

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Health & Human Services

The regular meeting of the Health & Human Services Committee was held in the Hubbard Auditorium, Tuesday, May 4, 2021 at 8:30 AM.

Present: Mr. William Standinger	Chair of the Committee
Mr. Tracy Monell	Legislator
Mr. Dennis Mullen	Legislator
Ms. Loretta Sullivan	Legislator
Ms. Lori Morgan	Director of Community Services
Mr. Chris Korba	Director of Administrative Services - MH
Mr. Shawn Yetter	Commissioner of Social Services
Mr. Gary Grant	Deputy Commissioner of Social Services
Ms. Lisa McCafferty	Public Health Director
Mr. Denis McCann	Director of Administrative Services – PH
Guest: Ms. Marte Sauerbrey	Chair of the Legislature

MENTAL HYGIENE

1. Budget Status
 - Mr. Chris Korba noted the 2021 budget is tracking well with one unexpected expense – Court Ordered Criminal Psychiatric services. The patient started treatment on 12/31/2020. The January invoice only has been received and is for \$33,125. We believe the patient is still in care. Ms. Morgan shared that there are 2 more outstanding competency hearings. She is working with Mr. DeWind to help determine when these clients are ready to testify and getting them out of care sooner with progress reports. Legislator Mullen suggested discussing setting up a reserve account for these services at a Legislative Worksession. Committee Chair Standinger requested that Mr. Korba look back 5-10 years to get an average per year cost.
2. Personnel
 - Monica Leljedal, LMSW, started 4/12/2021. She will be in Spencer schools.
 - Anna Walter, LMSW, started 4/26/2021.
3. Critical Issues/Topics
 - 730 Criminal Psych (discussed above).
4. Resolutions
 - None.
5. Proclamations
 - Mental Health Awareness Month & Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week.

Legislator Standinger asked for a motion to approve the April 6, 2021 HHS Committee minutes as written. Motion made by Legislator Sullivan. Seconded by Legislator Mullen. Motion Carried.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Commissioner Yetter discussed caseloads, programmatic highlights, and personnel changes.

1. Budget

- Mr. Gary Grant shared that all lines are at or below budget except one Foster Care line (under budget on FC as a group). The State is getting caught up on payments. The most recent withhold from the State was 5%. Under COVID relief, there is an additional savings to MA weekly shares of \$15,000/week. Commissioner Yetter noted that nursing homes account for 30% of total MA costs on average. Mr. Grant explained that DSS will be upgrading to a new software product that will be cloud based rather than server based. The cost to move everyone off the current system and the software is \$160,000 including the first year's maintenance costs. This new system should be very beneficial to caseworkers especially as case activity has been escalating. The state may eventually mandate this product. The benefit to TCITS is they won't need to deal with a server anymore. Mr. Grant would like the ability to move money around from existing lines to pay for the initial \$160,000. It was suggested by Legislator Sullivan that Mr. Grant look into the cost of similar products that other counties are using.

2. Caseloads

- During April, Cash Assistance caseloads decreased 6 cases, with Family Assistance decreasing 1 case and Safety Net decreasing 5 cases. Cases are down 10% for the year.
- MA-Only increased 18 cases.
- MA-SSI decreased 7 cases.
- Total Individuals on Medicaid decreased 9 cases to 3,709.
- SNAP cases increased 13 cases.
- Day Care decreased 3 cases.
- Services remained flat at 309 cases.
- See Caseload Summary.

3. Programmatic Highlights

- ESG/ERAP – Commissioner Yetter noted that we just received notification that the State Legislature has voted to extend evictions until 8/31/2021. There are two programs to assist renters and landlords with rent and rental arrears. Applications will be out at the end of May – no details yet. Payments will go directly to the landlords however tenants and landlords must sign the agreement. We don't know at this point if the courts will be handling the applications. They have lengthy backlogs on evictions.
- Tioga Career Center Report – Unemployment rates in Tioga County remain lower than the state average. There is a need for employees in the county and Ms. McCall is working with employers to find employees. She also included information about remote working. Ms. McCall shared that most new UI claims are fraudulent. She works closely with people that have been hit by fraud. It was suggested that we get the word out to the community that they should not ignore UI claims that they receive that they didn't file.

4. Personnel Changes

- Heather Anderson, Secretary to the Commissioner & Director of Social Services, resigned effective 4/30/2021. Commissioner Yetter and Ms. Myers will start interviewing next week.

5. Resolutions

- Transfer of Funds (ESG).
- Amend Budget & Appropriate Funds (ERAP). Funding for outreach (\$120,000) to assist with applying for rental arrears.
- Amend Budget & Appropriate Funds (ESG-CV2).

6. Proclamations

- Elder Abuse Prevention Month. (Repeat).

PUBLIC HEALTH

Ms. Lisa McCafferty presented highlights and resolutions.

1. Personnel
 - N/A.
2. Program Comments
 - Agency Report for April 2021 was forwarded to the Committee.
 - Agency Financials for April 2021 were forwarded to the Committee. Mr. McCann noted that the budget is tracking well, without any surprises. We are starting to get back the 20% revenues that were withheld. EI continues to be under budget; already \$25,000 under budget for 2021. Pre-School Transportation is also going well as more families are driving their kids.
 - Provided update on COVID-19 activities and status, including vaccine distribution. PA had a data breach of 70,000 people as a result of contact tracing. NYS has around 12,000 contact tracers. Ms. McCafferty shared that 49% of the County (over 18) population has had at least 1 shot; this includes the numbers from Robert Packer. TCPH has been directed to vaccinate certain populations, such as over 65, inmates and homebound. Ages 16-18 must get parental consent and a parent must be with the child when they are vaccinated. TCPH is informing Emergency Services agencies about NYS community Paramedic program. The Medical Reserve Corp. has helped staff the vaccine clinics.
3. Resolutions
 - Abolish One Full-Time Public Health Nurse and Create Public Health Educator Position. This is a \$7,000 savings in salary. Needed to investigate and do contract tracing on potable water and lead cases.
4. Proclamations
 - American Stroke Month in Tioga County. (repeat).

ADJOURNED:

Regular Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail V. Perdue

Executive Secretary, Social Services