

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2018  
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Michael Amo, Chairman  
Katie Bonelli, Mike Anagnostakis, Kevindaryán Luján, Janet Sutherland, Laurie R. Tautel,  
Peter V. Tuohy

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman  
Michael D. Paduch, Minority Leader  
Barry J. Cheney, Legislator  
Thomas J. Faggione, Legislator  
Rob Sassi, Legislator  
Joel Sierra, Legislator  
Kathy Stegenga, Legislator  
James D. O'Donnell, Legislator  
John S. Vero, Legislator  
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel  
Harry Porr, Director, Operations and Cost Control  
Darcie Miller, Commissioner of Social Services and Mental Health  
Todd Craner, Fiscal Director, Department of Social Services  
Jennifer L. Roman, D.O., Orange County Medical Examiner/  
Acting Commissioner of Health  
Christopher Ericson, Deputy Commissioner of Health  
Kerry Gallagher, Deputy Commissioner of Health  
Robert Dietrich, Director, Community Health Outreach  
Donna McCarey, Deputy Commissioner, Human Resources  
Stephen Knob, Director, Employment and Training Administration  
Colleen Grogan, Chief Budget Analyst  
Michael Ventre, Budget Analyst

Mr. Amo opened the committee meeting at 3:33 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present.

Ms. Sutherland moved request to accept inter-municipal agreement between the County of Orange and the City of Port Jervis as well as the New York State Police Departments for a detective to participate in the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) at Social Services, seconded by Ms. Bonelli.

Motion carried. All in favor.

On the agenda were the highlighted important issues from the Department of Social Services monthly report.

Ms. Miller stated that they were nearing the end of HEAP season. The point-in-time count has been completed and there are 470 homeless in Orange County an increase of 120 from last year. There were 350 individuals in temporary housing and 90 were not accounted for in the Department of Social Services temporary housing and likely using warming stations and/or family and friends for brief respites from the cold.

Mr. Amo asked about school safety as he understands the county is participating with the Department Mental Health counselors in the school districts.

Ms. Miller replied that the school districts that work collaboratively with the Department of Mental Health have suicide intervention and post intervention guide and policies in place. With the recent tragedy in Florida and/or every tragedy that has happened they take that opportunity to meet with school superintendents to discuss school climate, best practice interventions, safe school ambassadors, satellite clinics for students to access medically necessary treatment within the school and white paper supports in Warwick, Newburgh and Pine Bush school districts. The Chester School and City of Middletown School Districts are next in line for white paper support "Mental Health Education in New York Schools" which has been very successful.

Mr. Amo asked about white paper support. Ms. Miller replied that the New York State Office of Mental Health put out a white paper to show the difference between academic counseling and medically necessary licensed clinics.

Mr. Amo asked if the committee could receive a copy of the white paper. Ms. Miller replied yes, but it specifically speaks to differentiating between the roles. However, there are many publications available that discuss best practice interventions in schools.

Mr. Tuohy moved request to increase current hourly wage for seasonal positions for the Summer Youth Employment Program as follows:  
Junior Counselor from \$12.00 to \$14.00 per hour  
and Lead Counselor from \$15.00 to \$17.00 per hour.  
These positions are 100% federally funded with no budgetary impact; existing budget will be utilized,  
Seconded by Ms. Tautel.

Mr. Knob explained that these salaries have not been updated since 2009. The children these individuals supervise are currently making \$10.40 an hour and last summer they had a challenging time finding enough counselors. The individuals are required to have 30 college credits and a car so it is a highly responsible position for \$12.00 an hour.

Mr. Amo asked how many would be hired. Mr. Knob replied one Lead Counselor and six Junior Counselors.

**Mr. Luján asked for if** the positions were full-time, part-time, hours worked and would they receive benefits. Mr. Knob replied that it is a seasonal position at 35 hours a week. They try and recruit college students around mid-May in order to conduct intake in the schools and serve approximately 220 kids in Port Jervis, Middletown and Newburgh; however, they probably conduct intakes on about 600 kids.

Ms. Bonelli pointed out that it passed unanimously at the Personnel and Compensation committee meeting.

Ms. Sutherland asked when the interview process would begin for the counselors. Mr. Knob replied immediately and if they know of someone who meets the criteria please have them forward their resume to the office.

Motion carried. All in favor.

On the agenda was an overview of the Employment & Training Administration.

Mr. Knob explained that they primarily receive two sources of funding and operate the Workforce Innervation Opportunity Act through the Federal Labor Department. They also operate Orange County's Welfare to Work Program with funding through the Department of Social Services but they primarily help individuals that are less fortunate to find employment. They operate two main career centers; one in the City of Newburgh at Four Washington Center and one in the City of Middletown on Fulton Street that is co-located with the Department of Probation and Department of Social Services. In addition, they work with the New York State Department of Labor, Childcare Council and on occasion with BOCES and Orange County Community College. There are 60 computers within each center, job postings and a library to assist individuals with improving their skills. They also assist them with resumes, interview skills, childcare, transportation and any possible barriers that may affect their efforts in gaining employment. Additionally, they handle employer recruitment, monthly job fairs and two larger job fairs annually with one scheduled for May 16, 2018 at the Galleria in Middletown and another will be held at the Newburgh Mall in the fall. At the job fair in February the Newburgh Career Center had thirteen employers participate and seventy-five job seekers.

Mr. Tuohy asked for the number of employees that were placed at the February job fair. Mr. Knob replied that he did not have that number but would get the information to the committee. The employers continue to return so they must be doing a decent job and they do follow up with the employers with a survey.

Mr. Amo agreed that it was good question as there could be things that they could do differently to make them more affective.

Mr. Knob added that they also receive funds for job training and they send people to OCCC and BOCES to upgrade their skills and on job training contracts with employers at .50 cents on the dollar for the training period.

Ms. Stegenga asked if there was a percentage on the number of people in the Welfare to Work Program versus what they actually have on welfare. Mr. Knob replied that if they are deemed employable while on public assistance is referred to them and by law they must be some form of work activity of 35 hours a week. In 2017, they placed 500 public assistance recipients and closed 400 cases due to employment.

Ms. Stegenga asked if they have a percentage on the individuals that were placed but end up back on public assistance. Mr. Knob replied that he could get that information to the committee; however, it could be a moving target.

Mr. Knob commented that in his opinion, they operate one of the best programs in the state and their numbers prove that with other counties coming to them for guidance. They receive a federally funded grant of \$200,000.00 from the Planning Department called Job Access Reverse Commutation. This allows them to have eight vans; four in Newburgh and four in Middletown that assist them with bringing welfare recipients to work and assist them with childcare transportation until they figure out their own transportation.

Mr. Amo asked about their Annual Report. Mr. Knob replied that all the information was included in the County Executive's State of the County Report.

Mr. Amo asked for a description of their summer work program and its purpose. Mr. Knob replied that it is a summer work experience program for disadvantage youth between the ages of 14 and 20. They collaborate with non-profits, county departments and school districts and they work in the various summer camps in the cities.

Ms. Tautel asked how the program was funded. Mr. Knob replied through New York State.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.