

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MARCH 4, 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, M. Gasdik, V. Grant, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora

Media Present: No media present

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Human Services Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge.

Amendment & Approval of Minutes

OFA Director Madeleine Gasdik requested that Ardent Solutions be the organization "on record" rather than Catholic Charities as appears in the February 5, 2015, minutes.

Under OFA: Monthly Report

...As pertains to the Ombudsman Program about which she spoke last month, Ms. Gasdik said NYSOFA refused to allow Allegany and Steuben counties to continue to run their own programs, so with great remorse, Ms. Gasdik said OFA is giving up that program. However, she added, she is in conversations with other local agencies such as ~~Catholic Charities~~, Ardent Solutions, etc., to determine if anyone else would like to assume that responsibility.

ALSO (February 5, 2015, minutes)

Under Community Services: Request to Fill Health Home Manager, action should be changed (as below)

Dr. Robert Anderson also requested permission to hire an additional Health Home Manager. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator O'Grady, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried.

~~Refer to Ways & Means (should be) Prepare Resolution~~

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried to approve the Human Services Committee minutes of February 5, 2015, as amended.

Subsequently, a motion was made by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried to approve the Human Services Committee minutes of February 23, 2015.

Department of Social Services

Monthly Report

Department of Social Services Commissioner Vicki Grant entertained questions/comments on her pre-filed monthly report. Legislator Decker had several questions, pointing out fluctuations in numbers from a year ago at this time.

Family Health Plus went from 540 to 0 from January 2014 to January 2015. Ms. Grant explained that "Family Health Plus" had declined to "0" because of the ACA and Medicaid changes, so that will disappear altogether.

Relative Placement, which went from 4 in January 2014, has risen to 29 in January 2015. This, said Ms. Grant, is a result of a concerted effort to place children with suitable relatives instead of foster care if possible.

Adult Protective Open Cases, which grew from 6 in January 2014 to 17 in January 2015, is a result of much elder abuse, including financial exploitation, abuse, bad housing, etc.

Finally, CDPAP (Consumer Directed Programs) cases rose from 28-46 from January 2014 to January 2015. This number fluctuates, said Ms. Grant, as a result of what families want. They choose and hire their own personal care aides.

Ms. Grant concluded her report with “good news.” Kathy Van Etten, Senior Welfare Examiner, graduated from Leadership Allegany. The state requires case work contacts for foster care at a 95 percent level; we recently made 98.9 percent, so kudos for the Foster Care Unit. Our successful Response Program has reached its five-year mark, so we are celebrating that, and there will probably be additional information about that in April.

Request to Fill Senior Caseworker Position

Ms. Grant requested permission to fill a Senior Caseworker (AFSCME, Grade 17, Step Min.) position. This position, which became vacant due to a retirement, resides in the Services Unit and does child protective investigation and safety assessments to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of children. Without this position, DSS would not be able to meet state and federal requirements. This position is funded 50 percent federal dollars, 25 percent state dollars, and 25 percent county dollars. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator O’Grady, seconded by Legislator Burt, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Request to Fill Social Welfare Examiner Position

Ms. Grant also requested permission to fill a Social Welfare Examiner position (AFSCME, Grade 11, Step Min.). This position resides in the Temporary Assistance Unit and is responsible for interviewing clients, determining eligibility, and administering the appropriate benefits. Without this position, DSS would not meet state and federal requirements. Funding is provided with 50 percent federal dollars, 25 percent state dollars, and 25 percent County dollars. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Burt, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Office for the Aging **Monthly Report**

Office for the Aging Director Madeleine Gasdik entertained questions/comments on her pre-filed monthly report. In response to a question regarding the section labeled “Units of Service,” Ms. Gasdik explained that three segments (Homemaking/Personal Care, Housekeeping/Chore, and Case Management) are measured in hours, and the rest are measured in number of contacts (also referred to as “units.”) It was also noted that there had been some reduction in Meals-on-Wheels meals served in January 2015 compared to January 2014 which, said Ms. Gasdik, was somewhat of a relief as OFA had been over budget last year. Ms. Gasdik informed the group that a replacement for recently retired Tobi Nickerson had been hired. Sharon Tyrell, formerly the Volunteer Coordinator at the Comfort House in Wellsville would begin shortly. She also told the Committee that the AED has been installed and OFA is now working on training for staff in the use of the AED. In February, OFA did 102 tax returns for Allegany County seniors. Calendar events include the Senior Forum to be held Thursday, April 2, at the Genesee Valley Central School in Belmont, and the Senior Picnic is scheduled for Wednesday, July 29. She added that the Legislative Luncheon which had been scheduled for May 1 has been tentatively re-scheduled for May 8. She explained that County resident and long-time OFA volunteer Wallace Higgins had been awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his work with the Civil Air Patrol, but had been unable to travel to Washington, DC, to receive the award. Senator Cathy Young’s Office is working to get someone from Washington and Congressman Reed to come to Allegany County to present the medal to Mr. Higgins at the Legislative Luncheon.

Contract with VNA Home Care for Home-Delivered Meals for Their Long-Term Care Clients

Ms. Gasdik requested permission to enter into a contract with VNA Homecare Options, LLC, 1050 W. Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY, to supply home-delivered meals to its long-term care clients at a price of \$6.50 per meal. No additional need for funding is anticipated as the OFA 2015 Budget already includes meal for (now DSS) long-term care clients. It was noted that the County Attorney had reviewed and approved the contract. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Health Department
Monthly Report

Public Health Director Lori Ballengee gave an update on local illness prevalence and indicated that flu season probably has close to two more months before the population sees the end of it. Ms. Ballengee wanted to give Committee members a “heads up” regarding a movement by people at Alfred University wanting the Legislature to pass legislation prohibiting local pharmacies from selling tobacco products. After a brief discussion, the consensus of the group seemed to be a “hands-off” approach in this area. Ms. Ballengee indicated that would also be her stance when the issue is discussed at the next Board of Health meeting.

Grant Applications to Assist with Electronic Medical Records Costs

Ms. Ballengee requested permission to apply for grant funding from the United Way and from the Allegany County Area Foundation. The following is the rationale: As of March 27, 2015, all health-related facilities will be required by the state to administer all prescriptions electronically. There will be no more paper scripts. DOH will face fines if it is not in compliance. DOH has found an EMR (Electronic Medical Record) Company to accomplish this and would like to submit a grant application to the United Way and the Allegany Area Foundation to assist DOH in purchasing the equipment, training, and implementation of this new system. Should the applications for funding fail, DOH will need to pay for this out of its Article 6, General Public Health Work grant money. After any grant funding expires, there will be an on-going monthly service charge for the software and technical support. Again, these costs will be covered by the Family Planning and Article 6 grant monies. Between the submission of the MOE and the Human Services meeting, Ms. Ballengee had been informed that the County Health Department was not eligible for United Ways funding because it is a government agency. However, she intends to pursue funding from the Allegany County Area Foundation. She also noted that there may be an extension in the works and that DOH would not pursue this software until absolutely necessary because of the accompanying costs. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Request to Fill PT Early Intervention Services Coordinator Position

Ms. Ballengee also requested permission to fill a PT Early Intervention Services Coordinator Position (non-union, Grade 16, Step Base). NYS passed a law to comply with Federal regulations. As of September 2010, DOH is required to have two EI Service Coordinators in place at least 20 hours per week each to be in compliance with that law. EI Service Coordinators ensure that only children meeting the regulation guidelines receive services and those services are delivered in the most cost-effective, efficient manner possible. The majority of these services are billable, which will generate revenue to fund the salaries. Salaries will be covered by billable units generated and Article 6, General Public Health Work grant funds. Without this position, there would be a loss of control in insuring that the quantity of

provided services are as cost-effective and efficient as they can possibly be. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Burt, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:42 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