

Health and Human Services Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 10, 2010 3:30 PM
Scott Heyman Conference Room

Approved 12/8/10

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Frank Proto	Chair	Present	
Will Burbank	Member	Late	4:05 PM
James Dennis	Member	Excused	
Kathy Luz Herrera	Member	Excused	
Nathan Shinagawa	Member	Excused	
Leslyn McBean-Clairborne	Temporary Member	Present	

Staff: P. Carey, Commissioner of Social Services; B. Doling, Mental Health, L. Holmes, Director of Office for the Aging; A. Hendrix, Youth Services Director; N. Burston, Human Services Coalition; K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk

Guests: Liz Lawyer, Ithaca Journal

Call to Order

Chair Proto called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. He noted that Ms. Robertson, Chair of the Legislature, temporarily appointed Mrs. McBean-Clairborne as a temporary member of the Committee.

Chair's Report

Mr. Proto expressed appreciation to staff for their work and attendance at the Expanded Budget and Capital Committee meetings.

County Administrator's Report

Mr. Mareane was not available due to a telephone conference call.

Changes to Agenda

The reports from the Health Department and the Office for the Aging on Independent Transportation Network Everywhere was withdrawn from the agenda.

Mr. Burbank arrived at this time.

Mental Health Department

Resolution (DOC ID: 2221): In Support of Federal Bills S.2781/H.R. 4544, Commonly Known as "Rosa's Law"/ Elizabeth A. Connelly Act and Asking that All References to Mental Retardation be Amended to Developmental Disabilities and Urging All Federal, State, and Local Governments to Amend References to "Mentally Retarded" and "Mental Retardation" to "People who Are Developmentally Disabled" and "People with a Developmental Disability"

Ms. Doling said the resolution is the result of a dual effort by the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD) Subcommittee of the Mental Health Services Board. The purpose is to provide the ability to amend the title of the subcommittee and other documents containing a reference to mental retardation to reflect "people-first" language. The State has already amended its agency title to reflect this change. Mr. Proto said if the bylaws need to be amended that the action should be done before January.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee is working on many things, including reviewing what policies, local laws, and other documents may need to be updated. Ms. Doling said the change may affect some language in job descriptions, but not any of the duties.

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Will Burbank, Member
SECONDER:	Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, Temporary Member
AYES:	Frank Proto, Will Burbank, Leslyn McBean-Clairborne
EXCUSED:	James Dennis, Kathy Luz Herrera, Nathan Shinagawa

WHEREAS, people with developmental disabilities work hard to live as independently as possible, and

WHEREAS, the clinical language has changed and those working in the field are aware of a shift in meaning and usage; the outmoded terminology is now often used as a way to discriminate against people with developmental disabilities, and

WHEREAS, the “people-first” language is widely used, acceptable and appropriate terminology when referring to people who are developmentally disabled and people with a developmental disability, and

WHEREAS, New York State has also recognized the shift in terminology and has adopted the use of “people-first language” and amended their agency title to the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, and

WHEREAS, on November 17, 2009, S. 2781, commonly known as “Rosa’s Law” was introduced at the 111th Congress, and

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2010, H.R. 4544, commonly known as the Elizabeth A. Connelly Act, a related bill, was introduced at the 111th Congress, and

WHEREAS, these bills amend the use of the terms “mentally retarded” and “mental retardation” to “developmentally disabled” and “developmental disability” within Laws relating to education, employment, and other social services, and

WHEREAS, these amendments provide recognition of the need to amend how people with developmental disabilities are perceived, now therefore be it

RESOLVED on recommendation of the Budget and Capital Committee, That the Tompkins County Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee of the Tompkins County Community Mental Health Board, that the Tompkins County Legislature hereby supports Federal Bills S.2781 and H.R.4544,

RESOLVED, further, That the Tompkins County Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee of the Tompkins County Mental Health Board, and the Tompkins County Legislature hereby urges the Federal, State, and Local Governments, to amend the terms “mental retardation” and “mentally retarded” to “developmentally disabled” and “developmental disability”, in all Federal, State, and Local Laws as well as in any titles and documents,

RESOLVED, further, That the Tompkins County Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee of the Tompkins County Mental Health Board hereby urge the Tompkins County Legislature, to amend the “mental retardation” and “mentally retarded” to “people who are developmentally disabled” and “people with a developmental disability”, in any and all titles and document,

RESOLVED, further, That the Clerk of the Legislature is hereby directed to send certified copies of this resolution to President Obama, and the appropriate Federal representatives, Governor David Paterson, and the appropriate State representatives, New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, and New York State Association of Counties.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

Minutes
Health and Human Services Committee
Wednesday, November 10, 2010

Acceptance of Amendments to Proposed Bylaws

It was MOVED by Mr. Burbank, seconded by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the proposed people-first language amendments as reflected in the resolution and correcting the title of the Legislative body. MOTION CARRIED.

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Office for the Aging

Appointments

It was MOVED by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, seconded by Mr. Burbank, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to recommend appointment of the following individuals. MOTION CARRIED.

Office for the Aging Advisory Committee

Marie W. Layer – term expires December 31, 2013

Elizabeth Ellis – term expires December 31, 2013

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Minutes Approval

It was MOVED by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, seconded by Mr. Burbank, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of October 13, 2010, as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne reserved the right to make changes at a later date after having the opportunity to completely read the minutes.

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Youth Services

Youth Services Programs

Ms. Hendrix reported that at the last Tompkins County Council of Governments meeting, municipalities reported they plan to maintain the youth services programs at the same level as 2010. Some are attempting to raise the funds that would not be provided by the County and others are determining how to operate their programs with less. It is anticipated there will be some staff reductions and the possibility of elimination of transportation for one of the Dryden programs. In response to Mrs. McBean-Clairborne's question regarding the Town of Ithaca program, Ms. Hendrix said the budget does not have additional funding within the budget, however, the topic will be revisited and discussed further. She clarified that no municipality has indicated a total elimination of youth services programming.

Mr. Proto requested an update indicating the levels of funding for each municipality and what the present gap is.

In response to Mrs. McBean-Clairborne's question regarding the Dryden's loss of transportation, Ms. Hendrix said the affected program is the OURS Program; she does not know how many youth would be affected by the elimination of transportation.

Pharmaceutical Collection

Ms. Hendrix reported the second community-wide Unwanted Household Pharmaceutical Collection Day was held October 16 at the Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit garage and 741 pounds of unwanted medications was collected. There are two collection events being planned for 2011 and they

may be held in different location(s). The event was sponsored by the Tompkins County Coalition for Safe Medication Disposal, which is made up of representatives of area governments, non-profit organizations, higher education, and private businesses. Tompkins County government is a member of the coalition. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said a number of youth program Directors are on the coalition.

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Youth Development Survey

Ms. Hendrix reported on the New York State Youth Development Survey (NYSYDS) was given to Tompkins County students in grades 6-12 in October, 2010. The NYSYDS was produced by International Survey Associates/Pride Surveys under a contract with the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. It will assess and measure risk and protective factors that predict problem behaviors such as delinquency, violence, dropping out of school, youth substance use, and gambling. Tompkins County added questions to gather additional local information about student connections to school and school climate. The information will be compiled and made available to individual schools and other appropriate agencies to assist with programming.

Mr. Burbank said he was in a classroom when the survey was given and students found it difficult to complete in the allotted time.

In response to Ms. Burston, Ms. Hendrix said the survey obtains information on drug and alcohol use and is intended to act as a needs assessment.

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Mental Health Department - Continued

Budget Transfer to Computer Equipment (DOC ID: 2296)

This item was provided for information only.

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Electronic Medical Records Update

Ms. Doling reported the department is nearing the end of the electronic medical record program that dovetails with the compliance program. There is a \$42,000 grant to be used for this project and funding is in place in the 2011 budget for maintenance. Ms. Doling said at this time she is awaiting Mr. DeLuca's input on the project before signing contracts. Although there had been a problem with compatibility of the required program with computer hardware, it will be resolved with the assistance of the Information Technology Services Department. Ms. Doling said although it is a tremendous amount of work it will be beneficial due to the restructuring taking place within the department. She is hopeful it will be operational by the first of the year.

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Clinic Restructuring

In response to Mr. Proto's question of how the Clinic restructuring was progressing, Ms. Doling said it is going well. Senior staff has broken the task down into increments and provided training for clinic staff, making the process smoother.

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Department of Social Services

Monthly Statistics - 2010 September (DOC ID: 2236)

Ms. Carey reported applications for Medicaid and Food Stamps continue to climb. She believes the increase is because individuals who previously have been able to financially get by for a short period of time are now in a position that they cannot and require assistance. Food Stamp workers have spoken of the increase in new clients and have reported 300 new people applying since the beginning of the year. In response to Mr. Burbank's question on how long a process it is to receive food stamps, Ms. Carey said in

an emergency situation an applicant can receive Food Stamps within 24 hours. Normal intake for a food stamp application is 30 days. Emergency Food Stamps is for a limited amount (food for twenty days). If an applicant does not have a fixed address the staff make every effort to find a way to help the applicant through communication with outside agencies.

In response to Mrs. McBean-Clairborne's question of whether a recipient of emergency food stamps is found to be ineligible is required to pay back the amount of food stamps issued, Ms. Carey said they are not required to do so. Food stamps are funded by the Federal government and Social Services staff have been very good at recognizing potential fraud. If an individual receiving the benefit is found to be fraudulent, the County is not held responsible, however, when they apply in the future for benefits they may be sanctioned for the amount of benefits previously received.

With regard to homeless individuals, Ms. Carey said they can assist to get them into a shelter. Benefits are not available immediately but the process of helping them can start. She said the Rapid ReHousing grant funds have been able to place them in a shelter and within 4-5 days obtain an apartment.

In response to Mr. Proto's question about the New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) Energy Assistance Program, Ms. Carey said her department has a good working relationship with NYSEG and is working on determining eligibility by reviewing client cases to determine eligibility. Although it is more work for the department it is a benefit to clients.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne shared her experiences several years ago when she required assistance and expressed appreciation to Ms. Carey for developing an emergency assistance intake that reduced the period of time clients were required to sit and wait in the offices. Ms. Carey expressed appreciation for the support received by the Legislature and recognized their hard work and tough choices during the 2011 budget sessions.

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Office for the Aging - Continued

Ms. Holmes said it is the time of year for individuals to enter open enrollment for Medicare Part D (drug coverage). Her department has been informing clients that between now and the end of the calendar year they should review their policies to determine whether it would be beneficial to change plans. Ms. Holmes noted there are 59 plans in the state to choose from, each with different formulas and rates. She noted it is somewhat easier to go to the Medicare website that allows individuals to input specific medications they are taking to make the comparison. The HIICAP program staff also is available in person or by telephone to clients if needed. Ms. Holmes said she has been doing public relation notices to make people aware of this review period.

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Human Services Coalition

Ms. Burston said the agency is working on a chart that would provide heating solutions that will be available at the Homeless and Housing Task Force meeting on December 1st. The Human Services Coalition meeting will take place on December 8th, at which time there will be an update on the Free Clinic, a presentation from the Cortland County Cancer Screening agency, and information on health referral changes that affect clients.

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Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk.