

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 6, 2008 – 3:00 P.M.
SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: F. Proto, Chairman, N. Shinagawa, M. Robertson, C. Chock, T. Randall (arrived 3:45 p.m.)
Staff: P. Carey, Department of Social Services; K. Schlather, Human Services Coalition; S. Martel-Moore, Deputy County Administrator; N. Zahler, Youth Services; L. Holmes, Office for the Aging; R. DeLuca, Mental Health; L. Dillon, Tompkins County Action; K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk
Guests: Mark Wickham, Lakeview Mental Health Services

Call to Order

Chairman Proto called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes of December 5, and 18, 2007

It was MOVED by Mr. Shinagawa, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously approved by voice vote by members present, to accept the minutes of December 5, and 18, 2007, as presented. MINUTES APPROVED.

Additions to the Agenda

Members were provided with a budget transfer from the Office for the Aging for information purposes.

Chair Proto requested time be provided for an update from Ms. Holmes regarding the status of Lakeside Nursing Home as it relates to the Berger Commission decision.

Chair's Report

Schedule of Committee Meetings for 2008

Mr. Proto called attention to the schedule of 2008 Committee meetings within the agenda packet, stating that if required a special meeting could be called. He asked that Committee members and Department Heads contact Ms. Fuller if items come up that could require an additional meeting. Mr. Proto also that materials relating to agenda topics be provided as quickly as possible for distribution to provide adequate time to review.

2007 Committee Goals Review/2008 Committee Goals Discussion

Mr. Proto said at this time the Committee would review work completed to determine status of the 2007 Goals and to see what additional Goals should be considered.

Mr. Shinagawa went through the four goals developed by the 2007 Health and Human Services Committee and noted the following:

- Goal 1 –
- a) – was completed, the Committee is still meeting.
 - b) – although the Committee did not have extensive discussions, the Office for the Aging has been working with the Planning Department on a survey of “Baby Boomer” housing needs and preferences to assist in planning for the next twenty years.

Cornell University students are assisting in this survey. This item will remain as a goal.

- c) – The discussion regarding home health aides is ongoing; it was suggested that more active participation occur to alleviate the shortage.

Goal 2 – It was noted the need to improve access to, and quality of health care is ongoing. Members noted that one proposal was to reimburse tuition to primary care physician students who work in rural areas.

- b) – With regard to chronic disease management it was noted the Tompkins County Office for the Aging is one of three counties approached by New York State to participate in a demonstration of chronic disease management. This work may be collaborated with the Health Planning Council or Finger Lakes Independence Center. The Committee should receive an update in April 2008.

Goal 3 – A brief discussion addressed the need to “flesh out” the goal to determine how to best assist at a Legislature level. Ms. Schlather said if there is an interest in youth homelessness there is an on-going committee regarding this subject.

Goal 4 – It was noted there are many unfunded mandates dealing the Health and Human Services departments and agencies. This will be an ongoing item with the Committee hearing additional information relating to 2008. Ms. Chock would like to see more public education regarding unfounded mandates and the effect on the County. Mr. Proto spoke of increased expenses that could occur as a result of amending the parameters for services for autistic children.

Mr. Proto requested departments and agencies review the 2007 goals and develop three items their department/agency would like to have as potential goals. He said the manner in which the State policies are amending regarding autistic children it could have a large impact.

Report from New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC)

At Mr. Proto’s request, Ms. Robertson provided a brief overview of information received at the recent NYSAC conference. She reported that a good deal of the information related to public safety issues such as the cost of boarding; however, the Governor and other top officials did speak to a variety of issues that affect the budget. One item was an increase in coverage for children, allowing income up to 400 percent of poverty level to obtain Medicaid coverage, which would add 37 million to the budget, which will be borne by the State due to the Medicaid cap. In addition, was a concern regarding a potential decrease due to re-basing of Medicaid reimbursement; presently, the reimbursement is based upon twenty year-old data.

Mr. Randall arrived at this time.

There were discussions at the conference of a cap for special education costs at four percent; it was thought that once the four percent was exceeded the expense then went to the school districts.

Ms. Robertson spoke of Ken Crannell, of NYSAC, said the Governor stated the sum total of benefits to counties would \$519 million this year. Mr. Crannell’s calculations did not indicate this as the Governor’s calculation includes what the counties would have paid if no Medicaid cap existed.

Ms. Robertson attended a workshop on Primary Care that spoke of the Federal 330 program has provided funding for rural health services.

Human Services Coalition

Affordable Mixed-Use Housing from Outskirts to City

Ms. Schlather said the Continuum Care Committee has been having conversations regarding the need for housing, which led to a unique proposal being prepared by Mr. Wickham, Director of Lakeview Mental Health Services. Mr. Wickham spoke of the need for mental health housing in the Finger Lakes region, noting that presently there are two community residences and 32 certified apartments in various locations in the City of Ithaca operated by Lakeview Mental Health Services. In addition, they are in the process of constructing the 38-bed single-room occupancy unit that should be completed and occupied by this December. The new proposal, which would be separate from the single-room occupancy unit, would be a project that would provide affordable housing for the clients as well as staff desiring to reside in Tompkins County but cannot afford the current rents. He explained that the project would remove clients from present sub-standard housing to a new unit that would provide better transitional services as well as bring about more affordable housing for low-income individuals. The actual rents would be income-based, and the building could receive partial tax credits as a not-for-profit. There are some mixed-use housing projects in New York City and on Long Island but none exist in the Upstate region at present. He noted the project is only conceptual at this time but it is hoped to develop a housing unit that better meets the needs of clients. In response to a question from Mr. Randall, Mr. Wickham said units such as these have been viewed favorably overall, with the main question being the balance of removing real property from the tax roll. He said the design of this unit could be creative in a manner to maintain the property on tax rolls for municipalities. The project does not anticipate placing all the current residents into the unit; a review would be made to provide a good mix. The building could be located outside of the City of Ithaca provided it allows access to services. Ms. Robertson suggested conversations include the Commissioner of Public Works and Planning, Ed Marx.

Mr. Proto asked Mr. DeLuca, Commissioner of Mental Health to act as a liaison with the group discussing the project.

Mental Health

Budget Information

Mr. DeLuca reported he provided County Administrator Steve Whicher with the preliminary information relating to the 2007 budget; it appears there will not be a significant impact on the County. He also reported the County would be receiving an additional ten supporting housing beds for clients. Mr. DeLuca will provide additional program information to the committee.

Medicaid Take-Back

Mr. DeLuca reported that it is apparent the State is seeking additional funding as a result of Federal audits that resulted in the need to payback revenue. It is not known how this process will occur as the Federal government has not yet developed the structure.

Women's and Children's Substance Abuse/Dependence Community Residence Project

Mr. DeLuca said this is a collaborative (Cayuga Addiction and Recovery Services, Social Services, Tompkins Community Action, and Human Services Coalition) long-range housing proposal for women in early recover with or without children. At this point information is being collected, and will be touring several agencies within the State. The program will assist women just leaving a recovery program/hospital/treatment center, with the goal being to reunite the mothers with their children. The operation would be similar to Chartwell House, which runs a similar operation for males. Ms. Dillon, Executive Director of Tompkins Community Action, explained her efforts to date. Mr. DeLuca said due to the nature of this collaborative effort it may have several departments/agencies operating within the project.

Office for the Aging

Budget Transfers

The Committee was provided copies of budget transfers that did not require any action.

Update on Berger Commission

Ms. Holmes reported the working group set up to discuss the proposed closure of Lakeside as a result of the Berger Commission has had a positive effect. The State Department of Health is working with Lakeside's reconfiguration and has requested Lakeside to submit a revised plan. At this time it appears that if Lakeside continues to demonstrate the quality of service and financial feasibility the State Department of Health will recommend acceptance of the reconfiguration plan rather than continue with the closure as recommended by the Berger Commission. This would save one hundred skilled-nursing beds as well as allowing for Medicaid funded assisted-living beds. She said Pat Deptula, Director at Lakeside, has worked very hard with a wide variety of staff to get so advanced at resolving the dilemma the County has been facing. With the reconfiguration plan there was a request for proposals for the 80 assisted-living beds, due in September. The Village at South Pointe Assisted Living Program from upstate New York was provisionally accepted by the State Department of Health to be a provider, if they could secure a site. The site location has been discussed by the Ithaca Town Board at two meetings and they noted the project didn't fit in comprehensive plan with the initial indication the zoning would require amendment. The Town recognizes the need for this type of housing, however it appears the location is a concern. Since the time the other firm was chosen by the State Department of Health, they have recommended Lakeside resubmit and apply for 55 out-slots additional beds available state-wide. If they are successful, Lakeside would be approved for 80-bed assisted-living, 55 out-slots and 25 slots targeted to low-income.

Update on new location for Office for the Aging

Ms. Holmes reported that the County is reviewing a proposal to co-locate with another aging services provider within the City. It is anticipated that the office will be relocated during 2009.

Youth Services

2008 Budget

Ms. Zahler provided a pie chart indicating how the departmental budget is spent. She noted that only 15% of the amount is spent on staffing. She noted that the Governor's proposed budget if approved would result in \$10,000 loss of revenue; however due to the funds running the calendar year any loss would not be experienced until January 2009. The department budget is reviewed and voted upon by the Youth Board and it would have sufficient advance notice to make decisions accordingly.

National Recognition for Community Coalition for Healthy Youth

Ms. Zahler reported the Tompkins County Coalition for Healthy Youth is one of seven groups to be recognized at the national conference being held in Washington. Tompkins County represents the Northeast region of the country and will have a presentation display of the work completed locally.

Future Agenda Item

Ms. Zahler reported next month she would be bringing an action item regarding Bridges anger management program; utilizing local funds she was able to leverage sixty-five percent additional from the State to provide additional service.

Youth Board Appointments

It was MOVED by Ms. Chock, seconded by Mr. Shinagawa, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to recommend approval of the following appointments to the Youth Services Board:

Health and Human Services Committee Minutes
February 6, 2008

Christopher Hyer – Youth Representative – term to expire December 31, 2009
Kathleen Schlather – At Large – term to expire December 31, 2010.

Budget Transfer

The Committee was provided a budget transfer for information only.

Liaison and Advisory Board Appointments

Following discussion, the following liaison/advisory board appointments were made/recommended:

ADVISORY APPOINTMENTS - VOTING

Board of Health - voting member – Greg Stevenson (recommended)

Personal Emergency Response Service Advisory Board - voting member - Greg Stevenson (recommended)

Greater Ithaca Activities Board - voting member - Nathan Shinagawa (recommended)

Recreation Partnership - voting members- Jim Dennis/Frank Proto (C. Chock Alternate - recommended),
4th

LIAISON APPOINTMENTS - NON-VOTING

Alcohol and Drug Council of Tompkins County - liaison – Vacant (may be removed from list)

Community Mental Health Services Board - liaison – Carol Chock

Health Planning Council - liaison - Nathan Shinagawa, Jim Dennis/Alternate

Homeless and Housing Task Force –liaison - Martha Robertson

Human Services Coalition - liaison – Martha Robertson

Office for the Aging Advisory Board - liaison – Carol Chock

Senior Citizens Council - Lifelong - liaison – Frank Proto

Tompkins Community Action - liaison – Nathan Shinagawa, Frank Proto Alternate

Tompkins County Youth Board - liaison – Tyke Randall

Local Early Intervention Coordinating Council – to be determined – Nathan Shinagawa

NON-COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD

Cooperative Extension Service (Not a County Advisory Board) - 2 voting members - Chair appointments, Duane Randall (Appointed 1/15/08); Carol Chock (recommended)

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk