

MINUTES

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, February 6, 2023 9:00 a.m.

Present: Supervisors Donalty, Mettler, Groat, Brady and Eygnor, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Brian Sams, Social Services Commissioner Lisa Graf, Veterans Service Officer David Phillips and Aging and Youth Department Director Amy Haskins. Via conference call Supervisor Verno. Supervisors Leonard and Johnson were not present for the meeting.

Members approved minutes from the January 3rd meeting.

The monthly activities report for the Veterans Service Agency was distributed with the agenda. During December, 359 Veterans and/or family members contacted the local Office, the majority by telephone. Mr. Phillips said staff are working to make sure all calls coming into the Office are answered in an efficient manner. RTS transported 10 Veterans to the Canandaigua VA Medical Center and four to the Syracuse VA Medical Center. The Office was contacted regarding burial benefits for 17 Veterans during the month.

Mr. Phillips updated members on the \$100,000 PFC Joseph Dwyer Grant created in the 2021-22 State budget with the goal of bringing Veterans together in a safe anonymous environment where they can work jointly to help each other manage the effects of PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury. Mr. Phillips has been in contact with the County's Mental Health Director regarding the program and how to proceed. Clear Path for Veterans out of Syracuse appears to be the only agency that offers services set forth in the grant. Clear Path for Veterans can contract with the County and utilize grant dollars to oversee a local program; this would include one staff person. After talking to Clear Path about the services they provide, Mr. Phillips was not certain they would provide all required services. He will continue to review services provided by the vendor and keep the Committee updated.

Mr. Phillips presented a transmittal requesting authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a public transit route subsidy agreement with RST Wayne. The amendment clarifies the cost of cancelled transportation services in the existing agreement with RTS Wayne. Approved 3-0.

Monthly reports for the Department of Social Services were distributed with the agenda:

- Financial: Preliminary figures show through the end of 2022 the Department expended 76.5% of their County budget; both expenses and revenues were under budget. Staff are working to define all year-end figures. A lengthy discussion took place on the Governor's 2023-24 budget proposal to increase the Medicaid Weekly Share paid by counties. The Medicaid program helps counties provide a safety net for those who are unable to afford medical care. Federal dollars are passed on to States to help incur the cost of Medicaid programs. The Governor believes additional sales tax revenue counties are experiencing can pay the additional Medicaid expense. Mrs. Graf said in the coming fiscal year this

could add over \$3 million to the Social Services budget. Mr. House informed members NYSAC has brought a lawsuit against the State to have counties receive the full payment given the State by the Federal Government for Medicaid operation. A transmittal is being prepared to go before the Government Operations Committee later this week to challenge the Governor's proposal to increase counties Medicaid Weekly Share amounts.

- Child Welfare Services: 151 child abuse reports were received; four abuse reports and four petitions were filed with the Court. At this time, there are two Case Worker vacancies in the Unit.
- Temporary Assistance: Aid To Dependent Families is up slightly to 173 cases at the end of December and 179 families received Home Relief benefits.
- Food Stamps: There were 4,427 individuals received only food stamps (SNAP) benefits at the end of December, 94 individuals receive more than one additional Social Service benefit with food stamps and 184 individuals were on Public Assistance and food stamps. SNAP benefits have been at the maximum benefit since the COVID Pandemic began; beginning March 1st they will go back to the regular amount. Mrs. Graf said all recipients of SNAP benefits would receive notification prior to the reduction taking place next month; there will also be a media campaign regarding this change.
- Medical Assistance: There are 3,946 individuals in the County currently receiving Medicaid and 2,179 receiving Medicaid and SSI benefits. Mrs. Graf noted Medicaid eligibility changed on January 1st of this year; all individuals that began to receive benefits during the pandemic will have to re-certify under pre-pandemic guidelines.

Mrs. Graf presented a brief report on the Department's Day Care Program. The program was established to assist low-income families with paying the cost of childcare so they can attend school or go to work. The Program is funded with State monies. During 2022, the Child Care Program served 77 families monthly, effecting 170 children. The State is scheduled to increase income qualification limits for participation in the program.

The Committee was updated on the annual Angel Tree Program through the Department of Social Services. Local donations allowed 171 children to receive holiday gifts. The Department also received books, crafts and toys through the Toys for Tots Program to distribute to children in need.

Mrs. Graf said she continues to look for more effective and efficient ways to operate the Department.

The following transmittals were presented for the Department of Social Services:

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a three-year contract with Lexis Nexis for the purpose of legal research for a cost of \$13,944. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement with Finger Lakes Community College for employee training for a cost not to exceed \$69,953. Approved 3-0.

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--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a three-year agreement with Crossroad Consulting Services for the provision of assessments of individuals for the appropriateness of placement of foster care children for an annual cost not to exceed \$25,000. This assessment service is mandated by the State. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a renewal contract with Family Counseling Services of the Finger Lakes for the provision of child advocacy services. The one-year contract cost of \$66,355 will provide a Site Coordinator at the County's Advocacy Center. Approved 3-0.

Mrs. Haskins reviewed Department activities. At the end of January, there were 21 individuals on the waiting list for PERS units, six on the waiting list for legal services, 10 for case management, 33 for aide services and 32 for home delivered meals. Efforts continue to fill vacant positions in the Department. The proposed State budget came in flat for both the Aging and Youth budgets.

Committee members were informed the Youth State budget is transitioning to an October 1st-September 30th program years. Mrs. Haskins is working with the Department of Social Services on a County Child and Family Services Action Plan that is due this spring. State funding is only received if an approved action plan is in place.

Mrs. Haskins informed Supervisors there is a local group meeting around the issue of end of life care. Long-term care is discussed regularly at the County's Senior Advisory Council meetings. She also noted the State is mailing out Senior Community Assessment Surveys.

The following transmittals were presented for the Department of Aging and Youth:

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract with Mom's Meals for the provision of mail order meal service for qualifying senior citizens at a cost of \$25,000. Mrs. Haskins noted the Department contracts with ARC Wayne for the daily preparation of hot meals for seniors; the Mom's Meals Program handles those clients that cannot be served under delivery service of the ARC Wayne Program. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract with Wayne Pre-Trial Services, Inc. for the operation of a Youth Diversion Program for an annual cost of \$60,000. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a renewal contract with Family Counseling Services of the Finger Lakes for the provision of family and youth counseling services for a cost not to exceed \$23,250. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a renewal rental agreement with Eidda LLC to house a Senior Congregate Meal Program in Sodus for a cost of \$8,400. Mrs. Haskins noted the rate increased \$100 a month from last year. Approved 3-0.

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--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a renewal contract with Newark Emmanuel United Methodist Church to house a Senior Congregate Meal Program for a cost of \$5,000. This lunch program is staffed with volunteers; the County provides meals for the program. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a renewal agreement with the Clyde United Methodist Church to serve as a Senior Congregate Meal Site for a cost of \$4,200. The rent increased \$25 a month from the prior year. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a renewal agreement with the Town of Ontario for the operation of a senior congregare meal program for a price not to exceed \$5,200. The Town pays for the lunch manager at the location, the County supplies the meals. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract with NYS Industries for the Disabled for the provision of home delivered meals to homebound elderly individuals who are nutritionally at risk for a cost not to exceed \$243,700. Mrs. Haskins noted the majority of the Program's expense are paid for with Federal funds. The cost per meal was increased from \$8.70 last year to \$9.37 in 2023. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract with NYS Industries for the Disabled for the provision of bulk food preparation for home delivered meals to Senior Lunch Programs for a price not to exceed \$142,500. Approved 3-0.

--Authorization to create and fill the full-time position of Home Health Aide; a position reimbursed with State and Federal funds. The Department is no longer able to get Aide services through contractual agreements and services are in high demand. The only vendor being used by the Department will no longer be available once their contract expires this year. There are currently 33 seniors on the waiting list for Aide services. Mr. Verno noted, in the past the County laid off Aides to provide the service through contract. Mrs. Haskins said those positions were in the Public Health Department, which provide a different service than Aides in her Department. Approved 3-0.

Mr. Verno questioned how existing Senior Congregate Meal Sites were selected for funding, and if others groups in the County that provide seniors meals could receive reimbursement through the County. Mrs. Haskins said these sites were in place before she took over as Department Director; however, she believes they are located so seniors in any location of the County would not have to travel too far to attend a program. With the new year, attendance will be reviewed at each meal site to make certain they are located in an area that needs the service.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m. The next meeting of the Human Services Committee is scheduled for Monday, March 6th at 9:00 a.m.