



# Onondaga County Legislature

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Clerk

J. RYAN McMAHON, II  
Chairman

KATHERINE M. FRENCH  
Deputy Clerk

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## WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE 2017 TENTATIVE BUDGET HEALTH DEPARTMENTS A.M. – SEPTEMBER 22, 2016 DAVID H. KNAPP, CHAIRMAN

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Jordan, Mr. May, Mr. Shepard, Ms. Williams, Mrs. Ervin

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Kilmartin

**ALSO PRESENT:** Chairman McMahon, Mrs. Tassone, Mrs. Rapp, Mr. Liedka, Dr. Chase; also see attached

Chairman Knapp called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**Social Services – Department of Economic Security:** Sarah Merrick, Commissioner; Brian Lynch, Director of Administrative Services; Taviot Jackowski, Budget Analyst (4-73)

*PROPOSED 2017 ONONDAGA COUNTY BUDGET  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES – ECONOMIC SECURITY  
PREPARED STATEMENT FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2016*

### INTRODUCTION

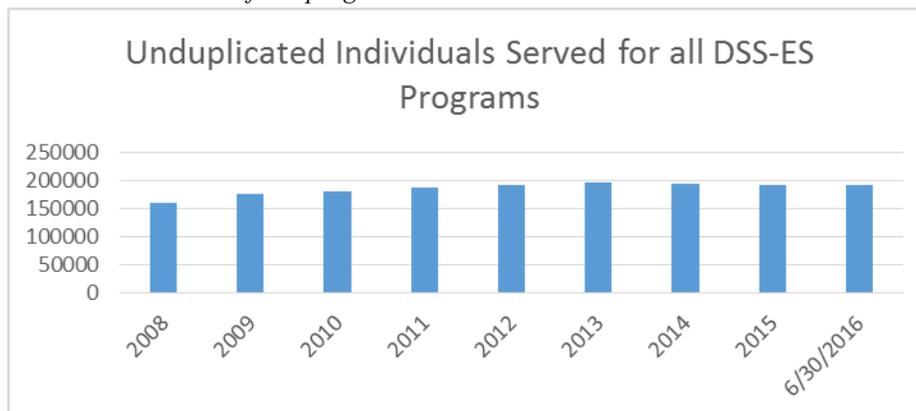
*Good Morning, Chairman Knapp and fellow Ways and Means members. Thank you for the opportunity to present the 2017 County Executive’s Department of Social Services – Economic Security’s proposed budget. Over the next few minutes, I will be giving you an update on program trends and activities, key accomplishments, and future plans. I am keenly aware of the financial pressures that are evident in the proposed 2017 budget but I ask that you keep in mind that no program in operation in DSS-ES is optional. Federal and State public benefit programs are mandated, and in turn, it is the responsibility of DSS-ES to administer them.*

### PROGRAMS

*This morning I would like to highlight the trends of a few of our key programs. For your information, Attachment A (page 9) gives you the detailed information on applications processed, as well as cases and individuals served since 2008. As you review the corresponding program budget lines, you will see slight adjustments based on these trends.*

#### **Unduplicated Individuals Served**

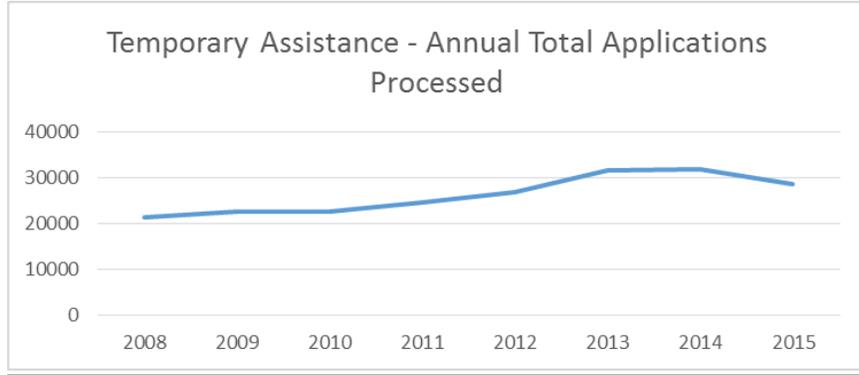
*As illustrated below, even with an improving economy, the Department continues to serve approximately 41% (192,689 individuals\*) of our County’s population with one or more of our programs.*



*\*OTDA collects monthly data on unduplicated individuals for all programs except Child Support. Child Support is tracked only by cases therefore, each case has been calculated at 2.7 individuals to derive an unduplicated count for all programs.*

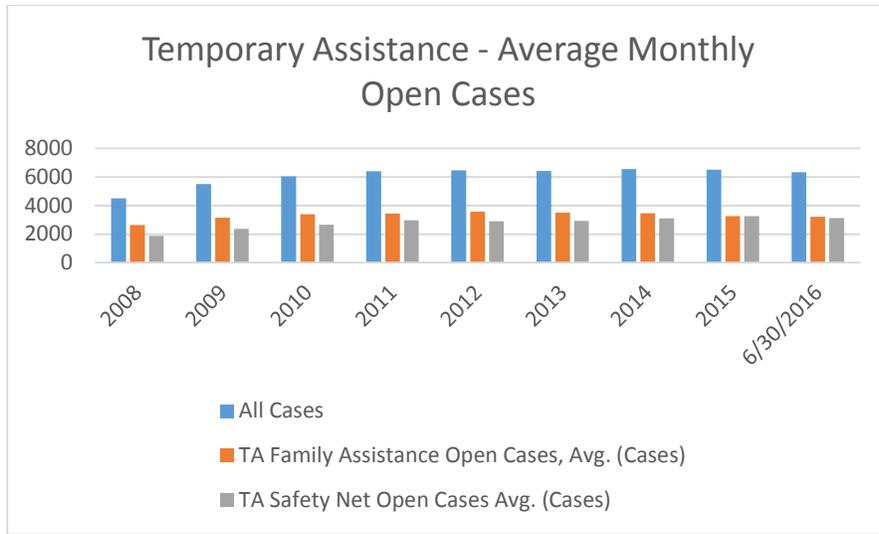
#### **Temporary Assistance Annual Applications**

Since the 2008 recession, an increased number of individuals continue to seek assistance. Even if those individuals do not meet the strict eligibility requirements, every application must be reviewed and a determination on eligibility must be made within specific Federal and State timeframes.



**Temporary Assistance, Average Monthly Open Cases**

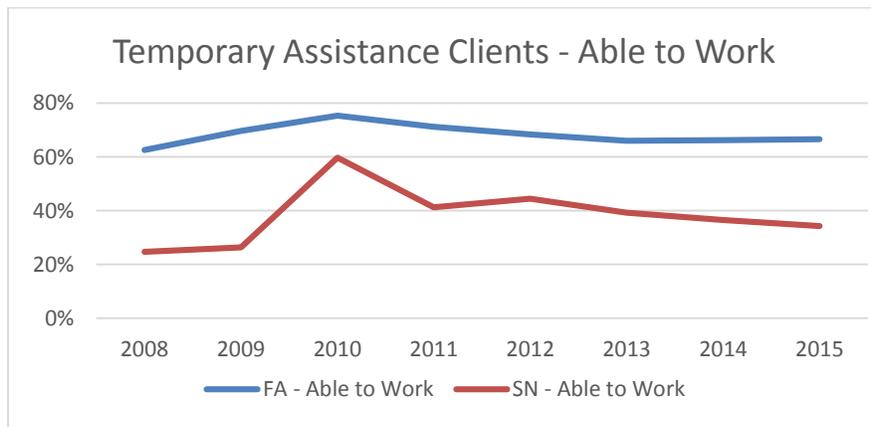
The monthly temporary assistance caseload continues to exceed six thousand. The safety net portion (i.e. single individuals, childless couples and families exceeding the federal five year limit) of the caseload is almost equal to the family assistance caseload.



Child only cases represent over 21% of our open temporary assistance cases. These clients either have parents on SSI or the child is in the care of a relative /family friend, grandparent/aunt/cousin. In some of these cases, residing with a relative is an alternative to foster care and allows the family to stay intact.

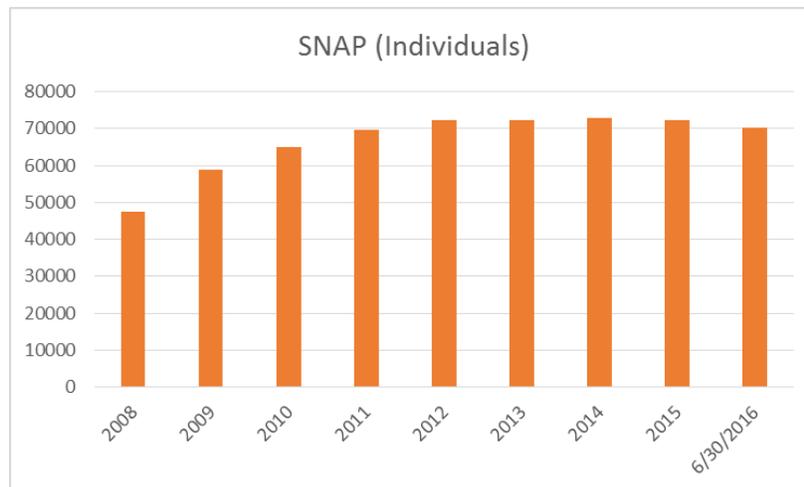
**Temporary Assistance Clients-Able to Work**

DSS-ES continues to emphasize employment and, in that effort, continues their partnership with JOBSplus! The chart below illustrates the changing demographics of our population with more clients deemed exempt from work requirements due to a short or long term disability. An increased number of exemptions results in the continuation of increased DSS-ES caseloads.



**SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, formally known as Food Stamps)**

The SNAP caseload is the largest benefit program the Department manages.

**Day Care**

- This is a benefit that enables low-income households to remain employed. In 2015, a monthly average of children receiving child care subsidies was 3,840.
- NYS implementation of the Federal Child Care and Development Act has been delayed. New regulations will go into effect October 2017. The proposed budget recommends an increase in the day care program by approximately \$700,000 to address the eligibility redetermination period increasing from 6 months to 15 months. Currently 21% of cases close at the 6 month redetermination period.

This increase will allow us to maintain our current caseload. The department will monitor the implementation of this change and the financial impact going forward.

**HEAP**

During last year's heating season, 40,000 households were served. The number of households served is based on the Federal and State annual allocation and not the community need.

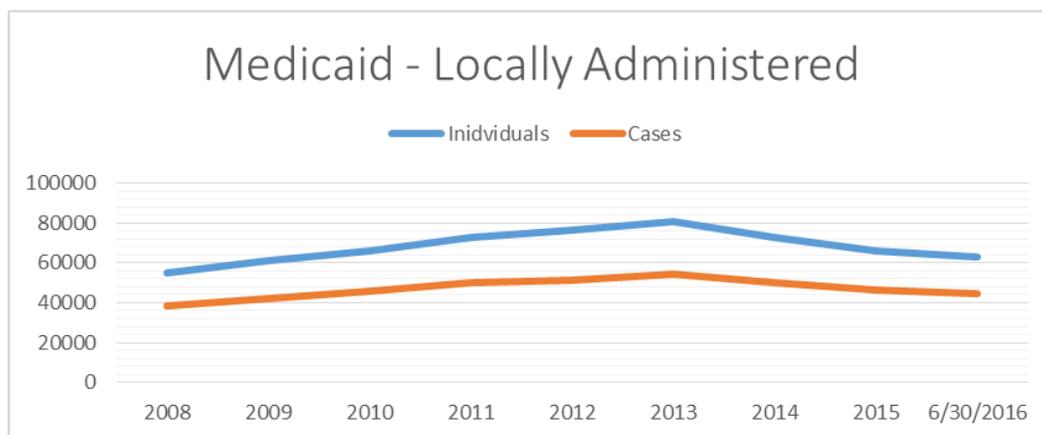
**Child Support**

Currently approximately 37,000 open cases are administered. Last year alone, over \$46 million was collected and redistributed to the custodial parent, providing financial support to our community's children.

**Medicaid**

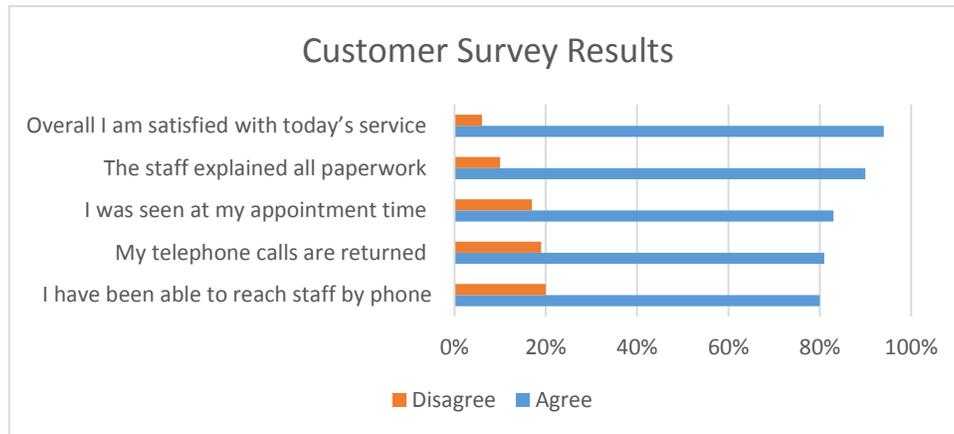
In October 2016 NYS Exchange Marketplace will take over the administration of all open cases for households with adjustable gross income. It is estimated that approximately 17,000 additional cases will be transferred to the State over a one year period. The application process and maintenance of open cases for households with non-adjustable income, as well as those applying for Chronic Care coverage (nursing home care), will remain the responsibility of local counties. This number is currently estimated at 28,000 open cases.

It is also important to note that the latest data from NYS Department of Health indicates that **nearly 125,000** Onondaga County residents have **some form of Medicaid health care coverage**. The budget line for "Medical Payments by State MMIS", increased over \$1.2 million due to the weekly share being increased by the State and a reduction in the amount of aid from the Federal government.



**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**1) *Focus on Customer Service*

Earlier this year, all 417 DSS-ES staff completed a 4 part training series regarding delivering exemplary Customer Service. One way the quality of DSS-ES customer service performance is monitored is the utilization of survey results completed by visiting clients. To date over **1248 total surveys have been returned**. As you can see from the chart below, the outcome is positive. Through client feedback, we can focus on keys areas to continue to improve.

a. *Kiosks*

- *Launched in March 2015, over 81,000 individuals have utilized the kiosks through automated scanning of documents, for an average of 227 individuals daily.*
- *Since the inception, the following user friendly improvements have been made:*
  - *a Spanish screen has been added*
  - *clients now have the ability to print Temporary Assistance and SNAP budgets,*
  - *receipts are generated more quickly*

b. *Call Monitoring*

- *During 2015, the Temporary Assistance, SNAP, HEAP and Medicaid call centers handled approximately 390,000 calls which constitutes a large part of our operations. We are now able to monitor telephone calls for accuracy, quality and training needs. A statistically significant call volume is being monitored. Calls are monitored for the following determinants:*
  - *etiquette, clarity/accuracy, sensitivity to diverse needs and access/communication barriers and compliance with standards, policies and regulations.*
- *This has been a key tool in improving our training and professionalism. Later this year, a customer survey feature will be put in place, giving us another tool to monitor effectiveness.*

2) *Focus on Improving Efficiencies*a. *LEAN*

*Thanks to your support earlier this year, the position of Director of Quality Assurance has been filled. In addition to the focus on customer service I just outlined above and developing a unified staff training system, one of the main responsibilities of this position, is to spearhead process improvement projects using the LEAN method.*

*Due to the high number of Temporary Assistance applications received, and the time involved, the first Lean project initiated over the summer. We have just started the process of incorporating suggested changes and believe we will see the following improvements over the next year:*

- Decreased client wait time
- Greater utilization of systems
- Increased efficiency with improved application processing time
- Engaging area non-profits to assist potential applicants

Some of the future Lean projects that have been discussed and the groundwork has begun include:

- Temporary Assistance Undercare (open cases) review. This project will include:
  - Following the client inquiry process from A-Z to include following the paper path of every action and each task assigned and taken
- DSS-ES mail flow review

#### b. Sheltering the Homeless

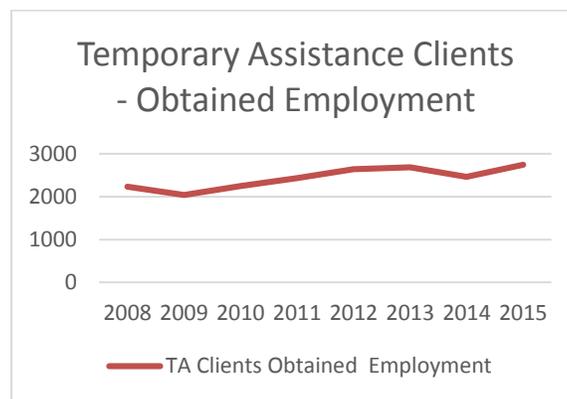
Departmental procedures regarding homeless and homeless shelters were revamped, resulting in decreases in the number of individuals served over the last year. In addition, the Department worked closely with Catholic Charities, Rescue Mission and The Salvation Army to successfully administer the Governor's Executive Order 151 in effect earlier this year. Consistent with the order and our community's standard, I am pleased to state that all homeless individuals and families were sheltered when the temperature (including wind chill) reached 32 degrees or below this past winter.

### FUTURE PLANS

#### 1) JOBSplus!

In October, JOBSplus! will re-locate to the Civic Center (13<sup>th</sup> Floor – Training Unit) and County Office Building (4<sup>th</sup> Floor – Job Coaches.) Temporary Assistance clients will now have a “one stop shop” experience where they can see their DSS-ES staff for eligibility purposes and the JOBSplus! staff regarding employment. This will result in a more seamless process, as well as improved efficiencies between DSS-ES and JOBSplus!

The chart below illustrates the annual number of clients gaining employment. At this time, it is also important to note that local employers, in most cases, require a high school diploma. Nearly three quarters of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance are without a high school diploma.



#### 2) Waiting Room Tracking System

A new client tracking system is being developed with a projected fall rollout. This system will be used in all DSS-ES and JOBSplus! waiting rooms for the purpose of tracking client volumes and wait times. Additionally, it will provide real time data regarding times spent at various stages of our operations, allowing the ability to deploy staff in the most efficient manner. The data collected will allow us to build a more efficient operation, target employees who need more training, and improve the client experience.

#### 3) New Employee Onboarding Program

A formal onboarding program to orient new employees to our mission, programs and expectations has been developed. The goal is to help new hires get adjusted to their new environment in a more timely fashion, improve early performance, reduce turnover and encourage a longer tenure with the department.

This morning I shared the methods by which we are working to develop more and greater efficiencies. This has been done to try to keep up with demand. Over the last eight years, with the exception of Medicaid, the Department has averaged a 20% increase in need and a loss of 46 employees, or 10% of our workforce.

Since our programs are mandated by the Federal and State governments, staff expenditures are highly reimbursed. On average for every dollar spent on salaries and fringes, .80 cents is returned to the County.

At this time, I want to extend my deepest appreciation to all departmental staff for their hard work and serving our most vulnerable community members. Thank you for your time and attention. I will be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Attachment A									
Total Individuals Unduplicated Counts, Monthly Average									
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016	
160,972	175,558	181,483	188,165	191,659	196,698	195,032	191,770	192,689	
20% increase, 2008 to 2016									
Temporary Assistance-Applications Processed									
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016	
21,289	22,670	22,583	24,593	26,725	31,678	31,849	28,539	11,845	
34% increase, 2008 to 2015									
Temporary Assistance-Family Assistance Open Cases, Monthly Average (2.7 Individuals per case)									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016
Individuals	6,557	8,197	9,024	9,197	9,663	9,639	9,440	8,848	8,974
Cases	2,631	3,152	3,398	3,445	3,568	3,501	3,455	3,262	3,287
25% case increase, 2008 to 2016									
Temporary Assistance-Safety Net Open Cases, Monthly Avg. (Single Individuals & Childless Couples and Families exceeding 5 year Federal Limit (1.8 individuals per case)									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016
Individuals	3,177	3,919	4,367	4,788	5,021	5,142	5,644	5,766	5,808
Cases	1,876	2,369	2,653	2,964	2,898	2,922	3,096	3,261	3,370
80% case increase, 2008 to 2016									
SNAP(Food Stamps)-Applications Processed									
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016	
14,718	17,735	18,565	21,133	21,818	22,514	24,500	23,525	11,431	
60% increase, 2008 to 2015									
SNAP(Food Stamps) Open Cases									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016
Individuals	47,480	58,950	64,890	69,628	72,166	72,452	72,860	72,230	70,141
Cases	22,437	28,282	31,682	34,944	36,627	37,303	38,086	38,028	36,793
64% case increase, 2008 to 2016									
Subsidized Child Care Open Cases, Monthly Avg.									
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016	
3,116	3,245	3,443	3,721	3,927	3,785	4,017	3,840	3,789	
Heating Energy Assistance Program (HEAP),Household served per Heating Season									
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		
37,353	64,088	45,028	40,519	38,048	36,813	40,445	36,940		
Child Support Open Cases & Annual Collections									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	6/30/2016
Households	33,977	34,912	34,363	35,008	35,703	36,341	36,826	37,053	37,123
Total Collections	\$48,138,665	\$47,459,836	\$47,198,279	\$47,487,866	\$47,509,412	\$46,453,198	\$45,453,198	\$46,030,248	27,901,795
9.6% Increase, 2008 to 2016									
Medicaid Open Cases									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013*	2014	2015	6/30/2016
Individuals	54,779	61,254	66,150	72,687	76,195	80,716	72,700	66,140	62,986
Cases	38,157	42,361	45,976	49,977	51,489	54,220	49,904	46,178	44,666
17% case increase, 2008 to 2016									
*Start of NYS takeover									

Mrs. Ervin has experienced the second floor kiosks, and thinks it is wonderful. Someone is there to help with the kiosk, and it takes minutes versus being in a long line. The customer service is improving, and needs to continue to get better, because there's nothing worse than being treated like less than a human being. Mrs. Ervin asked if there is enough room for all the traffic. Ms. Merrick responded it will increase the traffic about 200 – 300 people per day, and it will be monitored. The building was built for public service. There will be a tracking system, and they are going to try to build efficiencies. Mrs. Ervin stated the numbers are what they are, there is federal aid, and she appreciates all that they do.

Chairman Knapp stated there will be an increase in traffic flow (JOBSPPlus), and asked if the new intake center will alleviate some of this. Ms. Merrick:

- Yes; looking at architectural plans on second floor redesign – will have to use 2 floors to spread out approx. 300 – 600 individuals a day that come to Civic Center for benefits; as well as assistance with employment (JOBSPPlus)
- Address traffic flow, so traffic stays on lower floors; will take few years to figure out

Ms. Rooney commented that moving Probation to the first floor of the County Office Building has made a huge impact. None of the people reporting for probation use the elevators in the Civic Center, which has allowed for the move of JOBSPPlus; traffic no longer exists on those elevators. Chairman Knapp asked if any other operations are there, or are moving there. Ms. Rooney replied part of JOBSPPlus will be on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the County Office Building, but also Chronic Care for Medicaid and HEAP. Ms. Merrick stated they are trying to keep the traffic in the County Office Building lower. JOBSPPlus will have fifty or less people a day meeting with job coaches. The volume will be in the Civic Center, because of the workshops and training. Chairman Knapp asked if the KOB is able to handle traffic flow, and Ms. Rooney answered it is a smaller footprint, but it can handle the traffic.

Ms. Merrick responded to Mr. Liedka's questions regarding the call center:

- Call Center is all County workers; titles: Income Maintenance Workers and Income Maintenance Specialists
- Calls are taken by Income Maintenance Workers; when issues are more complicated, they will be transferred to Income Maintenance Specialists; individuals in these titles are the workforce of the department

Chairman Knapp said there are ~400 homeless a night currently, and asked what the capacity is in the winter with the various partners. Ms. Merrick replied probably 500, plus they have relations with a few local hotels. Hotels are used when over capacity, because the homeless have to be housed in the winter. No one will be on the streets.

Chairman Knapp stated Ms. Merrick has 109 employees that are eligible for retirement, and asked if she has had any discussions to what the plan is. Ms. Merrick:

- Not #1 worry; looks like most will take the early retirement, and they have knowledge, experience, personal efficiencies
- When there's a clear idea of who the individuals are, the department will begin planning replacements; 98% of workforce comes off Civil Service tests (off lists); starting to prepare to keep people in the right positions

Chairman Knapp stated supplies and materials are going up significantly for 2017 from 2015 actual, and asked if that is kiosks. Ms. Merrick:

- Percentage of computers replaced every year; state system - state pushes new programs requiring up to date computers; almost 1,000 computers in all of the departments linked to state system
- Replacement plan to gradually replace those computers, not all 1,000 at once
- Additionally a few things needed for DMV tracking system; large TVs and other technical equipment

Chairman Knapp talked to Mr. Morgan about the early years of the Affordable Care Act being a benefit to the County (bottom line), because of the increased federal contributions. Is that starting to taper off. Mr. Morgan:

- Cap is the cap; does not grow anymore; state not giving County a good idea of what the benefit is
- Since started it's been an estimate; changing weekly payments based on estimate – not the cap
- Enhanced Federal Reimbursement, as a result of ACA, spun up additional federal revenue allowing the County to have an expense in the budget less than the cap
- Problem – state continues to adjust what benefit is; been estimated for a year now; trying to get bearings of what the real value of it is; this year will be higher than budget; cap is cap and expense below cap, but not as much as anticipated
- State trying to determine what their value is to each county; Enhanced Federal Reimbursement related to specific population that was expanded in most states; NY already covered those individuals
- State trying to nail down benefit for each county based on the number of those individuals; having difficult time doing

Ms. Merrick responded to Chairman Knapp's questions regarding day care:

- Will get more information soon; state keeps delaying and not giving information
- Tried to do best guestimate to avoid waiting list; \$716,000 is probably what is needed for next year, but 2018 may be well over a \$2 million increase
- State still trying to get waivers and adjustments from federal government, but time running out; think 2018 will be the year; it is a change in federal eligibility
- Child Care Block Grant Act implemented 2 years ago (updated act implemented 20 years ago) raised standards on everything; emphasizing quality early childhood education through child care, which is great, but federal government did not put additional money into it; passed it onto state as unfunded mandate

Ms. Merrick replied to Chairman Knapp that looking at the HEAP chart, the numbers are solely dictated by the allocation. The allocation is the state, and it ebbs and flows depending on what the state has available. Ms. Merrick used every dollar. Unlike any other eligibility programs, HEAP has a fixed allocation. Chairman Knapp asked if the budget was exceeded, and Ms. Merrick said they maximized what the state gave them.

Chairman Knapp asked why the professional services line increased \$300,000 from 2015 actuals. Ms. Merrick:

- Trying to build efficiencies through technology; more money with vendor called Vintech
- Language and interpretation costs are going up; must have this available; regulations in place, and latest is Civil Rights Act Title VI; more and more welcoming refugees; many languages
- Professional service line has no new contracts; basically includes vendors needed to use for requirements
- Vintech – outside technology company who built case management system; currently building client tracking system on the system already in place

Chairman Knapp asked what the \$75,000 was for the local direct support grant projects (\$0 this year). Ms. Jackowski answered it was a grant that the department no longer receives, so the money is not in the budget.

Chairman Knapp asked about other miscellaneous revenues; line 0057. Ms. Merrick:

- Brought in JOBSPlus – they will pay rent through intergovernmental line
- Rent money coming from OCC, who is fiscal agent for JOBSPlus; OCC is educational institution, able to leverage large fed and direct; will capture revenue and pay for rent costs; reflect in budget

Mr. Morgan commented that Ms. Merrick is correct:

- With JOBSPlus moving into building, it does not make sense for Facilities to charge JOBSPlus, then JOBSPlus charge the County back; when it was offsite it made sense
- Any internal building cost (i.e. Security, facilities) will be charged directly interdepartmentally; they will claim reimbursement as if it were a contract expense, but revenue is increasing because JOBSPlus has to pay those costs

Ms. Merrick responded to Chairman Knapp's questions regarding grants:

- Department administers HUD grants for local Homeless Coalition; next year it will be moved to United Way of Central NY; currently County is fiscal agent for coalition
- Grants went up, because allocations have gone up; next year will be down to hardly anything, because those HUD grants will be transferred

Chairman Knapp asked about able bodied adults without dependents. Ms. Merrick:

- Affects individuals who receive SNAP benefits
- Last year anticipated thousands of individuals who would have to be assisted by JOBSPlus to get employed, otherwise they would lose their SNAP benefits
- State able to get waiver for City of Syracuse for 1 year; department closed about 700 able bodied individuals cases in County; rest are being assisted in getting employed
- Need to anticipate if the federal government does not continue to give the City a waiver; unemployment rate continues to go down; would then have 5,000 cases to address

**Chairman Knapp requested a list of their contracts.**

Mrs. Tassone asked how they are doing with fraud cases. Ms. Merrick responded that they continue to address fraud on a regular basis, and they continue to recoup \$1 million. It is a combination of denying the benefit or closing the case (and attempting to recoup the money). The average is \$1 million per month. Mrs. Rapp asked if it is reflected in the budget. Ms. Merrick does not know if it is. Ms. Merrick said she can get Mrs. Rapp a breakdown.

Ms. Rooney corrected Ms. Merrick that the increase in the grants budget is part of the URI funds received; \$30 million for antipoverty (\$6 mil/yr. for 5 years). The money has been included in the revenue and appropriation.

Chairman McMahon would like clarification on what the County is doing with the URI funds. Ms. Rooney:

- Announcement made; County working with state on process to allocate money; proposing this would mirror how County allocates funds with Youth Bureau; in existence since 1968, and partnership with 24 members
- Members appointed for Economic Inclusion Board would make decisions about funds on annual basis focused on eradication of poverty; waiting on approval from NYS that they agree with County's process of allocating funds
- Specific guidelines on how money can be used, which will be forthcoming
- All 5 counties will be allocating funds for job opportunities, housing initiatives, etc.; all things focused on poverty and economic opportunity
- Assuming all housing agencies (i.e. Community Development) would apply and would be eligible

Chairman Knapp called for a short recess at 10:19 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:41 a.m.

**Department of Ault & Long Term Care Services:** Lisa Alford, Commissioner; Barry Beck, Deputy Commissioner; Pete Headd, Deputy Commissioner of Aging; Sandy Miller-Martens, Administrative Officer (4-87)

**Onondaga County  
Department of Adult &  
Long Term Care Services**

**2017 Budget Presentation  
Lisa D. Alford  
Commissioner  
September 22, 2016**

**Department Mission:**

To Provide Support to Improve the Quality of Life and Overall Well-Being for Adults and Those With Long-Term Care Needs.

*We accomplish this, and support our community, through advocacy, planning, coordination, program funding and direct services.*

**Department Units**

- Office for Aging
- NY Connects
- Long Term Care Resource Center
- Mental Health Services
- Adult Protective Services
- Veterans Service Agency

**Office for Aging**

Provides:

A Wide Range of Cost Effective, Community Based Services That:

- Delay the High Expense of Institutional Care
- Supports Aging Well
- Assist Caregivers and Their Families

*The Office for Aging provides a wide range of cost effective, community-based services to seniors age 60 and older. Our programs include Home Delivered Meals, more than thirty Senior Dining Sites, EISEP – the Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program and HIICAP which is our Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program. Our Community Services include Neighborhood Advisors and Transportation. All of these programs help to delay the high expense of institutional care. We also support Senior Center activities and provide Falls Prevention education. And finally the Office for Aging assists our caregivers, with respite both in the home and at social adult day programs. We provide support groups, family caregiver planning and offer The Institute for Caregivers which provides no cost education and training to current and future caregivers.*

## Mental Health Services

### Provides:

- Planning, Quality Improvement and Training Services
- Single Point of Access (SPOA) Services
- The Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Program
- Contracts for Community Services

*Mental Health Services Provides planning, quality improvement, and training services for mental health, substance use disorders and developmental and intellectual disabilities. We provide access to case management and residential services to individuals with serious mental illness under the Single Point of Access services. Mental Health offers court ordered and enhanced care coordination services to individuals under the Assisted Outpatient Treatment Program. And we facilitate contracts for community services for those, age 18 or older, with mental illness, substance use disorders and developmental and intellectual disabilities.*

## NY Connects

### Provides:

- Information, Assistance and Resources on Long Term Care Services for Any Age
- In-home Nursing and Social Assessments

## Long Term Care Resource Center

### Provides:

- On-Going, Medically Based, Care Management for Children/Adults with Disabilities
- Personal and Consumer Directed Home Care Services

*NY Connects provides a one stop shop or “No Wrong Door” offering free and unbiased information and assistance for those, of any age, seeking Long Term Care services. It also offers in-home nursing and social assessments to assist families in choosing appropriate levels of care. The Long Term Care Resource Center provides ongoing medically-based care management for children and adults, with disabilities, who are receiving personal and consumer directed home care services.*

## Adult Protective Services

### Provides:

At Risk Individuals, Who Have a Physical or Mental Impairment, Services to Keep Them Safe From Harm Due to Their Inability to Care for Themselves or Because of Neglect, or Abuse, by Others:

- In-Home Investigations
- Case Management
- Legal Interventions
- Guardianships
- Referrals to Community Services

*Our Adult Protective Services unit provides at risk individuals, who have a physical or mental impairment, services to keep them safe from harm due to their inability to care for themselves or because of neglect, or abuse, by others. We conduct in-home investigations, offer case management and legal interventions, when appropriate. Adult Protective Services acts*

as a guardian when a person has no one else, who is appropriate, to make legal or financial decisions for them. And we collaborate with, and make referrals to, internal and external agencies that can provide further assistance.

### Veterans Service Agency

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Provides:  
Assistance to Veterans, and Surviving Spouses, With:

- Benefit Claims
- Military Records
- Burial
- Referrals

The Veterans Service Agency assists Veterans with preparing their claims for Federal, State, or Local benefits. We help surviving spouses of Veterans with information and to apply for survivor's benefits. We assist Veterans with obtaining copies of their official military records and other related papers. The Veterans Service Agency works with honorably discharged county Veterans and their spouses who wish to be buried in the Onondaga County Veterans Memorial Cemetery. And we refer Veterans to agencies and organizations for other needed services.

### 2016 Key Impact Areas

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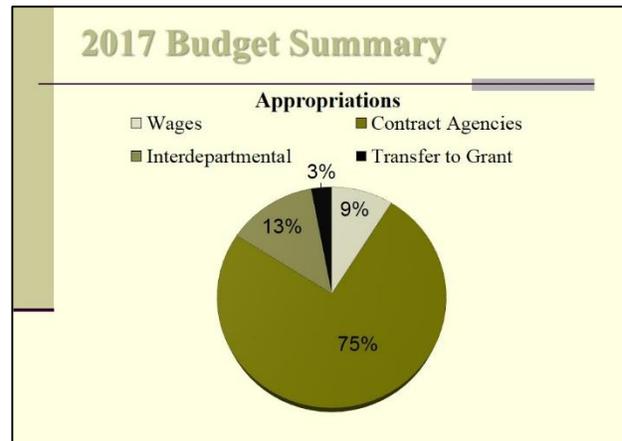
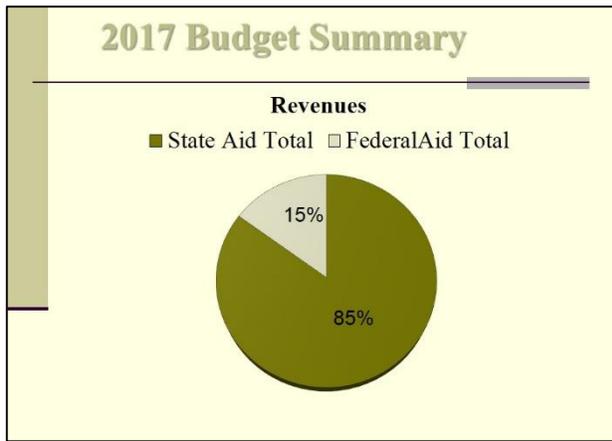
Aging Services - Served More Seniors

Mental Health - Peer Engagement

Adult Protective - 18% Increase in Assigned Cases

Veterans Services - Homeless Veterans Outreach

Now I'll share several key accomplishments from the past year. An aging Onondaga County population has meant an increase in the demand for Office for Aging services. In 2016 people needing transportation increased by 14%. Those needing home care services by 18%. The number of people served by our Neighborhood Advisors increased 15% and frail seniors needing Home Delivered Meals went up 26%. In 2016 the Mental Health unit initiated On-Call Peer Outreach Services, a new program developed by the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. Now an experienced peer works with hospital emergency department personnel to help connect individuals in a substance use disorder crisis to appropriate addiction treatment. In 2015 we saw a 5% increase in the number of Adult Protective referrals. In 2016 the number of referrals remained the same but the number of cases, that met our acceptance criteria, increased by 18%. The addition of a part time Veterans Service Officer allowed the Veterans Service Agency the opportunity to partner with Catholic Charities on a program to reach and assist homeless veterans.



### 2017 Key Budget Adjustments

Personnel	• Decrease of \$379,758
Contractual Expenses	• Decrease of \$1,088,800
Federal Aid	• Decrease of \$1,169,373
State Aid	• Increase of \$143,282

Our key funding adjustments are as follows:

*In our Appropriation Adjustments our net personnel funding decreased by \$379,000 due to salary and wage adjustments. Our contractual expenses decreased by a million dollars due primarily to mental health contract carry forwards supported by State aid. In our Revenue Adjustments we saw a \$1.2 million dollar decrease due to federal salary sharing, shift to State revenue and reduced expenses. State Aid increased by \$143,000 due to a shift from Federal revenue to State aid.*



**Onondaga County Department of Adult & Long Term Care Services**

**Committed to the Continual Enhancement of the Well-Being of Our Community by Creating a Safe and Healthy Environment Through Knowledge, Access and Choice.**

Chairman Knapp said the Veterans Service Department currently has Ms. Dennis, an Assistant Director and two Service Officers, and asked if that is up or the same. Ms. Alford replied they received an additional part-time employee last year, which has helped to do more outreach and work with Catholic Charities for homeless veterans. Chairman Knapp acknowledged Melissa Spicer, and several of her staff from Clear Path. Ms. Alford commented that representatives from the entire department will go to Clear Path next month to do a presentation, and look at ways to work together more. Chairman Knapp asked if there is an inclusion in the budget for Clear Path, and Ms. Alford answered yes; \$100,000. There is also additional money from OMH, but that is a pass through. Ms. Alford replied to Chairman Knapp that it is the same as last year.

Chairman Knapp asked for expansion on why federal aid is down \$1 million. Mr. Morgan:

- Goes along with contractual services; going down just over \$1 million
- Most contracts in Mental Health paid by pass through dollars; those expenses go down, and will not get revenue
- Money given to County as pass through to agencies

Chairman Knapp stated supplies and materials increased 150% since 2015 actual, and asked why. Ms. Alford said they purchased laptops for staff; utilizing systems where they do not have to return to the office.

Chairman Knapp asked about travel and training that has increased significantly. Mrs. Miller-Martens answered that there are additional funds this year, because OMH has implemented a forensic pilot program. This involves training and travel. Ms. Alford said it is a grant focused on working with persons justice system involved (currently incarcerated or transitioning out).

### **Chairman Knapp requested a list of their contracts.**

Mrs. Ervin asked if the part-time person has helped with the numbers, or is there a need for more. Ms. Alford replied it has helped with the numbers, and the ability to do more outreach with the veterans. Mrs. Ervin asked if it is enough, and Ms. Alford said if they have more people, they can serve more people. Currently a staff person goes once a week to Clear Path, but there are other places they could go if there were more staff.

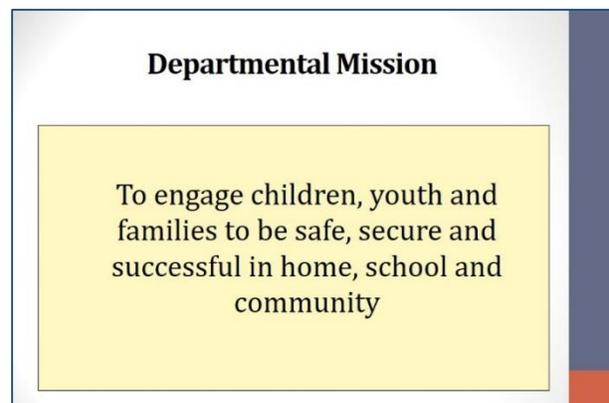
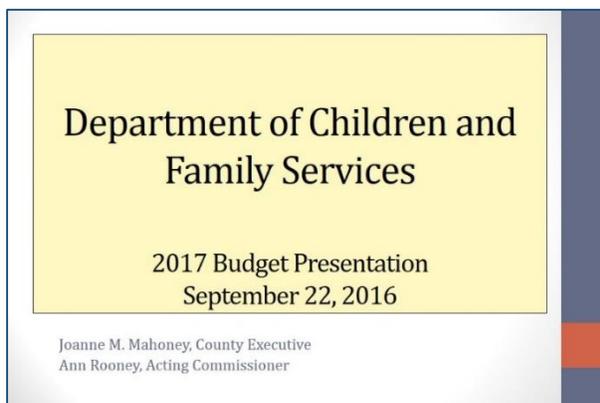
Mrs. Ervin asked how many eligible retirees are in the department that might take the package. Ms. Alford said there are about thirty that are eligible.

Mrs. Rapp said the proposal says 100% of the funding comes from the state and feds, and Ms. Alford clarified that a majority comes from the state. That is on the revenue side. Mrs. Rapp said the local dollars are showing almost \$5 million, and Ms. Alford stated it is on the appropriations side. Ms. Alford said the additional local dollars help to implement the services. Some are used for matching funding, but Veterans is a lot of local dollars. Support given to Crouse would also be local dollars. **Chair Rapp asked for a breakdown of where the local dollars are going.** Ms. Alford agreed.

**Department of Children & Family Services:** Anne Rooney, Acting Commissioner; Jen Parmalee, Director of School Based Initiatives; Sandy Miller-Martens, Fiscal Officer (4-99)

Ms. Rooney introduced Jim Czarniack, Deputy Commissioner overseeing Child Welfare, Linda Lopez, Deputy Commissioner overseeing Children's Mental Health and OnCare, and Damian Pratt, Director of Juvenile Justice Services.

Ms. Rooney stated for the record, "David Sutkowy, who retired in June, his commitment to Onondaga County was unmatched, and especially his commitment to children and families in our community." Ms. Rooney is serving as Acting Commissioner, because when Mr. Sutkowy was Commissioner he was also serving as the Supervisor for all of Child Welfare. Ms. Rooney said they strategically moved Jim Czarniack from Juvenile Justice to oversee Child Welfare. Ms. Rooney is pleased that the County Executive gave her the opportunity to serve as Acting Commissioner while the pieces are put in place. There is not a lack of attention to this department.



### Child Well-Being

How well a child is doing in their family, in the community and in the school setting.

How well a child is developing the capacity and learning skills needed to function well as an adult in our society.

### Departmental Structure

Commissioner

CHILD WELFARE	CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH	JUVENILE JUSTICE	SCHOOL-BASED INITIATIVES	YOUTH BUREAU
Investigations FAR Services Foster Care Adoptions Independent Living	Clinics Contracts ACCESS Team OnCare	JD/PINS Hillbrook	Promise Zone Family/Student Support Mental Health Clinics ADAPEP	Community Education/Training Runaway & Homeless Youth

### Child Well-Being and the Impact of Poverty

Onondaga County Caseload Change

	2008-09	2008-15
Temporary Assistance	+12%	+61%
Food Stamps/SNAP	+14%	+87%
Medicaid	+4%	+41%

- “Those living in areas with high concentrations of poverty experience diminished school quality and academic achievement, diminished health and healthcare, pervasive joblessness, increased crime and declining housing stock.” HHS-2014
- Recent research from Rutgers University determines Syracuse has the highest concentration of Black and Latino poverty in the US.

### Success of Departmental Restructuring

- ABILITY to focus on Child Well-Being
- Less reactive and crisis driven, to more proactive response system
- Check-in process post formal case closing
- Streamlining of all child and family serving systems
- School based work
- Complex cases allow for immediate action from all disciplines
- Formal placement of children with relatives is up 46% since 2013 avoiding costly out of home options

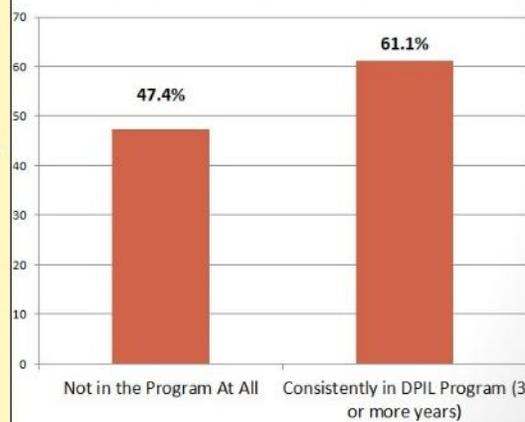
### Moving Forward: Initiatives

- Early Childhood Alliance
- Imagination Library
- Let's Go To Kindergarten
- Talk Read Sing Play
- Campaign for Grade Level Reading
- School Based programming
- Juvenile Justice mental health screening
- Continued emphasis on relative placement

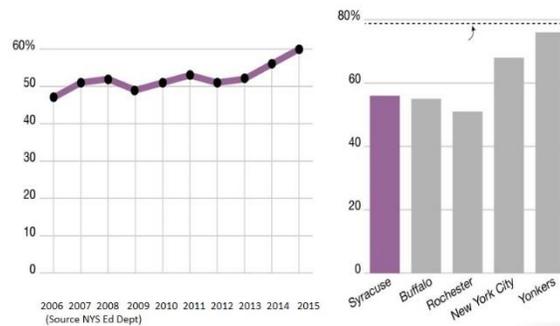
## Imagination Library Research Results

- For those consistently enrolled in the program (i.e. 3-4 years), there was a **28.9%** increase in children ready for kindergarten
- Even after controlling for race, gender, ESL status, Special Education Status, and Free and Reduced Lunch Status, enrolled children were more likely to be "kindergarten ready"
- Onondaga County mean is 58%
- Today, over 10,000 children aged 0-5 enrolled countywide

Percent Ready for Kindergarten (scoring 13 or higher on LNF)



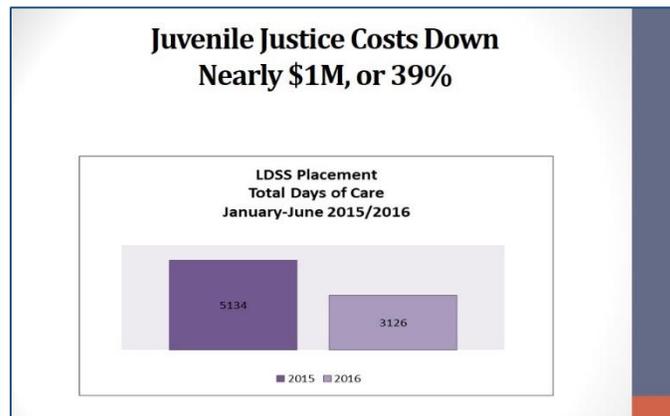
### City of Syracuse Graduation Rates 2006-2015



## 2017 Budget Overview

- Total Budget \$82.7M, of which \$22.4M is local
- Need for administrative support – creation of Special Assistant to the Commissioner Personnel/Staffing
- Juvenile Justice care days down by 2,000 days resulting in \$1M savings - creation of Placement Review Committee –
  - **You Manage What You Measure**
- Foster Care projected spending is up 14% or \$3.6M due to:
  - Families struggling with addiction issues
  - Increased costs of hard to place youth
    - **Cost containing strategies for 2017:**
      - Data-driven decision making
      - Retooling of expenditure approval process
      - Mandatory three month case review

- 283 positions with 266 filled; 1 addition
- Unprecedented low level of administrative help; less than 1% of all funding is for administrative help
- Plan to unfund 2 Case Workers to pay for new position; staff of over 250 employees, and no one dedicated to personnel and training, etc.; all things that help department to run more smoothly
- Assistance to commissioners, deputies, and staff; only department of this size without someone in a position like that



Mr. Jordan asked why rents are up \$167,000 due to rental space for record storage. Ms. Rooney:

- Rockwest – majority of DSS storage; found DSS was absorbing all the cost, but keep Child Welfare records there also

Mr. Jordan asked if the records could be scanned. Mr. Morgan:

- Place is huge; billions of records; as DSS pulls cases, they are starting to image them; destroy cases as they can
- Going forward there is an imaging system in place to reduce the amount of new paper created

Ms. Merrick commented:

- New cases are imaged, then destroyed; Child Welfare records have to be kept for life
- Most records can be destroyed after 7 yrs; continue reviewing that; cannot get out of record keeping particularly with Child Welfare and Adoption records
- Consolidated to one area – Rockwest; part of job to abide by regulations

Mr. Morgan clarified:

- This is not increase in cost of space (goes up 3% every year); distributing it properly
- Ms. Merrick's budget used to pay for all space, but there are Child Welfare records there; some rent costs were allocated to Child Welfare budget; not all of the increase
- Also includes lease with Marcellus School District where day treatment as well as clinic were moved; comment in funding adjustments is not accurate that it is all due to space rental

Chairman Knapp has heard about storage from several departments, specifically the Clerk. Mr. Morgan:

- Certain departments (Health, DSS) have implemented their own system on the front end to start imaging documents
- Initiative this summer using high school and college students to start to tackle some records at Empire Archives
- Started to identify what is there; those records hardly touched, but paying for storage
- Will continue initiative to reduce cost of dead storage; Empire is for records rarely retrieved; costs every time to retrieve
- Print Management Initiative – last 4 or 5 years implemented and installed multi-purpose copiers (copy, print, scan); when machines off lease, team (IT, DMB, Purchasing) goes in to understand what is being produced and why
- Will figure out if there's a better way to process information
- Clerk's issue – records stored at North Area; slated to be renovated; pushed off year to come up with comprehensive plan on where the records will go, and where Sheriff evidence will go; Clerk was involved with summer project
- Can get cost of space there; not going up, being redistributed

Mr. Jordan asked how they came up with the increase in cost for Foster Care of \$3,615,736. Mr. Morgan responded the way the account is estimated is based on the number of children they believe will enter foster care, and the level of care needed. Driven by cases and cost per case. Chairman Knapp asked where they are to date on numbers. Ms. Rooney replied the 2015 actual was 364 children in foster care.

Mr. Jordan agrees education is a big part of the problem. Mr. Jordan has spoken to many teachers and students to find behavioral problems are huge, and there does not seem to be a lot of consequence to it. Often times

teachers feel their hands are tied, and they cannot do much to address the problem. If a student is being destructive or disruptive, then it impacts the ability of all children to learn. Ms. Rooney:

- Promise Zone - support to teachers; if there are behavioral issue students in class, then specialists will come in and help with those issues; over 2,000 children engaged with Promise Zone Specialist in City schools
- Last year, 1st marking period for kids with Promise Zone Specialist had an average 2.1; by end of 2nd marking period they were up to 3.4; there has to be assistance for children and teachers
- Reduction in amount of incidents; kids are in classroom and remain in classroom; number of children who continue to have behavioral problems goes down; not end all, but great strides to assist teachers and children

Mr. May said nowhere in the budget is it more evident of the employee benefits effect on local dollars as it is in this budget. It is substantial, and it is dollar for dollar the increase. Mr. May asked if the Foster Care line is driven solely by case load, or is there something else. Ms. Rooney:

- Caseload, also cost containing strategies; administrative oversight
- Lot of Case Workers working on issues; streamlined process; different levels of tutoring; different things children receive
- Administrative level checking everything approved is appropriate - Case Worker up to Deputy Commissioner
- Having eyes on who has approval to expend all those things the department is doing; putting systematic measures in place; similar to what happened with Juvenile Justice; hopefully will see reduction in foster care as retool whole process
- Hoping cost per case will go down; plus mandatory three month case review – child in care, will have mandatory case review; have to have a return to school plan

Mr. May said Ms. Merrick stated there is a regulatory responsibility on records management, and asked if it is a statutory responsibility or common sense. Ms. Rooney said adoption records are statutory. Mr. Morgan stated the State Education Department dictates the records retention requirements.

Chairman Knapp said contractual expenses on the grant line are up \$1 million, and asked what it was for. Ms. Rooney responded the department received a federal grant for Juvenile Justice Mental Health screening, which is the majority of the increase.

Chairman Knapp asked what is budgeted for OnPoint for college, and Ms. Rooney said the same as last year. Mr. Morgan thinks it is \$50,000. Ms. Rooney believes it is \$75,000 in the Youth Bureau, and \$50,000 in another. Mr. Morgan will get a list of the contracts with this.

Chairman Knapp stated a couple years ago the County received a sizable grant from Assemblyman Magnorelli for Syracuse Schools, and the County was asked to administer it. Ms. Rooney stated that is the Promise Zone Specialists. It is a year to year grant, and Assemblyman Magnorelli was able to secure the \$2 million for the County. It is in its third year. There is a Promise Zone Specialist in the Solvay School District as well. Ask every year to move specialists to other school districts, if the County receives expanded funding. Ms. Rooney said they are constantly looking at the funds to explore other options.

Ms. Rooney replied to Chairman Knapp's questions regarding Hillbrook:

- Census is made up of in County and out of County youth; budgeted for average census of 17 – 9 in County and 8 out of county; receive revenue from the other counties; also receive reimbursement from state for Onondaga County youth

Chairman Knapp asked where the revenue from other counties is in the budget. Mr. Morgan thinks it is in County Service Revenue. Chairman Knapp would like confirmation.

Ms. Rooney answered Dr. Chase's questions regarding Hillbrook:

- Census goes up and down; regulated by OCFS; County cannot detain any child over the age of 15 at Hillbrook; there is no one under the age of 16 at the Justice Center
- Capacity of 32 in Hillbrook; 4 eight person pods; 3 open – 2 for boys and 1 for girls
- Average census of 9 makes it possible for other counties without detention facilities to use Hillbrook
- Staffing – enough people; 24 hour operation; number of part-time employees; when census up, can staff appropriately

Mr. Shepard asked if there is a time frame for the selection of a Commissioner. Ms. Rooney answered that they are looking at it right now, and they are comfortable with where they are. The Foster Care account for 2017 is the focus right now, then they will start the process of finding a new Commissioner.

Chairman Knapp asked which counties Onondaga County hosts (at Hillbrook), and Ms. Rooney said they are up to 16 counties. Most counties do not have detention facilities, so when a judge remands a child to detention, they call Hillbrook. This includes places that have overflow (i.e. Buffalo), or those without a detention center. Those counties are responsible for transportation, expenses, etc.

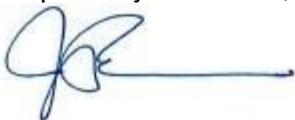
Mr. Morgan stated the revenue from other counties is in State Aid Social Services, and is budgeted at \$2.2 million. It is part of the \$25 million number. Chairman Knapp asked what the overall budget for Hillbrook is. Mr. Morgan answered it is budgeted within Juvenile Justice (4-108), and the amount is just under \$5 million in appropriations. There are other services in that line. Ms. Rooney answered Chairman Knapp that there are continual conversations with other counties, and there are ongoing conversations with OCFS with whether the County will be able to utilize Hillbrook for lower level services (fence makes it difficult). Chairman Knapp asked what would happen if the state changes the rules on 16 and 17 year olds, and Ms. Rooney replied Hillbrook would probably be full.

Mr. May said Hillbrook is an inefficient and expensive function of the County. Mr. May likes the idea of other people coming in. It may not create revenue, but it will create efficiency. Correctional Health personnel are sent there for no more than 16 people. As the County moves towards a full capacity, then the facility will run more efficiently. Ms. Rooney:

- Hopes County will never have to use Hillbrook; capacity for 32; if more out of County youth, then decision would be made to fill a whole pod
- Lot of services by mandate; originally designed for 32 when there were more children in detention; brings in revenue
- Hope with raise in age, youth in Justice Center will be serviced at Hillbrook; would be more impactful for them

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE M. McNAMARA, Assistant Clerk  
Onondaga County Legislature

### ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **W&M REVIEW OF HEALTH A.M.**

DATE: **9/22/16**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Ava Kerznowski	Onon. County DSS-ES
Michael Torrick	Onon. County DSS-ES
Corbin Cox	Onon County IT
Paula Mally Angel	Onon Cty Dept. of LAW
Jim Keith	Onon Cty DSS-ES
Monica Brown	Onondaga Co DSS-ES
Rich Fungal	Medicaid
Gina Maloney	Medicaid
Brenda Streets	medicaid
Sandy Miller-Martens	Financial Operations
Beth Martens	Personnel
Sarah Merrick	DSS-ES