

MINUTES

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 2, 2022 9:00 a.m.

Present: Supervisors Donalty, Leonard, Johnson, Verno, Metler, Groat and Eynor, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Brian Sams, Director of Veterans Service Renee Maybee, Veterans Service Officer Samantha Wilson, Veterans Service Dog Bolen, Commissioner of Social Services Dr. Ellen Wayne, Aging and Youth Department Director Amy Haskins, Economic Development Fiscal Officer Jamie Corteville and County Auditor Kristen Scott.

Minutes from the April 4th Committee meeting were approved as written.

The following monthly reports were presented for the Department of Social Services:

- Financial: Through the first quarter of 2022 the Department expended 22.4% of their County budget; this is nearly 2% higher than last year at the same time. The Department's budget is \$40.8 million, with a County cost of \$21.5 million. Dr. Wayne noted an uptick in cases in the Day Care Program and increase in Foster Care expenses due to a higher level of care being needed by some children in the program. The Summer Youth Program will start up soon.
- Temporary Assistance Caseload: Aid to Dependent Children/Food Stamp cases remain constant at 170, while there was a slight increase in participation in Home Relief/Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) participation to 186 cases.
- SNAP: Food Stamp only cases rose to 4,400, Dr. Wayne believes this number will continue to increase. Public Assistance along with Food Stamp cases remain constant at 188. A report showing pre-pandemic program participation levels compared to now will be sent out by Dr. Wayne following today's meeting.
- Medicaid Caseload: The Medical Assistance caseload increased to 3,803 participants and the number of Medicaid recipients that also receive SSI fell slightly to 2,172. The State said local Department of Social Services will not have to perform 'look back' review of program qualifications.
- Child Welfare Services: During March the Department received 181 child welfare reports, six child abuse reports and filed 11 petitions with Family Court. Dr. Wayne noted many of the employees in this unit have left and new staff members are being trained. There is also a higher and more complex number of cases being seen by staff. Dr. Wayne reviewed the process followed when a child welfare report is received by the Department.

This month's program spotlight was on National Foster Care Month. When children are in the custody of the Commissioner of Social Services, she is reasonable for their everyday care and any, and all, of their needs. This includes medical, dental, education, mental health development assessments, links to counseling, and other services. These children are entrusted to Foster Care Parents in the County to meet their needs. Foster Care families are expected to care for, nurture, love, and provide stability for children who might never have experienced any of that. This year's in-person Foster Care Recognition Dinner is planned at the Lodge in the Williamson Town Park.

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The Committee was informed long-time secretary to the Commissioner, Dawn Smith, retired. Her replacement has been trained and is now in place.

Dr. Wayne updated the Committee on the Cross Systems Kids/Adult Cooperation effort. This system provides intervention and aligns services across systems—screening and assessments in one system, follows through with referrals, and treatment, in an effort to reduce the fragmentation of services and coordinate care.

There is tension between the State Department of Labor and the County's Department of Social Services regarding an upcoming contract with the Workforce Investment Board relating to services historically provided by the Department of Labor. She will keep the Committee updated.

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

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract with Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes for the provision of Early/Crisis Intervention Services to TANF eligible families at a cost not to exceed \$59,165. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to Supervisors to sign an amended agreement with Hillside Children's Center to reflect modifications in the Federal Family First Prevention Services Act and State Law. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign an amended agreement with the William George Agency to reflect modifications in the Federal Family First Prevention Services Act and State Law. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a seven-month contract extension with Youth Advocate Program, Inc. to allow for rebidding of this preventive, support and rehabilitation contract for services to children and families. Dr. Wayne stated the Department is re-visiting preventive services they offer, so they are serving the community to the highest benefit. This service will be re-bid for 2023. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an eight-month extension of the Wayne County Action Program contract to allow for rebidding of this parental educational service program to prevent child neglect for a cost of \$29,750. This service will be re-bid at the end of the year. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to create and fill the position of Social Welfare Examiner. Dr. Wayne noted there has been no increase in staffing in this unit for the past 10 years and the number of new applications being received continues to grow. She reviewed upcoming retirements in the Department and the number of staff that are out with COVID. There continues to be a high number of individuals filing for Public Assistance and the timeline for responding to a public assistance request has been shortened by the State from 45 to 30 days. Approved 5-0

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--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract renewal with Family Counseling Services of the Finger Lakes for operation of the County's Child Advocacy Center for a price of \$64,575. The original contract allowed for a second year extension. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to issue an advance payment in the amount of \$81,120 to Lucas Dobbins for the remodeling of space to accommodate the Department's long term housing program. This project is being paid for with ARPA funds. Restoring the apartment building will allow the Department to operate their long-term housing program. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to appoint Rick Plympton from Optimax Systems to the Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board. Approved 5-0.

The monthly activities report for the Veterans Service Agency was distributed with the agenda. During March the Department had contact with 612 veterans and/or family members; the majority of contacts were by phone, although personal meetings are resuming in the Office. There were 13 veterans transported to the Canandaigua Veterans Administration Medical Center, three to Rochester and 12 to Syracuse during the month. There have been changes in the law regarding exposure to hazardous materials while Veterans were in service; the local Office will assist with filing these claims. The Department was contacted regarding 40 veteran burials during April, paying for two indigent burials at a cost of \$5,500.

Mr. Groat requested an update on transportation services for the Veterans Service Agency that were formerly provided by RTS/WATS. He serves on the RTS/WATS Board and questioned their Director about the high rate increase for the transportation of Veterans to the Canandaigua VA Medical Center, stating the County would be performing their own transportation due to this increase. Mrs. Maybee noted the Department has a vehicle purchase fund that contains remaining donations from the last van they purchased. She is also seeking grant funds for the purchase of a new van. Mrs. Maybee questioned if she should make contact with RTS/WATS to renegotiate a 2022 contract, or wait until 2023 to start a new contract. After a brief discussion, it was agreed Mrs. Maybee, Mr. House and Mr. Groat would meet with RTS/WATS regarding a future contract for veterans transportation.

The Committee was introduced to the new Veterans Service Dog Bolen; he is being well received by Veterans coming into the Office.

The monthly activities report for the Department of Aging and Youth was distributed with the agenda. The Office provided 343 clients with NY Connects assistance, 141 seniors with insurance counseling and provided home delivered meals to 196 seniors. A total of 133 seniors participated in the Lunch Club 60 Program, 270 have PERS units through the Department, 70 are receiving Aide services and 85 case management services. At this time there are 32 seniors waiting for case management services, six waiting to be placed on PERS units and one waiting to be placed on the Home Delivered Meal Program. Caseworkers are very busy with the amount of seniors they are working with and the amount of program knowledge they provide. There are about 250

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PERS units currently being monitored by the Office of Aging and Youth; this is possible because of one-time limited source Stimulus funding. Mrs. Haskins stated with the future of Stimulus funding not guaranteed, the number of PRES units will be reduce to 200 through attrition.

The Committee was updated on the Home Delivered Meal Program. Staff remain in constant contact with Wayne ARC making sure the Program is working smoothly. Contact has been made with volunteer drivers who had contact information available to make sure they are continuing with their service. The program is operating smoothly through the transition with Home Meal Service. The Department is in the process of cleaning the data base of seniors receiving home delivered meals, as this process was not performed in the past several years by Home Meal Service. Mrs. Haskins voiced concern about the increased price of food reflected in the cost to produce meals through this program.

Mrs. Haskins informed the Committee a Senior Caseworker turned in his resignation; the position is competitive and will be posted. A new part-time Home Health Aide will begin with the Department on May 6th.

Mrs. Haskins reviewed how the Office of Aging and Youth is utilizing Unmet Needs Funds to pay for social needs, such as basic resources, i.e. food, safe housing, and transportation. Unmet needs may have an adverse effect on an elderly person's health. The Office secured additional Unmet Needs Funding of \$85,000. Mrs. Haskins contacted the State to make sure funding will be re-occurring; she was informed it would be. She presented a budget summary to show where Stimulus funding; which is no longer being funded is used and where Unmet Needs funds have been and could be used. Unmet Needs funds are to be utilized to reduce, or eliminate, any back-log of cases in the Department. Committee members agreed they would like to see this unanticipated revenue utilized to eliminate service waiting lists. Mr. House said Mrs. Haskins will need to work with administrative staff to look at Department efficiencies and the best use of these funds.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m. The next meeting of the Human Services Committee is scheduled for Monday, June 6th at 9:00 a.m.