

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 2, 2007 – 3:00 P.M.
SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: N. Shinagawa, Chair, M. Robertson, M. Koplinka-Loehr, M. Sigler, Vice Chair, F. Proto (arrived at 3:25)
Staff: K. Kephart, Health Department; N. Zahler, Youth Services, L. Dillon, Tompkins Community Action, L. Holmes, Office for the Aging; K. Schlather, Human Services Coalition; P. Carey, Social Services Commissioner; R. DeLuca, Mental Health Commissioner; J. Kippola, Contracts Administrator; K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk
Guests: C. Sanchirico, R. Funke, Catholic Charities; S. Wampler, WHCU; S. Griffin, Foodnet

Call to Order

Chair Shinagawa called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Tompkins Community Action

Ms. Dillon, Director, invited members to the annual Tompkins Community Action luncheon and awards ceremony on May 18th. She said the Martin Luther King celebration held at the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC) was successful in calling attention to poverty through a simulation. She would like to hold another simulation exercise and would like members of the Legislature and other municipal officials to participate in the event. She indicated an interest has been expressed by the *Ithaca Journal* to write a series of articles on poverty. She will be attending a meeting next week to discuss the simulation and will come back to report on the status of the event.

Ms. Dillon provided information on the various initiatives occurring at the various human services agencies:

- Commercial Drivers License program – the third training session is almost complete for this program that is a collaborative effort of Tompkins County, City of Ithaca, GIAC, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, and Tompkins Community Action, and a variety of employers. Out of 19 trainees, 16 are employed, and 7 passed their written exam.
- Natural Leaders Initiative – between GIAC and Cornell Cooperative extension is a program designed to encourage seeking out a diverse employee base.
- Energy Services – a grant for \$500,000 additional money was received which allowed \$200,000 for the weatherization program. At this time there are only 50 households on the waiting list. The balance, \$300,000, will be used to provide energy reduction renovations to 70 apartments at Titus Towers.
- Healthy Home Project – this project is designed to provide education and utilize various programs to assist in reducing pollutants within homes that can affect individuals with allergies, asthma, etc. Several grants have been sought, the latest one with the Environmental Protection Agency. Thus far, \$3,300 was been received from the Sunshine Group of the Cornell University Human Ecology School; some funds from the Community Development Block Grant have been utilized for the program.
- The agency just completed its annual Federal Head Start annual review. Overall the audit was favorable, with minor findings in the area of governance. The government Head Start Policy Council regulation details are sometimes difficult to follow. Since that time, TCA is working with the school to assist in appropriate training to enable compliance.
- After School Programs – The Boynton and Dewitt middle schools' programs were able to remain open due to private and agency funding.
- HEAP - At the end of the 2006-2007 heating season, 400 applications were completed. A part-time worker is hired to assist with application processing.

- Primary Care School Support Program – this program, in Dryden and Groton schools, follows former Head Start children into regular classrooms. This has been very successful, with some teachers willing to go to a parent’s home for a parent-teacher meeting when necessary.
- Supportive Housing – as a result of \$1.2 million grant, allowed the agency to purchase and renovate the Corn Street apartment project. A June open house is anticipated; two families are in one of the homes. Ms. Dillon expressed appreciation for Schickle Construction who won the bid. She said the local contractor has been extremely helpful on the project.
- Chartwell House – as a result of HUD funding six additional subsidized transitional housing units were purchased to assist homeless families with children.
- Strategic Plan – Ms. Dillon provided Mr. Shinagawa with a summary of the 2005 – 2010 Strategic Plan.
- Annual Campaign – this year’s goal is to provide funding for Head Start playground upgrades. Although the campaign has not officially begun, over \$3,500 has been raised for this effort.

Ms. Dillon spoke to the Committee about the possibility of seeking funding from the County and the City of Ithaca for a joint venture with TCA and a not-for-profit company to develop the site adjacent to Chartwell House. Although Ms. Dillon had looked at the property previously it was not possible to move forward at that time due to lack of funding. This proposition was put before TCA’s Board who indicated approval to move ahead with the possibility of the joint venture. The cost of the property is \$150,000. Ms. Dillon is coming forward to ask both the County and the City if they would be willing to assist in the purchase of the property to hold it and allow time to develop the site plan. She spoke of the difficulty in siting housing for special need individuals, particularly when proximity to services and transportation are also a component. Ms. Dillon spoke of the possibility of using the site for a Chartwell House for women, a halfway house, etc. She said if the site could be secured it would allow time to apply for resources to complete the project. She spoke of potential funding from the New York State Homeless Housing Assistance Program, HUD, and Office of Temporary Disability supportive services funding. In addition, Ms. Dillon will be discussing the potential project with the City of Ithaca.

Mr. Proto arrived at this time.

Ms. Dillon said the IRA has set aside funding in the fall for development of this site. In addition, there are some housing funds being utilized as revolving loan funds. She noted the purpose of the discussion is to provide the opportunity to determine if the project could occur.

In response to Ms. Robertson’s questions, Ms. Dillon said the IRA would have approximately \$30,000 that could be utilized for development of the site. In addition, the request for the City and County would be for each provide fifty percent of the purchase price. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr indicated the County has guaranteed loans for other agencies when the purpose fits into the County Mission. He believes this may fit and recommended speaking to the County Administrator and County Attorney. Ms. Dillon said her intent is to bring the matter forward for discussion and stated she may also speak to the Budget and Capital Committee if felt necessary. In response to Mr. Sigler, it was noted the average stay at Chartwell House is twelve months, although there are some residents who will remain there longer.

Office for the Aging

RESOLUTION NO - TO EXECUTE FOUR TEN-YEAR CONTRACTS WITH FOODNET MEALS ON WHEELS TO PROVIDE NUTRITION SERVICES TO COUNTY RESIDENTS 60 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

Ms Holmes introduced Mr. Griffin, Director of Foodnet. She spoke of the four separate agreements being proposed, noting it is a positive step to make them a ten-year agreement. The addition of a resolved that includes a cost of living increase also provides security to Foodnet that some of the increase in personnel expenses from wage increases would be included as part of the contract in the form of a cost of living increase based upon the Consumer Price Index.

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Mr. Proto asked if it was required to have a ten-year contract and if the contracts are contingent upon receiving the funding as outlined. Ms. Holmes said there is not a ten-year requirement and that the contracts are contingent upon funding. It was noted the State requires a cost of living adjustment in their funding agreements. Mr. Proto expressed a concern with regard to committing to a cost of living adjustment for a ten-year period. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr noted it is contingent upon funding.

Mr. Griffin said having the cost of living clause provides knowledge of support to the agency. By having the knowledge that the cost of living increase will be provided, he can better plan for items such as equipment replacement, fuel, etc. In addition, having this clause will most likely prevent the need for an over-target request for maintenance of effort as well as being an indicator that the living-wage clause can be maintained rather than to fund raise for salary increases.

Mr. Proto inquired if by including the clause it will then be requested on other County agreements such as home health aides as well.

Ms. Robertson was informed that the County provides twenty-seven percent, the State and Federal provides forty-two percent, with the balance of funding done through fund-raising. Ms. Holmes noted the previous contracts were for a ten-year period but did not have the cost of living clause within the resolution. In addition, the contract amounts will be built into the appropriate budget lines. Mr. Proto asked if by including the clause the fundraising efforts would diminish and was informed by Mr. Griffin the fundraising would continue as in the past. Mr. Proto spoke of the projected need to increase services as County residents age; Mr. Griffin anticipates this as well.

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Proto.

Ms. Kippola reported that at this time there are not many ten-year contracts undertaken by the County. She said that while the contracts do not have a cost of living clause it occurs naturally during the negotiation process; generally the Consumer Price Index is used as a standard for determining cost of living. She noted the average has been 2.8 percent.

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, seconded by Mr. Sigler, to amend the resolution to remove the cost of living clause. A voice vote on the motion to amend resulted as follows: Ayes – 3 (Legislators Koplinka-Loehr, Proto, and Sigler); Noes – 2 (Legislators Shinagawa and Robertson). MOTION APPROVED.

A voice vote on the amended resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 5; Noes – 0. RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

WHEREAS, the Office for the Aging wishes to renew its contracts with Foodnet Meals on Wheels, and

WHEREAS, the ability of Foodnet Meals on Wheels to plan to meet future demands would be enhanced by four ten-year contracts to provide home delivered meals, congregate meals, nutrition education and nutrition counseling, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health And Human Services Committee, That the Legislature approve contracts for:

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Term of Contract</u>
SNAP & CSE (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program & Community Services for the Elderly—NYS funding)	April 1, 2008-March 31, 2018
Title III-C-1 & Title III-C-2 (Older Americans Act—Federal funding)	January 1, 2008-December 31, 2017
Foodnet Select (Private pay program of Foodnet)	January 1, 2008-December 31, 2017
NSIP	October 1, 2008-September 30, 2018

(Nutrition Services Incentive Program—Federal funding)

RESOLVED, further, That the County Administrator or his designee is authorized to sign these agreements and any amendments related to the agreements,

RESOLVED, further, That these contracts are contingent on availability of Federal, State, and County funding.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

Explanatory note: The terms of each agreement follow the fiscal year of each funding source.

Berger Commission Working Group Update

Ms. Holmes reported on Ms. Cole, Health Department Director's attendance at a regional Board of Health meeting last week. Board of Health Commissioner Daines noted the Berger Commission is now law and its recommendations will move forward. The State Board of Health will be conducting a regional tour to receive public impact statements and will be taking place June 20th in Syracuse. It is anticipated that Lakeside representatives will attend that meeting. The Health Planning Council is reviewing a bed-need methodology to determine what the actual need projections are. It appears at this time that the number of beds that will be required for residents of Tompkins County will exceed the number provided by the Berger Commission recommendation. She indicated that Mr. Deptula, of Peregrine, has met with Senator Winner and representatives from Senator Seward's office who have indicated they will attempt to facilitate a meeting with the New York State Department of Health and Lakeside to discuss what the next steps could be.

In response to a question as to whether there is a desire for the current operator to amend their operations to provide continuous operations, Ms. Holmes said at the present time steps are being reviewed to see if this is possible. In addition, it was noted that if closure were inevitable, it is unknown if any other additional operators have an interest in taking over the service; there would be a State request for proposals. It is hoped that if there were other interested operators they would come forward to discuss the situation with the Office for the Aging.

Youth Services

2006 Services Provided by the Recreation Partnership Board

Ms. Zahler provided members with a brief review of the Intermunicipal Recreation Partnership 2006 Annual Report. She indicated a review of the draft agreement will be coming forward in June and will then be presented to the other municipalities as well for approval.

Ms. Zahler then reviewed statistical information on members of the partnership, participation in various programs, unduplicated youth participation, contractual programs, and scholarships. It was noted that 2,734 youth participated during 2006 from all municipalities involved. The Committee was informed that Department of Social Services childcare subsidies may be used to attend any summer camp meeting Health Department regulations. Ms. Zahler noted that although Groton's contribution is relatively small, that was not a consideration in providing scholarships.

A discussion occurred regarding the timeline required to determine participation in the Recreation Partnership. It was noted that the agreement would again request adequate notification of a municipality's withdrawal. Ms. Zahler stated the Recreation Partnership Board sets their budget in July and is then passed on to towns, the City of Ithaca, and the County. She stated the Partnership would ask that when the budget has been set a withdrawal not occur for that particular year. Ms. Zahler said that if the County does not choose to participate she did not think the Recreation Partnership would be financially viable to continue. Mr. Proto said the County should provide a sense of whether or not it plans to participate by the end of summer as the Town Supervisors, and City would be working on their budgetary items as well as planning youth programs. Ms. Zahler said when the draft agreement is brought in June she would need to have any areas of concern addressed with a vote on the agreement occurring in July. The present cost-sharing is ¼ by the City, ¼ by the

Town of Ithaca, ¼ by the remaining towns, and ¼ by the County. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr noted that if the County chose not to continue it could approve one-year funding; Mr. Proto said that would provide the advance notice.

Ms. Zahler provided copies of the Summer Youth Programs brochure.

Department of Social Services

Ms. Kephart reported that Department of Social Services and Offender Aid and Restoration are working together on a Re-entry Program and have utilized Project Assistants and interns to collect information to assist with this project.

Ms. Kephart spoke of the State replacing seventy computers within the department in order to accommodate their required programs. She explained that previously machines were shared; this will now provide more efficiency for staff to input their reporting. As a result of the upgrades, numerous computers in various state of viability have been made available. Thus far, twenty have been provided to the Mental Health Department. The Information Technology Services Department has been working with DSS on this endeavor to insure the machines are operational and appropriate program removals have occurred. When asking David Squires, Finance Director, about County policy restrictions to donate computers, he indicated he did not believe it would violate any company policy but it would be good to inform the Committee of the intent to donate. Ms. Kephart said it would be four or five computers to go to Offender Aid and Restoration for staff use.

Mr. Sigler indicated support for the donation. Mr. Proto recalled having provided an increase in the OAR budget previously to purchase computers.

The general sense of the committee was to approve the donation to OAR and asked that other agencies be considered for the computer donations. Ms. Schlather of the Human Services Coalition expressed an interest in receiving computer donation(s).

Catholic Charities

Ms. Sanchirico, Director, provided an overview of the services offered by Catholic Charities. She noted the Samaritan Center has a 1.7 FTE and utilizes 3-4 Welfare to Work individuals as well as volunteers. A brief description of the number of individuals (1639) and households (678) served by the agency was provided, noting individuals are assisted with HEAP and Food Stamp applications, offer reduced-cost food purchases, emergency assistance for personal care products and/or prescriptions, bus passes, utilities, and clothing. It was noted the majority of those served (87%) had a very low income of less than thirty percent of the median income (\$13,350/one person).

The Committee discussed the Samaritan Center Security Deposit Assistance Program in more detail. Ms. Sanchirico reported that the Community Development Block Grant funding for the security deposit program has been exhausted until October 2007 when a grant in the amount of \$40,000 will be received. She said this time of year there is a great deal of moving occurring and not having funds to assist with security deposits for individuals on low income could have repercussions. The Committee was informed that a small \$5,000 FLEX grant offered some assistance but has been spent. In addition, the agency is receiving many calls for individuals who are unable to pay utility bills. She has called Patricia Carey, Social Services Commissioner, to determine if any funds would be available for this purpose.

In response to a question from Mr. Shinagawa, Ms. Sanchirico said the security deposit program requires landlord and tenant to enter into an agreement stating that if there is no damage the tenant retains the security deposit (to be used at next apartment); if there is damage to the apartment the landlord agrees to return any unsecured portion of the security deposit to Catholic Charities. Ms. Funke reported that the majority of residents seeking assistance with security deposits are Section 8 voucher holders who found apartments but cannot afford the security deposit. (37 of 54 security deposits provided from January to April were considered very low income; 2 were homeless; 25 of 54 were single parents with at least two children). In addition, it was

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noted the maximum security deposit grant is \$500, with the majority of grants provided being between \$450 to \$500; some security deposits are ranging between \$700 - \$900 for a 2-3 bedroom apartment.

Ms. Sanchirico said she received a message from Mr. Whicher, County Administrator, indicating he would like to know how the program fits into continuum of care and would like assurance that it is not a duplicated service. She has not had an opportunity to respond to Mr. Whicher, however, she reported her agency is the only one offering a security deposit program.

The Committee was informed that the present funds were from 9/06 to 4/07 in the amount of \$25,000. A \$40,000 grant has been requested from CDBG for October 2007. Ms. Robertson noted the greater demand could be due to rental increase. Ms. Funke said previously HUD required tracking of the security deposits which required perpetual tracking. More recently HUD revised their guidelines and do not require tracking. Ms. Robertson spoke of former Director, George Ferrari having divided the funds up evenly throughout the year. Ms. Funke said a decision was made to amend that policy; for every one request granted there are 5-6 more asking. Mr. Proto expressed concern that the County will be asked to continue to fund agency programs such as this. Ms. Funke stated that to truly reflect the unmet needs of the community is to use the funds for utility payments and security deposits on a first-come-first served basis. Ms. Sanchirico estimated the amount needed to meet security deposit requests until October 2007 is \$20,000.

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Shinagawa, to provide one-time funding in the amount of \$20,000 from the Contingent Fund for the Security Deposit Program. Ms. Robertson spoke of the extreme need for a program such as this, particularly for Section 8 recipients who may have several years wait before they receive a voucher, and then have a limited time period to find housing. Mr. Shinagawa said he believes Mr. Whicher's concern is whether there is a duplication of services. He understands that some members may not support the request as it could set a precedent. Mr. Sigler is not certain what to do and feels it will come forward as a member-filed item. Ms. Funke said this is the first time a request for funding has been made for the program and clarified that previous years the funds were divided evenly between twelve months. She explained the 2004 CDBG funds (\$25,000) were not spent until January 2006. The October 2006 award of \$25,000 carried them through April 2007. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said the program is meritorious, however he hesitates that there are structural and systemic difficulties associated with it. He does not yet understand the greater perspective of other agencies. He does not feel he can support the motion without more analysis. Mr. Shinagawa is in support of the motion due to the need to utilize the Section 8 vouchers, particularly when so many are single mothers.

A voice vote on the motion resulted as follows: Ayes – 2 (Legislators Robertson and Shinagawa); Noes – 3 (Legislators Koplinka-Loehr, Proto, and Sigler). MOTION FAILED.

Approval of Minutes of April 4 and 18, 2007

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Proto, to approve the minutes of April 4 and 18, 2007 as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Appointment

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, and unanimously approved by voice vote, to recommend the following appointment to the full Legislature:

Substance Abuse Subcommittee

Amy Chaffee – Community Member; term expires December 31, 2010

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr was excused at 5:15 p.m.

Liaison Report

Alcoholism Council

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Mr. Sigler reported the Alcoholism Council has hired Catherine Blair as the new Director. At this time interviews are being held for a Clinical Director. The 2006 audit has been completed and is going well.

Youth Board

Mr. Sigler reported the Youth Board is working on their budget and approved a teen dance, which is becoming a popular event within the County. Ms. Zahler reported the Sheriff will attend the May 19th meeting to provide information on youth detentions within the jail.

Office for the Aging

The Office for the Aging Annual Luncheon will be on May 3rd at the Clarion Hotel. The guest speaker will be Michael Burgess, Director of New York State Office for the Aging.

Recreation Partnership

Mr. Proto reported the majority of their work was covered earlier in the meeting. It is hoped that the draft Recreation Partnership will be completed by the end of May.

Human Services Coalition

Ms. Schlather indicated their review process has begun based upon preliminary information received regarding the budget retreat. Mr. Shinagawa said Mr. Hattery was asking what Strategic Planning was taking place at HSC; he would also like a discussion on the intent of the Human Services Coalition at its formation and how it has developed over the last thirty years. It is hoped to have this completed by October.

Board of Health

Mr. Shinagawa reported two public meetings have been held regarding the well drilling regulations proposal. Upon action by the Board of Health information will come forward. Mr. Sigler would like to have a Cornell Cooperative Extension representative present at the discussion.

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk