



Onondaga County Legislature

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HEALTH COMMITTEE MINUTES - MARCH 13, 2014 DANNY J. LIEDKA, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Corl, Dr. Chase, Ms. Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mrs. Tassone

ALSO PRESENT: Also see attached list

Chairman Liedka called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. *A motion was made by Ms. Williams, seconded by Dr. Chase to waive the reading and approve of the minutes of the proceedings of the previous committee meeting; MOTION CARRIED.*

1. COMMUNITY SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD:

- a. **Confirming Appointment to the Community Services Advisory Board (James A. Yonai, Ph.D., CRC)**

A motion was made by Ms. Williams, seconded by Dr. Chase, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

2. CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES: David Sutkowy, Commissioner

- a. **Amending the 2014 County Budget to Release Contingency Funds for a Department of Children and Family Services Deputy Commissioner Position (\$103,148)**

- Department of Children & Family Services includes Child Protective Services (investigates allegations of child maltreatment including abuse and neglect), Juvenile Justice (PINS), Hillbrook Juvenile Detention Center, Children's Mental Health Services, Youth Bureau and School Base Initiatives (County does w/respect to schools & education)
- Alignment approved in budget and asked to create Deputy Commissioner – approved but funding in contingency fund
- Asking to release the money to hire a Deputy Commissioner; would like to hire Linda Lopez
- Ms. Lopez resume attached – known for years; met when she was head of emergency services for Rescue Mission, then moved to Salvation Army in leadership position and last handful years been Director of Oncare
- Oncare - mental health initiative designed to improve access to mental health services
- Human Services community is service rich; within Mental Health there is a variety and complexity of needs; having range of services at different levels and working with families with different needs and levels of care is helpful
- Service rich can be confusing: knowing terminology, criteria, and how to access services
- Ms. Lopez single handedly coordinated Mental Health services in community; one achievement of Oncare is the est. of Access Center - single door entry for those in need of mental health services
- Access Center - rather than calling different orgs to figure out what they do and criteria, now they call Access with professional staff including a person from CPS and Juvenile Justice Services to be on the team; work with family to understand what the need is, and how community can respond
- Ms. Lopez helped coordinate services available and provide access to families; saved a lot of time

Ms. Williams asked if the two accounts listed on the resolution are the ones the money is coming out of. Chairman Liedka responded the money is in a contingency account, and those accounts are where the money is being transferred to. The total is bigger, but this is only a partial year so it is prorated. Chairman Liedka replied to Ms. Williams that the contingency account is being debited, and it will go into the accounts listed.

Mr. Corl asked if the salary is \$65,000 per year. Chairman Liedka answered it is great than that, and that is just the remainder of the year. The total with benefits is well over that. Mr. Sutkowy commented it is \$90,000, and it is a grade 37. Ms. McCluskey stated it is \$97,978, and it is a grade 37. Mr. Corl asked who Mr.

Sutkowy's assistant is currently. Mr. Sutkowy responded there is no one, and they are pretty flat. There is the Commissioner position, and there are the five service areas that are headed up. Ms. Lopez is heading up Children's Mental Health, and she will continue to do that as well as provide additional administrative oversight.

Chairman Liedka asked Mr. Sutkowy to explain how the look is different now versus a year ago. Mr. Sutkowy:

- 5 service areas: Child Protective, Juvenile Justice, Children's Mental Health, Youth Bureau & School Base Initiatives
- Organized around common population not funding streams; found that a lot of families that needed services from the County participated with multiple departments; to coordinate services effectively it was inconsistent; not effective
- i.e. Children in child welfare system, but also arrested and in juvenile justice system
- Level of communication – different worlds and information systems; staff didn't know what individuals were involved; interaction changed w/families between depts; no integration; asking families to do things, sometimes in conflict
- Whole point of realignment to change behavior; designed to change approach
- Management team – each service area has a mission and goals; managers job to ensure meeting those goals as effectively and efficiently as possible
- Second major point of reorganization – make connections between the areas (Welfare/Juvenile Justice/Mental Health)
- Start pulling things together; doing different things with staff and policies; exciting opportunities and ambitious agenda
- Would like Ms. Lopez in position to move on this; looking at how to stay connected with families longer
- Good with dealing with crisis; systems to work with families in crisis, but it's not enough just to deal with crisis
- Child could still be struggling; maybe not crisis but still struggle - which could manifest at school and with the family
- Think about how to help families and what resources to use; does no good if doing the job to address a crisis, but child still continues to struggle, doesn't graduate high school and has no prospect of a job

Chairman Liedka commented to have that type of ownership of a family, and help break down cycles, it will give the kids a better chance than what they would have had. The return may not be seen right away, because it will take the child to grow to see how the changes took effect, but in the long run it will make a significant difference. Chairman Liedka likes the direction the department is heading, and the changes are all for the better.

Mr. Corl stated he has seen a grandparent or relative who wants to take custody of a child, but they are reluctant because the department disappears. Mr. Corl asked if they envision potentially staying involved with the family when a grandparent or aunt gets custody; to try and help them through that transition. Mr. Sutkowy responded yes, and they need to do a better job. There are 250 children in foster care, which used to be 800. There are also 250 kids living with relatives. Mr. Sutkowy responded to Dr. Chase that they do not provide the same support to relatives who are caring for their relative's children as they do to foster care. Mr. Sutkowy stated they need to change that, and it is on their agenda. Dr. Chase commented some of the relatives may be just as much of a risk as the family the child came from.

A motion was made by Ms. Williams, seconded by Dr. Chase, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE M. MCNAMARA, Assistant Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **Health**DATE: **3/13/14**

NAME (Please Print)

DEPARTMENT/AGENCY

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
D. Sorky	Children & Family S.
L. Lopez	Children & Family Services
Amy McCluskey	DMB
John Courtman	Montana Co. Medical Society