusek responded in the positive saying the need was evident and the request had been reviewed with the Budget Team. He added the duties and responsibilities the attorneys had were immense in terms of Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services and Prevention work as well as the financial aspects of Social Services. Ms. Seeber questioned if there was any discussion of sharing an attorney with the County Attorney's Office. Mr. Dusek responded there idea of sharing one attorney between the County Attorney's Office and Social Services; however had been proposed, he said, it never gained traction. He indicated the next step would be to assign Amy Bartlett, 1st Assistant County Attorney solely to the County Attorney's Office, relinquishing her Social Services responsibilities, and to hire another full time attorney for Social Services.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to reflect increasing the vacant Part-Time Assistant Social Services Attorney, salary \$35,000, to Full-Time Assistant Social Services Attorney, salary \$62,500, and refer the same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Resolution Request is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Schmidt introduced a request to fill the vacant position of Social Welfare Examiner #41, Grade 8 salary \$31,452, in the Temporary Assistance Unit, due to the resignation. She added the position had a large case load and handled the homeless population.

Motion was made by Mr. Vanselow, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Social Welfare Examiner #41 as outlined above, and to forward same to the Personnel Committee for reporting purposes. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position form is on file with the minutes.*

Next, Ms. Schmidt presented a request for Cynthia Schrock Seeley, Deputy Commissioner/Chief Legal Counsel, to attend the Interstate Substance Abuse Convening in Burlington, Vermont on October 29-30, 2015.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request for out of State travel, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 18, 2015 Board Meeting. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Schmidt said Agenda Page 9 consisted of a request for Linda Morgan, Social Welfare Examiner, to enroll in the following job related courses:

Course Title: Sociology 101

Course Title: Psychology 101

Institution: SUNY Adirondack

Cost: \$996.00

Ms. Schmidt stated she was recommending approval of this request, as Ms. Morgan was attempting to further her career in the Department of Social Services by taking these classes.

Ms. Seeber inquired if there was a contract to ensure the employee remained with the County after they funded the courses. Mr. Dusek responded the last Collective Bargaining Agreement provided that County employees were allowed to take job related courses with prior approval of the County Board. He continued, upon satisfactory completion of the course with a grade of "C" or better, the County would reimburse the employee 50% of the cost of tuition and fees; he added that if the employee did not work for 18 consecutive months after course completion they would be responsible for repaying the County for their contribution

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Ms. Seeber and carried unanimously to approve the request and forward same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Julie Montero, Facial Manager (DSS), reviewed the Overtime Report, indicating overtime expenses were down compared to the prior year, but noted there was not a lot of staff turnover. She indicated the Revenue and Expense Report showed expenses were still under budget, and she reported the 2016 Budget would be available in September with minor changes. Ms. Montero added June and July reports indicated revenue was expected to be received.

Mr. Dusek took a moment to acknowledge the work Ms. Schmidt and Ms. Montero had done for the DSS and Mr. Simpson mentioned he was impressed with their work as well.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes, Legislative Office Specialist