

Health and Human Services Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 12, 2010 3:30 PM
Scott Heyman Conference Room

APPROVED June 9, 2010

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Frank Proto	Chair	Present	
Will Burbank	Member	Present	
James Dennis	Member	Present	
Kathy Luz Herrera	Member	Present	
Nathan Shinagawa	Member	Excused	

Staff: P. Carey, D. Mengel, D. Bodner, Department of Social Services; F. de Aragon, ITCTC, J. Mareane, County Administrator; L. Holmes, Office for the Aging; R. DeLuca, Mental Health; N. Zahler, J. Johnson, K. Coleman, Youth Services.

Legislators: M. Robertson, Chair

Guests: Stacy Shackford, The Ithaca Journal; Jessica Yoon, Workers Center

Call to Order

Mr. Proto called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Changes to Agenda

Mr. Proto added a Department of Social Services Budget Adjustment to the agenda. He announced that Ms. Yoon, who spoke at the May 4th Legislature meeting, has asked for time to provide information on the restaurant owners booklet being developed at the Workers Center. He will add this item at the end of the agenda. Mr. Proto spoke of a project being undertaken by Cooperative Extension and Human Services agencies regarding work plans during the economic downturn; Ms. Robertson will address this issue during the meeting.

Ms. Herrera said that while she realizes the budget adjustment was added due to an error in submission to the new agenda program, additions to the agenda do not provide the level of transparency she would like.

Approval of the Minutes of April 14, 2010

It was MOVED by Mr. Burbank, seconded by Mr. Dennis, and unanimously adopted by members present, to approve the minutes of April 14, 2010, as amended. MINUTES APPROVED.

Chair's Report

Resolution Regarding Breast Cancer Screening

Mr. Proto said he has asked Mr. Shinagawa to prepare a resolution for the Committee to consider regarding the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) recommendations for breast cancer screening. As discussed previously, the CDC recommendation stated it is not necessary to have a screening at the age of 40; the Cancer Center and others do not believe this precedent should be made and wish to stress the importance of having the ability to have the earlier screenings.

IACC Day Care

Mr. Proto said the request for financial assistance from the County is still pending. Ms. Carey, Ms. Schlather, and Ms. Day-Hall are still meeting with IACC staff and it is hoped to be able to provide a positive response in the near future.

Report from the County Administrator

Mr. Mareane reported the County has sponsors in both the Senate and Assembly for the Mortgage Recording Tax increase legislation. Mr. Proto said he had received an e-mail asking for support of a resolution that would utilize the mortgage recording tax for transportation.

Human Services Agency Meeting

Mr. Proto said Ms. Schlather and Ms. Robertson have had discussions about having meeting(s) for the County's human service agencies to discuss State and County budget impacts.

The first meeting will take place on May 26th and will include funders, agency directors, and department heads. The group will be brainstorming to determine if there are other ideas or models available to consider, leading to very innovative thinking.

Ms. Robertson said this morning Mr. Mareane provided agency directors an abbreviated version of the presentation made at the Budget Retreat. She said there were many questions asked by those in attendance.

Mr. Dennis said he found the discussions interesting, noting some individuals had questions such as whether there could be a room tax applied to individuals utilizing Cornell University, noting the room tax is collected for the Statler Inn. In addition it was suggested that the County should plan for the future when in good financial shape. Although people do not like to hear that reductions are necessary they understand the County is willing to be open and discuss the situation.

Mr. Mareane said there is interest and an understanding that the groups are coming together to determine how to do things differently. The challenge will be how to take suggestions and channel them to make things productive.

Ms. Robertson thanked Mr. Mareane and staff who put together the information. She noted the information was very clear and understandable.

Department of Social Services

Monthly Statistics (DOC ID: 1995)

The Committee reviewed the statistics provided. Ms. Carey said the number of food stamp cases has increased, with over 400 cases per worker and the temporary assistance cases are leveling off. The new process of not being required to come in person to apply for medical assistance and the department has received many calls.

Ms. Carey said the County will become a "Managed Care" county over the next year. The Managed Care pays a fee to a group health insurance (Fidelis and Total Care) and a physician is assigned to an individual and can make referrals. As a result, there will only be a few fee-for-service Medicaid services available. She stressed it is better for individuals health to have an assigned physician; the primary care physician becomes more engaged and the client gets better care.

Mr. Proto spoke of the County years ago attempting to attract primary care physicians to the County without a great deal of success and that there are not many at the present time. Ms. Carey said the primary care physicians who are within the County prefer the Managed Care plan as it pays better and there is less paperwork involved than if they were a fee-for-service physician. Mr. Proto recalled that

former Senator Clinton had proposed legislation to attract primary care physicians; Senator Schumer also supported the effort but it was not acted upon.

Mr. Burbank asked what the total number potential food stamp recipients may be. Ms. Carey said she did not have the information, but has asked the State for it.

In response to Mr. Proto's question whether the increases occurring over the past four years is consistent in other counties, Ms. Carey said they are. She will provide members with a report of how the County compares to others within the State.

Ms. Robertson asked if the number of families requiring assistance under the Temporary Assistance/Safety Net programs is steadily increasing. Ms. Carey said the cases vary month to month, with the number of cases in Safety Net increasing as people reach the five-year limit for Temporary Assistance.

Ms. Robertson asked if there is any report that could compare how each state's statistics are in comparison to New York. Ms. Carey did not have the availability of a report. Mr. Mareane said there may be a report available through New York State Association of Counties as a result of the legislation to cap Medicaid.

RESOLUTION: BUDGET ADJUSTMENT - DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (DOC ID: 2010)

Ms. Carey said the \$250,000 is an adjustment related to the \$2 million dollar grant for the Housing First initiative. She said as a result of this initiative there has been a significant reduction in people in the shelter (eight individuals versus 20-30) Ms. Herrera asked what will occur in 2011 if the funds are drawn down for that period. Ms. Carey explained that staff has calculated what will be needed based upon the number of people being assisted. The goal is that some individuals will no longer need help due to employment, with the additional funds being able to help other individuals. At the end of March 569 households with over 1,300 individuals have been assisted. This program began in October 2009.

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Will Burbank, Member
SECONDER:	James Dennis, Member
AYES:	Frank Proto, Will Burbank, James Dennis, Kathy Luz Herrera
ABSENT:	Nathan Shinagawa

WHEREAS, pursuant to Administrative Manual Policy 05-02, budget adjustments exceeding \$5,000 require Legislative approval, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health and Human Services Committees, That the Director of Finance be directed to make the following budget adjustments on his books:

Department of Social Services

<u>Revenue Acct</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Amt</u>	<u>Approp Acct</u>	<u>Title(s)</u>
6010.44611	Federal: Food Stamps	\$ 46,740	6010.54442	Professional Services
6010.44689	Federal - Other Social Services	\$250,000	6010.54400	Program Expense

Explanation: Department of Social Services is only a funding conduit for Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Education program. The Federal and State governments have okayed a \$322,000 program, but only \$275,260 was anticipated in the County budget. The additional spending authority requested will be

reimbursed one-hundred percent by Federal funds targeted for this purpose. The rate of expenditure on the Ongoing Rental Assistance component of the Housing First initiative funded through the HPRP grant has exceeded expectations; we are therefore proposing to shift funds anticipated to be paid for this purpose in 2011 to the current year.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Consolidated Transportation Plan (DOC ID: 1998)

Mr. Proto said a resolution approving the amendments to the Consolidated Transportation Plan will be on the June agenda.

Mr. Mengel gave a presentation outlining the status of the 2006 Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) grant and the Coordinated Transportation Planning for January through April 2010. He explained the funds were made available through Washington DC as a Federal Transit Authority (FTA) Grant of \$544,963. This grant required the funds to be used for job access, New Freedom program, and for the elderly and individuals with disabilities. The proposal indicated \$297,201 would be used by Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) and \$247,762 be used by Tompkins County. By the beginning of 2010, \$379,250 of the grant was obligated, leaving a balance of \$165,713. The FTA, County and TCAT determined to reallocate the balance to eligible projects and the decision received FTA approval.

The Coordinated Plan Committee identified and discussed service gaps in community transportation with five priority areas: 1) access to affordable out-of-county transportation to medical services, other human services, commuting to work or school; 2) including human service transportation needs in a Regional Transportation Study sponsored by I-TCTC; 3) addressing issues relating to paratransit service to medical services in Tompkins County; 4) encourage development of family of mobility services including individual travel-training, volunteer driver services, ridesharing, Way2Go coordinated marketing for deploying new services, and TCAT rural demand response service; and 5) management of the Coordination Planning process. Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council (I-TCTC) conducted a public solicitation of proposals. Seven were received, reviewed, and accepted by I-TCTC as priority projects to use grant funds. The grant awards are as follows: Gadabout to provide service to Challenge, Inc.'s South Hill site for 2010-2011; Challenge Industries to provide support for travel/training for people with disabilities for 2010-2011; Catholic Charities to provide support for critical car repair program for 2010-2011; Women's Opportunity Center for a taxi voucher program to go to work for 2010-2011; Ithaca Carshare for the multi-agency Carshare Pilot Program for 2010-2011; FISH (Friends in Service Helping) to provide support for volunteer-driver medical transportation services for 2010-2011; and Department of Social Services for support to the Wheels for Work car loan program for 2010-2011.

Following the presentation Ms. Carey explained the Wheels-to-Work program, noting it provides financial assistance to low-income individuals to enable them to have reliable transportation to travel to and from work. It was further explained that all the projects are associated with employment, which is a requirement of the grant. The JARC funding is more flexible than other funds received for transportation.

Ms. Herrera said the TCAT Board had attempted to find a way to provide service to these populations. The Consolidated Plan is very exciting and innovative. She said by documenting the programs it would provide data on underserved populations that could assist in developing better service.

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Report on the Accomplishments of the 2009 Workforce Grant of the Office for the Aging, Funded by the Community Health Foundation of Central & Western New York (DOC ID: 1993)

Ms. Holmes reported on the Long Term Care Workforce Initiative that was developed to call attention to the development and retention of workers in the home health aide (HHA) and certified nurses assistant (CNA) fields. Various studies over the past few years have indicated a growing need for individuals to be Long Term Caregivers, however, statistics showed a 71 percent annual turnover rate for certified nurse's assistants, 91 percent of nursing homes not having adequate staff to cover basic care, 40-60 percent of home health aides leaving after less than a year on the job, and 80-90 percent of home health aides leaving within the first two years. In addition, the loss of one CNA is equivalent to an organizational loss of \$2,500 in recruitment and training costs.

Within Tompkins County, there was no central organization to provide aide certification training. As a result many home care agencies transported candidates out-of-county for certification training, due to the lack of regular training there was a missed opportunity with potential workers, and residential care facilities cited staff retention concerns.

The Community Health Foundation of Western New York "Fellows Action Network" has a goal of increasing the ranks of the long-term care workforce in Tompkins County and to equip organizations and facilities with the tools to improve the retention rates of direct care staff. Other objectives of the grant included the promotion of community collaboration, development of additional opportunities for HHA and CNA certification training within the County, development of a retention program to support direct care workers and implement at least one organization as a pilot program, and research and develop a way to streamline the direct care training ladder.

For the Community Collaboration portion, the kick-off included 40-50 agencies and businesses present; since then there have been regular planning meetings. A project assistant was placed at Tompkins Workforce NY who assisted with the recruitment and enrollment of students in the aide trainings and served as liaison between Workforce and long term care providers, as well as other organizations.

A SUNY Consortium grant in the amount of \$50,000 was received that allows each agency to cover twenty percent of the cost of the training for each potential student; eighty percent of the cost is covered by the grant. There has been various training for HHA and CNA since October 2009. In addition, the Cornell Retention Specialist Program has been an effective tool to train existing staff from organizations as a tool to reduce turnover; both home health agencies and residential care facilities have participated. A booklet on home health careers was developed and distributed at career fairs, educational facilities, and human service agencies.

The group is continuing to meet around projects such as the SUNY grant and the Retention Specialist Program and is working with CNYAHEC and BOCES to develop and promote direct care worker trainings. In addition, the group will also work with Cornell and Ithaca College to encourage students to consider careers in long term care and to work on a "universal worker" designation to improve career development/professional growth and attract workers to direct care.

Ms. Herrera asked what the range of pay is for long term care workers, noting often retention is directly related to salary and benefits. She spoke of individuals working off the books in other areas of the country. As demographic shifts continue it would help to continue a good quality of life by reaching out to the immigrant and other communities to keep the jobs in a good rate of wages. Ms. Holmes said wages are an issue, what is being looked at is approximately \$10 per hour for entry level. Ms. Holmes said the home care program at the Department of Social Services allows family and friends to provide services and receive wages; there is not a service like this for individuals not on Medicaid. It is possible

to speak to FLIC or the Women's Opportunity Center to be an intermediary for this type of worker. Ms. Herrera said it would provide flexibility and the opportunity to hire a worker with a specific language or cultural background.

In response to Mr. Proto's question about training, Ms. Holmes said after the first year of the grant she would be able to provide information on how many participants completed the training and placement. The SUNY Consortium grant funds are available each year, it would be up to the agencies to apply; some agencies who did not apply may be interested. The retention specialist training is geared toward staff and agencies strategically (HR, nursing supervisor, scheduler, etc.), with the learned skills applied to assist with retention within their agency.

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Youth Services

Municipal Youth Services Program Overview (DOC ID: 2002)

Ms. Cornell provided a brief overview of the Municipal Youth Services Program noting it is built as a pyramid program to assist at-risk youth. Recreation programs are open to every young person in the County, which exceeded 4,000 participants throughout the County in 2009. Youth development, the municipal youth services system, plans and organize activities that focus on life skills, serving 2,970 youth in 2009. As youth are more at risk, each level of service shows a decreasing number, with the most at-risk youth (on PINS and Probation) being the lowest number.

Ms. Johnson reviewed written information on the municipal youth program. The program was developed 21 years ago to provide services for youth in rural communities. A partnership was developed that required matching funds from municipalities for the programming as well creating local planning groups to determine what was the most appropriate development programs for their community. Most of the programs serve middle school youth. She said it has become a large community developed effort, engaging local citizens with local government, assisting in discussions between local government and schools, etc. The programs also empower the municipalities to help youth, who then often give back to their communities. Many of the local parks and gardens are taken care of by the youth, and rural farmers markets are staffed by the municipal youth services system.

Ms. Johnson spoke of the connections made by Youth Services and within each of the municipalities has helped other agencies who need to know appropriate information specific to each municipality, using the Youth Services Department as a resource center. She also said programs are designed to provide life skills for the youth. She noted the majority of students attending the programs generally do not continue their formal education and would most likely continue to reside within the county.

In response to Mr. Burbank's question of what challenges the Department is facing, Ms. Johnson said the funding to maintain programs and a steady workforce is the main challenge. If funding is further decreased it will require staff reductions from 40 hours to 30 or 35 hours per week, making it difficult to maintain a core group.

Ms. Zahler spoke of how in 1982 when the country and County were in the midst of a recession, Phil Shurtleff initiated the youth employment program, which continued through 2009. The program was created because it was known that youth would not be able to afford or find transportation to Ithaca for employment. Mr. Proto spoke of the innovative plans made to find alternative work programs for youth as a result of the loss of funding. Ms. Zahler spoke of how the development of the programs has built such good working relationships with municipalities and agencies. She spoke of the program managers being the unsung heroes of the programs.

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Workers Center – Restaurant Owners Manual Project

Ms. Yoon is seeking collaboration with the County on a Restaurant Owners Manual modeled after the one created in New York City. She said they are seeking endorsement by the Legislature, which would give it more validity in the eyes of restaurant owners as well as financial support and assistance to distribute it throughout the County. Mr. Dennis noted there is a County Restaurant Owner's Association. The purpose of the brochure is to assist restaurant owners' to understand the New York State's Public Health Laws as they apply to their businesses. The scope would include items such as wages, tips, allowable deductions, uniforms, as well as OSHA standards. This information would be presented in a "plain language" that would be understandable to everyone. She said although there are resources and associations not all restaurants are reached. Those found having violations are often smaller and do not belong to any particular group.

Ms. Herrera said there are restaurant owners who have said they do not understand some of the rules such as break time, mandatory sharing of tips, etc. It would be good for the County to support the efforts, however, financial support may not be available.

Mr. Dennis would like to see what is published by New York State Department of Labor to understand what is provided. Ms. Yoon said the intent is to take all the laws and put it into one publication; currently there is not a manual provided to the owners. Presently, training for restaurant owners costs \$25, which is sometimes difficult when starting a business.

Ms. Yoon said she would provide copies of the New York City Manual as well as the draft brochure to members of the Committee for their review. She clarified that they would like to have the County endorse the brochure, financial support if possible, and to use the Health Department to distribute the brochure to restaurants.

Mr. Dennis said those within the City would require building permits and certificates of occupancy; it would be a way to know what type of business it is. Ms. Herrera expressed her interest, however is concerned what role the County would have with regard to periodic updates, liability if wrong information were provided, etc. Although she believes it could be worked out it is an area to study. Ms. Herrera also suggested working with the Chamber of Commerce as well. Ms. Yoon said she is hoping to include them as well as other organizations.

Mr. Dennis said he would like to see what New York City has done; he did not think the County Charter addresses labor issues of this sort. Mr. Proto said he had noted that other than Personnel, the County does not deal with labor issues. He said the County may not be able to endorse the brochure due to the possibility of legal issues involved.

Ms. Herrera spoke of the State having completed investigations and found numerous violations at various restaurants; as a community that takes pride in the quality of life and social justice issues we should support local businesses. The County should look to determine what the obstacles may be to support the project, although it may not be in the form of an endorsement. She said perhaps indicating specific dates the information is provided would be appropriate. Ms. Herrera said for the Legislature to provide support such as this is good for economic development, tourism, and helps to bring the community together in a positive manner.

Ms. Yoon said it is anticipated to have a more finalized draft completed by the end of next week. They are hoping to have a person experienced in labor law review the brochure (either Kate Griffith or Angela Cornell from Cornell University), with the printing taking place in the fall when funds have been raised. She noted it might not be possible for the Workers Center to pay for the full printing of the

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brochure. Ms. Yoon said the intent is not to ask the County to take over the oversight of labor; the hope is to utilize the County information of restaurants within the County for the distribution portion.

Mr. Proto spoke of the Board of Health having to print information on regulations in several languages to accommodate the diverse ownership of restaurants. He said Cornell University assisted them in the process. It may require the Workers Center considering printing in various languages or have an available website.

Mr. Burbank was excused at this time (5:55 p.m.).

The Committee expressed a desire to see the New York City brochure and the draft brochure. It was noted there might be a need to have the brochure reviewed by the County Attorney and perhaps the Personnel Commissioner before an endorsement could occur.

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk