

## MINUTES

### HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Monday, April 1, 2019 8:30 a.m.**

Present: Supervisors Verno, Baldrige, Emmel, Robusto, Jacobs, Chatfield, Groat and Crane, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Ken Blake, Veterans Service Director Jason Eldridge, Aging and Youth Department Representatives Penny Shockley and Amy Haskins, Commissioner of Social Services Josh McCrossen and Director of Social Services Shelly Bentley.

Minutes from the March 4<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting were approved as written.

The Annual Report for the Department of Social Services was submitted at the March meeting; however, it was agreed the report would be reviewed at today's meeting. During 2018 the Undercare Unit processed 3,861 Temporary Assistance and SNAP re-certifications and 1,400 SNAP periodic reports. The number of cases the Temporary Assistance Unit oversees has declined, resulting in a cost savings of over \$1.2 million. The Medicaid Unit processed over 6,000 cases each month in 2018; there continue to be fraud investigations resulting in a savings to tax payers. The Legal Unit generated just under \$1 million in recoveries. The one part-time attorney assigned to the Child Support Unit handled 4,000 cases resulting in over \$10 million in funds distributed to families to keep them off of cash assistance or repay assistance. The workload in the Child Welfare Unit increased greatly with over 1,800 reports of abuse and neglect received in the past year. The Department continuously worked to reduce the dependence of residents on Public Assistance, the Fraud Unit continues to pursue investigations of potential fraud. Workforce Development came under Social Services in mid-2017 and worked with the Department of Labor on orientation for all applicants of Temporary Assistance. Medicaid continues to be the highest cost in the Social Service budget.

Supervisor Miller arrived at the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

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

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement with Child Caring Institution Children's Village for the provision of child placement for compliance with Raise the Age Legislation. Mr. McCrossen said his Office reviewed statistics provided by the State for potential involvement by local youth through Raise the Age; their information shows only one youth would be involved annually in the program. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to extend the Youth Advocacy contract for one month to allow for placement of youth outside of their homes while the Department concludes the bidding process for this service. Approved 5-0.

Mrs. Bentley voiced concern with staff turnover and the difficulty in recruiting employees, as training requirements for new staff have become more intense and training is not being offered close to Lyons; this is discouraging for new hires.

Mr. McCrossen noted the Governor has supported spousal support for individuals in long-term care; however, the State Legislature has not supported this action. At this time Medicaid has rules for spousal protections that allow the spouse of a nursing home resident to keep their own income, and possibly that of their spouse, if it is proven needed. Mr. McCrossen is concerned

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that individuals who can afford to pay for some or all of the expenses related to care of their spouse are not being required to do so. He requested Supervisors approach local State Legislators and explain that a percentage of Medicaid costs are local cost and if an individual can afford to pay for the care of their spouse they should do so. The cost for long term care averages \$135,000 annually.

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

- Finance: In the first two months of the year the Department expended 16.4% of their County budget, 2% less than last year at the same time.
- Caseload: At the end of February there were 833 Wayne County residents receiving Temporary Assistance, 5,620 on Medical Assistance and 8,270 receiving Food Stamps; all numbers are lower than the previous month.

The monthly report for the Veterans Service Agency was distributed with the agenda. During February the Office had contact with 223 Veterans and/or family members, provided 82 units of transportation service to or from and Canandaigua VA Medical Center and 15 to or from the Syracuse VA Medical Center. Twenty-seven Veterans from Wayne County passed away during the month.

Mr. Eldridge announced he will be deployed later this year for an extended period of time. He believes at least a part-time staff member will need to be hired during this time; the individual has to be a Veteran and American Legion certified to perform the functions needed.

Ms. Shockley presented a transmittal requesting authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a renewal contract with Newark Emmanuel United Methodist Church for the provision of administering a senior congregate meal program for a price of \$5,000. This contract has a 10% County match. Approved 5-0.

The Committee was informed Karen Breen will continue to work with Home Meal Service during the transition of her retirement. Home Meal Service will begin working with ARC on many administrative issues starting this month; however, will keep their identity with an independent board.

Ms. Haskins distributed comparison figures for seniors in Wayne, Cayuga, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca and Tompkins Counties. Wayne County had a higher number of grandparents raising their grandchildren than surrounding counties and the lowest number of individuals 60 and over that are in the workforce. Rental costs for seniors living in the County were the lowest in the area, while the County had the highest number of seniors that do not have a telephone in their home. The number of seniors in nursing homes was higher in Wayne County than most surrounding counties; Ms. Shockley said she believes this number is high because our County is limited in assisted living and other living situations for the elderly.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m. The next meeting of the Human Services Committee is scheduled for Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m.