

MINUTES

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, June 6, 2022 9:00 a.m.

Present: Supervisors Leonard, Johnson, Verno, Metler and Eygnor, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Brian Sams, Director of Veterans Services Renee Maybee, Commissioner of Social Services Dr. Ellen Wayne, Deputy Director of Social Services Lisa Graf, Aging and Youth Department Director Amy Haskins and County Auditor Kristen Scott. Supervisor Donalby was not present for the meeting.

Minutes from the May 2nd Committee meeting were approved as written.

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

- Temporary Caseload: At the end of May there were 167 County residents receiving Aid to Dependent Children/Family Assistance and 172 receiving Home Relief/SNAP benefits.
- Child Welfare: During May the Department received 144 reports concerning child welfare, of this number nine were abuse reports. The Department is struggling with highly complex cases. Cases for medically fragile children generally have a lot of medical documentation that needs to be reviewed by staff; this can be a daunting task. Dr. Wayne is looking into additional training for Caseworks regarding medical abuse/neglect so they can be better able to respond to reports.
- Medicaid: At the end of May there were 3,803 County residents receiving Medicaid benefits and 2,172 receiving Medicaid and SSI benefits. Dr. Wayne is concerned with ongoing case costs due to lax documentation during the pandemic; it will be a challenge for counties when qualifications for benefits are re-calculated.
- SNAP (Food Stamps): There are 4,474 families in the County receiving SNAP benefits; a small number of these individuals/families also receive other public assistance benefits. The number of individuals/families receiving food stamps greatly increased during the pandemic. At this time all cases are receiving maximum benefits; no cut-off date for the additional amount has been set.
- Financial: (No graph was available for today's meeting, one will be sent to Committee members later in the day.) Through April the Department expended 30.5% of their County budget; this is up 2% from last year at the same time. The Department's total operations budget for 2022 is over \$40 million.

This month's Social Service spot light is on Elder Abuse. World Elder Abuse Day is recognized on June 15th. On his day, and throughout the year, efforts will be made to raise awareness of abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults. The Social Services Adult Protective Unit consist of nine Caseworkers, two Senior Caseworkers, one Supervisor and one Registered Professional Nurse. Caseworkers work closely with area nursing homes, law enforcement, mental health providers, and landlords to assist in addressing their clients' needs. The Adult Protect Services Unit plays a critical role in assessing and intervening on behalf of vulnerable adults. Unlike

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children, adults can make decisions. Many times it is up to this Unit to show an individual does not have the mental capacity to make their own decisions. When charged to protect adults, the Department takes over an abused adult's supervision and support.

Through an employee questionnaire it was found the majority of Social Service staff would not refer a friend or relative to work in the Department. The Department's Leadership Team is in the process of reviewing findings from the staff questionnaire to see if there are areas where improvements can be made. The latest survey showed improvement in the responses to the way employees value the work they do and if they feel the work they do makes a difference in the lives of others.

Dr. Wayne noted her upcoming resignation. Lisa Graf will be relocated, on a temporary basis, to the Commissioner position. She noted efforts made while she was Commissioner to meet the needs of the community and the support received from the County while doing this. A long-time Attorney in the Department is retiring in July; there will be two Attorney vacancies in the Department at that time. Dr. Wayne stated the need to have an attorney with knowledge of Social Service Law hired. Supervisors were informed the Deputy DSS Commissioner position will also be backed filled on a temporary basis. The Human Resource Department is recruiting for all vacant positions. The need for this large Department to have a success plan, along with the staff, in place was noted.

Dr. Wayne reviewed changes to eligibility in the Child Care Assistance Program. Since the pandemic many individuals have chosen not to work or work from home and are not in need of assistance with day care services. This program assists individuals who are not working because they cannot find affordable child care.

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

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement with Pathways, Inc. for the provision of foster care for a cost not to exceed \$375,000. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Department of Social Services to accept an allocation of \$29,478 from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Bureau of Adult Protective Services for Community living. Dr. Wayne said funds will be utilized to support vulnerable adults in the community. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to adjust public office hours to 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Dr. Wayne stated the need to have the doors on the agency closed by 4:30 p.m. so staff can conclude their business for the day. Emergency situations would still be dealt with, as they are now, 24/7. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to surplus office desks according to County policy. Dr. Wayne noted the majority of the desks are not repairable. Approved 4-0.

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--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Youth Services Contract. Dr. Wayne said this will allow the County to receive an additional \$105,743 for this program. Typically the County served about 75 youth each summer with employment through this program. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Youth Services Contract for \$130,524. The ultimate goal of this program is to ween individuals from this subsidized employment program to permanent, non-subsidized, employment. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Administrative, Adult Dislocated Worker and Career Center Services contract that will add \$135,574 to this program. Dr. Wayne said program participation will be monitored for length of time in the program, in an effort to encourage business participants to place these individuals on their payroll. Approved 4-0.

The monthly report for the Department of Aging and Youth was included with the agenda. By the beginning of **May** the Department had 431 seniors make 1,925 contacts with the Office regarding the NY Connects Program, 177 seniors made 767 contacts with the Office regarding Insurance Counseling and 228 individuals had over 15,000 meals delivered to their homes during the month. There were 138 participants in Lunch Club 60, 291 senior on PERS, 72 receiving Aide Services and 89 receiving Case Management Services. At this time there are 23 seniors on the waiting list for Case Management Services, one waiting to be placed on the Home Delivered Meal Program and 25 waiting Aide Services. Mrs. Haskins noted her staff is also going through staff turnover and shortages. Aides through contracted agencies are rarely available and Mrs. Haskins does not anticipate this waiting list to go down. The Home Delivered Meal Program is going well through ARC. It is apparent with the number of wellness checks that ARC is doing for the HDM program that the previous agency who oversaw delivery did not make this a priority. The County's contract with ARC is making sure this is being done, Mrs. Haskins is not sure if volunteers with Home Meal Service were instructed to do this. Mrs. Haskins informed the Committee Farmers Market coupons are scheduled to arrive in July and will be distributed to seniors at that time. She noted a member of the Insurance Counseling staff was invited to present at a statewide conference in June; however, due to commitments will not be able to travel to Albany for this. There is a possibility her appearance could be made virtually.

Swimming began over the Memorial Day weekend at Sodus Point Beach Park. There were many people at the Park due to the warm weather, 80 or more entered the water.

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

--Authorization to host the Summer Youth Worker Program through the Workforce Department Office. The worker would be placed in the Aging Office to assist seniors in learning to be more comfortable with technology and technical devices. Approved 4-0.

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--Authorization to hire an additional Lifeguard for Sodus Point Beach Park. Mrs. Haskins stated this will have no additional cost; however, will allow for addition personnel to be on the list to lifeguard. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to pay Head Lifeguards a stipend to coordinate and supervise the swimming program at Sodus Point Beach Park when the Director or Assistant Director are not scheduled to work. Mrs. Haskins noted the need to always have a Director or Assistant Director on site when the beach is open. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to create and fill a Caseworker position for Aging Services. Mrs. Haskins said the Department is receiving an ongoing increase in Unmet Needs funding from the State Office of Aging in the amount of \$85,000. The Department has a waiting list for case management services; she believes this list could be eliminated with the additional staff member. If funding for the position does not continue, the position will be eliminated. These funds can be used to pay the salary and related expenses of the employee. The Department has four Caseworkers--two work in the Youth Unit and two in the Aging Unit. Approved 4-0.

Veteran's monthly activities report was included with the agenda. During April the Department was contacted 421 times by Veterans and/or family members regarding pensions, education, burials, insurance, legal issues, loans, tax exemptions, medical coverage and other issues. There were 12 Veterans transported to the Canandaigua VA Medical Facility, 14 to the Syracuse VA Medical Facility and six transported for other medical appointments within the County. Supervisors were informed the Veterans Service Agency was contacted 25 times during April regarding Veterans burials. A book on end-of-life decisions for veterans is available at the Office.

Mrs. Maybee presented a transmittal requesting authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a memorandum of agreement with the local Veterans Administration Integrated System Network to collaborate on the Expiration Term of Service Sponsorship Program. There is no cost to the County to participate. Details of the program were reviewed by the Committee last month. Service members would enroll in the program up to 12 months prior to leaving military services. Sponsors would be trained utilizing a Veterans Administration curriculum and be paired with a service member coming into their community. Each Veteran would have a personalized plan of action. Mrs. Maybee stated the Department of Defense has yet to issue information on what veterans are being released from active duty; the program cannot work without this information. Approved 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m. The next meeting of the Human Services Committee is scheduled for [Tuesday, July 5th at 10:30 a.m.](#)