

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, JULY 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
Leigh J. Benton, Legislator
Barry J. Cheney, Legislator
Thomas J. Faggione, Legislator
James D. O'Donnell, Legislator
Kathy Stegenga, Legislator
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel
Donna McCarey, Deputy Commissioner, Human Resources
Rich Magoch, Administrative Officer, Department of Social Services

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. Tautel moved request to reclassify one (1) Aging Services Specialist (#04655), Grade 9 from part-time to full-time, seconded by Mr. Luján.

Ms. Maglione explained that they are seeking to move their Aging Services Specialist from part time to full time with funding from NY Connects.

Ms. Bonelli commented that NY Connects has been a thriving program.

Ms. Maglione agreed, it is one of the programs that keeps seniors living independently in their homes.

Ms. Bonelli asked how they were doing with respect to awareness. Ms. Maglione replied that they are doing well with the help of social media and live events.

Ms. Tautel asked how the NY Connect funds were dispersed to the county. Ms. Maglione replied that this one is dispersed annually.

Ms. Tautel asked if there was a lag with reimbursement. Ms. Maglione replied no.

Ms. Tautel asked if they go to senior centers and/or clubs to spread awareness. Ms. Maglione replied that she attends long-term council meetings quarterly. These meetings include

one member from each of the senior centers and senior clubs in the county. In addition, the Legislature recently approved the hiring of a part-time Senior Citizen Coordinator who will also be attending these meetings as part of their position.

Ms. Tautel asked if brochures were available on NY Connects. Ms. Maglione replied yes, and it not only supplies the NY Connects information but also their congregate sites, senior groups and various services.

Mr. Tuohy asked for the number of residents using their services. Ms. Maglione replied they serve approximately 12,000 of the 70,000 seniors in Orange County.

Mr. Cheney asked if they considered adding another part-time position as opposed to just the one full-time position. Ms. Maglione replied yes, however, the person currently in the part-time position is very good and they did not want to lose her to a full-time position elsewhere.

Ms. Stegenga noted that the person in the position would be receiving a 30% increase by going from part-time to full-time. Ms. McCarey replied that the position is currently classified as part-time and under the bargaining unit it stipulates the number of hours they can work and under NYSHIP they cannot work over 20 hours. In order to utilize the grant money and make the position full-time the employee would be allotted all the CSEA entitlements including salary, leave accruals and benefits. Their rate of pay is not changing but their hours are increasing from 980 annually to 1820.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Amo commented that the upcoming budget process was discussed at their recent roundtable meeting. They will be asking that departments think about what is being accomplished with the funds requested, the number of people they have working on grants, the status of those grants and the outcome measures.

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

Mr. Magoch explained that the Emergency Housing Placement numbers were unavailable for the report as claims were not received from the various programs. However, he was advised that the numbers would be available at the August Human Services committee meeting and would include both May and June. They are greatly concerned with their homeless numbers as they continue to rise and the number of families in hotel/motels. Ms. Miller and the Department of Social Services continues to work closely with all stakeholders and community partners to address and hopefully reduce their homelessness numbers.

Mr. Luján asked how much they were spending in hotel/motels for temporary housing and is there something they could be doing for long-term placement. Mr. Magoch replied that he does not have the amount spent on hotel/motels with him, but the cost is high. The goal is for long-term placement but the lack of affordable housing for families in Orange County plays a huge part with stakeholders and community partners meeting regularly to address this issue.

Mr. Luján asked if they should be focusing more county funds on affordable housing as opposed to hotel/motels. Mr. Magoch replied that the goal is for long-term affordable housing and to prevent emergency housing and temporary housing situations.

Mr. Luján requested a comparison on how much they are spending on hotel/motels in order to pursue something more sustainable. During a recent conversation with legal services it was stated that they could be saving a great deal by ensuring that these individuals remain in permanent housing.

Mr. Amo asked who was responsible for repairs to homes. Mr. Magoch replied that all the municipalities have different rules and regulations and it is a shared responsibility with the various agencies and community partners. However, the key is to have the right people in attendance for the meetings.

Mr. Amo commented on the accountability from the community partners they help fund.

Mr. Benton asked how hotel/motel prices are negotiated. Mr. Magoch replied that he was unsure but would convey the question to Ms. Miller.

Ms. Sutherland noted that only three or four hotel/motels have contracts with the county. At a recent affordable housing meeting they discussed getting builders in and the standards on who can rent the apartments as a single person only receives \$412.00 a month.

Mr. Tuohy expressed concern with the amount of contractual expenses and asked that Ms. Miller look at and report back to the committee next month. Mr. Magoch replied that he would relay the question and request to Ms. Miller.

Mr. Benton asked if there are fluctuations throughout the year that would affect that number. Mr. Magoch replied possibly.

Mr. Luján emphasized that they need to ensure that people are staying in long-term housing and he would suggest that legal services come before the committee for a presentation. In his opinion, they could save a lot of money and provide people with the help they need.

Mr. Amo noted that on page 7, under 2011-2017 Medicaid Expenses it states that the expenses for Skilled Nursing Facilities has decreased significantly from \$92 million in 2011 to \$68 million in 2017, and is some of that cost being absorbed in the HMO (Managed Care). As the HMO (Managed Care) expense has increased from \$186 million in 2011 to \$515 million in 2017. Mr. Magoch replied yes, but there could be other factors contributing to those numbers. Managed care numbers have dramatically increased; however, some of that relates to the state takeover of enrollments.

Mr. Amo added that at their recent roundtable meeting the budget process was discussed. As departments prepare to come before the legislature with their budgets they would like them to supply the committees with outcome measures and the justification for the funds they are requesting. In addition, they are asking for the number of people working on grants and the status of those grants.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.