

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
JANUARY 7, 2015**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: K. LaForge, D. Pullen, S. Burt, D. Decker, C. Jessup, T. O'Grady, C. Crandall

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Ballengee, H. Budinger, D. Fanton, M. Gasdik, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, J. Luckey, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora, J. Tomasi

Media Present: No media present

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Human Services Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge.

Amendment & Approval of Minutes

Office for the Aging Director Madeleine Gasdik requested the following corrections to the December 3, 2014, Human Services minutes:

Under Office for the Aging

The words "16-17 clients a day" should actually be 16-17 clients per week.

Monthly Report

Madeleine Gasdik, Office for the Aging Director, reported they are in the last few days of Medicare Enrollment. There have been 216 people served in October with assistance with Medicare Enrollment. Employees spend one-two hours with each client and have been serving approximately **16-17 clients a day per week**.

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator O'Grady, and carried to approve the Human Services Committee minutes of December 3, 2014, as amended.

Department of Social Services

Monthly Report

Department of Social Services Deputy Commissioner Julie Tomasi reported that there were no major differences or major areas of concern to report this month. Ms. Tomasi gave a brief summary of the Foster Parent Christmas party which included birth parents as well as foster parents and caseworkers. She added that it was a good event with no "incidents" and it was a wonderful experience for the youngsters.

Request to Fill Senior Social Welfare Examiner Position

DSS requested approval to fill a Senior Social Welfare Examiner (AFSCME, Grade 13, Step Min.) position which became vacant as a result of a promotion. This position is in the Temporary Assistance Unit and is responsible for overseeing several Social Welfare Examiners on a daily basis. The position is funded by 50 percent federal dollars, 25 percent state dollars, and 25 percent local dollars. This position allows DSS to meet state and federal requirements. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator O'Grady, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Request to Fill Senior Typist Position

DSS requests approval to fill a Senior Typist (AFSCME, Grade 7, Step Min.) which became vacant as the result of a promotion. This position is responsible for performing clerical

duties for all programs. The position is funded by 50 percent federal dollars, 25 percent state dollars, and 25 percent local dollars. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means** (one opposed: Legislator Burt)

Office for the Aging **Monthly Report**

Office for the Aging Director Madeleine Gasdik, referring to her pre-filed monthly report, indicated that the total of meals served (via Meals-on-Wheels) was over 108,000 at the end of November. She added that when they budgeted for 2014, they budgeted for 92,000 meals. Obviously, they are over the original budgeted amount, but OFA was able to cover these costs via a variety of grants, etc. She also noted that November was a very busy and hectic month because of Open Enrollment; staff was thrilled to get through it, she said. Ms. Gasdik went on to say that she wanted to alert the Committee that the Ombudsman Program (which is partially funded by the State and federal governments and which trains advocates for residents of nursing homes or assisted living) might change or be lost. The program, she said, is a “money loser,” but OFA wishes to keep it because it is important to serve that clientele. A lot of other counties, because it is a money loser, don’t want to do it anymore, so the State put together a regional Ombudsman Program. Allegany and Steuben counties comprise their own region, she said. Despite losing money on the program Steuben County is happy with its program as we are with ours, she added. Our program had a very successful evaluation this summer, and OFA does not wish to give it up and lose control of our County’s program. So we and Steuben County are seeking permission from NYSOFA to be able to each run our own programs as we have in the past. So far, no response has been forthcoming. Ms. Gasdik said she just wanted the Committee to be aware that we may lose the Ombudsman Program or be forced to combine with Steuben County and figure out a way to administer the new hybrid program.

Request to Create One Part-Time Temporary Typist Positions

OFA requests permission to create one part-time temporary typist (Grade 4, Step Min.) position. This position will be filled by a retired DSS worker who will work one of two possible schedules: either two days per week or three days per week. This position is responsible for telephone and office reception, and clerically supports the whole agency. If other employees were asked to do these jobs, the County would be paying higher wages for typist duties. Federal Balance Incentive Program funding will help support this position which provides good customer service to clients. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Request to Temporarily Fill a Typist Position on a Part-Time Basis

Ms. Gasdik also requested permission to temporarily fill a Typist (ASFCME, Grade 4, Step Min.) position on a part-time basis. This position will be filled by a retired DSS worker who will work one of two possible schedules: either two days per week or three days per week. This position is responsible for telephone and office reception, and clerically supports the whole agency. If other employees were asked to do these jobs, the County would be paying higher wages for typist duties. Federal Balance Incentive Program funding will support a portion of this position. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator O’Grady, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Request to Fill Aging Services Specialist Position

OFA requested permission to fill an Aging Services Specialist (AFSCME, Grade 16, Step Base). This position is responsible for care coordination. It is necessary to operate the EISEP

Program. State EISEP and CSE funding and Federal III-E and Balance Incentive Program funding will support this position. This will be a provisional position as there is no list to go format this time. Subsequently, whoever is hired will be told that s/he must pass the test and be one of the top three on the list to retain the position. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator O'Grady, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Health Department

Approval of Agreement with Monroe County Medical Examiner's Office

Health Department Director Lori Ballengee requested approval to enter into a contract with the Monroe County Medical Examiner's Office. She said the County has a contract with Olean General Hospital (OGH) which began January 2, 2015, but that we are retaining the contract with Monroe County, especially for forensic autopsies. The differences in the primary fees are as follows: a full autopsy at Monroe County will cost \$2,800 while an autopsy at OGH will cost \$1,650. The blood description exam (which is used when a full-blown autopsy is not needed) will cost \$1,800 at Monroe while it will cost \$200 at OGH. The body will only go to Monroe County if a law enforcement officer or the coroner feels it needs a more extensive autopsy than the type OGH can perform. Although we do need the contract with Monroe County, Ms. Ballengee hopes that the majority will go to OGH. She went on to say that since Dr. Christopher Depner (Wellsville), who serves as the Medical Director for the Department of Health and for the Jail, became the Medical Director for the coroners, the incidences of necessary autopsies has decreased because he is willing to sign the death certificates. (If no one will sign the death certificate, the body must be autopsied.) Ms. Ballengee has told him that if he is uncomfortable signing said certificate, then the body goes to Monroe County. Ms. Ballengee noted that Dr. Depner assumed this extra responsibility with no extra fee. In 2014, only 25 percent of bodies were sent for autopsies as opposed to as many as 55 percent in prior years. This savings, in her opinion, is thanks to Dr. Depner. Approval of the contract, contingent on correction of typographical errors, was granted on a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator O'Grady, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Executive Session

The Committee entered executive session to discuss the financial and employment history of a particular corporation at 4:50 p.m. on a motion by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried.

The Committee exited executive session at 5:50 p.m. on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Burt, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators