

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 14, 2009 – 3:30 P.M.  
SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**

APPROVED 5-12-09
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Present: F. Proto, Chairman, M. Robertson, G. Stevenson, W. Burbank, T. Randall  
Staff: P. Carey, Department of Social Services; N. Zahler, Youth Services; K. Schlather, N. Burston, Human Services Coalition; L. Holmes, Office for the Aging; A. Cole, B. Crosby, S. Conners, Health Department; R. DeLuca, Mental Health; J. Mareane, County Administrator; K. Schlather, Cooperative Extension; K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk  
Legislator: M. Koplinka-Loehr  
Guests: T. Ashmore, *The Ithaca Journal*

**Call to Order**

Chairman Proto called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes of March 10, 2009**

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Burbank, and unanimously approved by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of March 10, 2009.

**Office for the Aging**

**Budget Update**

Ms. Holmes reported \$50,000 in State funding was cut from the Long-Term Care Education program.

**Budget Adjustment**

Ms. Holmes noted this is the member item for home repairs provided by Senator Winner. The purpose of the adjustment is to move it forward into the current State fiscal year.

It was MOVED by Mr. Randall, seconded by Mr. Burbank, and unanimously adopted, to recommend adoption of the following budget adjustment to the full Legislature. BUDGET ADJUSTMENT APPROVED.

<u>Revenue Acct</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Amt</u>	<u>Approp Acct</u>	<u>Title(s)</u>
6796.43803	State Revenue	\$10,000	6796.54400	Program Expense

Explanation: Reappropriation of money to be used in 2009 in the WRAP Program.

**Office Space**

Ms. Holmes reported that the State Court has renewed pressure regarding their request for space within the Courthouse. The Department is actively seeking leased space and is presently working with Chris Anagnost to find adequate property in the downtown area. Mr. Marx, Mr. LeMaro, and Mr. Mareane are involved in the process. One space they have looked at would require extensive renovation and it is not certain it could be accomplished in a timely fashion.

Ms. Holmes reported that Lifelong's fundraising committee is presently in the financial planning phase and would be getting back to the County in June to indicate whether they would be able to move ahead with their renovation/construction concept.

Mr. Mareane said there would be an in-house meeting of staff to determine what can be done regarding the State's request. He noted there has been progress in proceeding with some work requested; when a letter is drafted he intends to stress to the State that it is a difficult economic period to have to spend funds if not fully necessary.

In response to Ms. Robertson's question, it was noted the Office for the Aging is the largest block of space the State desires. Mr. Proto spoke of the need to have a leasing agreement that would correlate with any possible construction at the Lifelong site. Mr. Burbank asked how the lease would be funded; Ms. Holmes replied it is built into the Facilities budget. She said there is a price-range thought to be acceptable and properties being reviewed fall into this area. There is a concern that the property requiring renovation could end up being too expensive per square foot due to the construction.

### Annual Luncheon

Ms. Holmes announced the department's annual luncheon would be held on May 13, 2009, at the Clarion Hotel. The Keynote Speaker would be Dr. William Thomas Founder of The Eden Alternative.

### Lakeside Nursing and Rehabilitation

In response to a question from Mr. Proto, Ms. Holmes said she has not had any new information regarding Lakeside Nursing and Rehabilitation.

### Human Services Coalition

Ms. Schlather reported that for the current budget year most agencies would receive funding at last year's level, with an overall loss of a couple thousand dollars. The Women's Opportunity Center's funding was restored, Neighborhood Legal Services received funding at 2007 level, Lifelong had a slight decrease as well. She noted that some agencies having contracts with the County might have them altered later in the year due to reductions. Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes (formerly Ithaca Breast Cancer Alliance) did not have a large cut, and the Advocacy Center had its COPS funding restored. Many of the agencies anticipate the restored funding to only be for a one-year period. Red Cross was cut several thousand dollars this year and anticipate that next year would see \$30,000 to \$40,000 additional reductions. Better Housing of Tompkins County was cut \$3,000 this year, however their funding is ahead of what it was two years ago. Ms. Schlather said Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services is much the same, with part of the problem being determining how the present economic situation, interest rates, and individual incomes will be during this economic downturn.

With regard to Human Services Coalition, Ms. Schlather reported a loss of \$85,000 to \$90,000 for the 2-1-1 Information Referral Program, which is a United Way of New York initiative, with little hope it would be restored in 2010. She is doubtful the funds would be restored. At this time the program will continue to operate as a result of funding received through a community development block grant of \$12,000 for 2008 and \$30,000 for 2009-2010. Ms. Schlather reported all efforts are being made to continue the program, which would require payment of telephone lines for the 2-1-1 number as well as manning it 24-hours per day, 7 days per week. It may require amending the program next year. The Human Services Coalition budget committee would be meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup> and it should assist in determining the future budget concerns.

The Committee received brochures on the recently developed New York prescription plan available for individuals without coverage who do not qualify for other programs.

### Youth Services

Ms. Zahler expressed appreciation to the Legislature for the resolution in opposition to the New York State block grant funding for youth services. She noted the block grant concept was rejected, although there is still a ten percent reduction in total funds received from the State. Youth Services has six programs that receive funding that comes from the State through the department to agencies or municipalities. All the programs received a ten percent reduction. As a result of the reduction, her department is reduced by \$6,900, agency contracts are reduced a total of \$21,300, with the total \$28,200 in cuts. In addition, youth programs outside of the County budget for municipalities have seen a combined reduction of \$7,800. The Ithaca Youth Bureau had \$5,400 cut from its administrative budget as well. The reductions are for the 2009 calendar year budget. The 2010 budget projections are unknown at this time; it is anticipated there would not be any funding restored.

Mr. Mareane said in discussions regarding the budget plan the goal was to identify the positives that we thought would occur and balance them against the negative impacts. He hopes to utilize stimulus monies this year to continue programs and use the time to determine what to do for 2010. For programs fully grant-supported the framework for the work plan is to make proportional cuts in the program or, in the event all funding is lost, eliminate the program with an appropriate transitional period. He noted the continual amendments to the State budget make it necessary to regularly review and rework budgets. He anticipates having an updated review at the budget retreat.

Mr. Mareane spoke of the restoration of the COPS funding, however it is only through the end of September. He said it would require extensive lobbying to maintain the program beyond that date. The retreat would focus primarily on 2010, however, a close look at 2009 is also necessary.

Ms. Zahler reported her department entered into twelve-month contracts with agencies for the full amount, however, they made it clear that due to the economic climate it could require renegotiation. As a result, many of the agencies are spending cautiously to be prepared if renegotiations are necessary. She reported the volunteers making up the Youth Services Board are going to meet with the agencies next week and ask them to prepare the 2010 budget, noting there will be priority-based cuts, but it is not known how much. She said the budgets would take the 18 percent cuts made to date into account.

Mr. Mareane said a letter thanking our delegation for their support with COPS funding would be in order. He believes that in October the Governor may be looking at expenses to determine what to do.

#### Youth Community Service Projects Recognition Initiative of the Tompkins County Youth Board

Ms. Zahler provided written criteria on an award program developed to recognize youth groups. It has been sent to the media and she is looking for nominees.

Mr. Proto suggested reviewing the groups nominated for the Distinguished Youth Award. Ms. Zahler took the suggestion under advisement.

#### Youth Employment Collaboration for Summer 2009

Ms. Zahler reported due to stimulus funding an additional opportunity for summer jobs for youth up to age 24 are available. Ms. Mattick at Workforce has asked for help by Youth Services in providing technical assistance, coordination, and assistance in monitoring the placement and work of three different agencies: Workforce, Tompkins Community Action, and the Ithaca Youth Bureau. The agencies will be providing employment for 300 to 400 young people with funding from the State and Federal government.

Mr. Randall said approval for participation in the program has been given by Mr. DeLucci at TST-BOCES. He would like to see a presentation on the campus to assist students in placement. The available jobs are filled with priorities and placement determined by income levels. Information on the positions was made available through the Summer Youth Programs flyer as well as municipal offices and all libraries.

Safe Celebrations Letter

Ms. Zahler said a letter from STOP-DWI was sent to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in all school districts regarding the need to stay safe while celebrating at the prom and graduations. The letter was mailed in envelopes from the District Attorney’s office and stressed the need to be cautious. Mr. Randall said it was well written and direct, similar to a contract to behave. The letter was signed by Ms. Zahler as representative of the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth, the principal of each district, and the District Attorney.

**Department of Social Services**

Record Imaging Project

Ms. Carey reported the County has begun the State-required imaging of client records, including those for HEAP, Medicaid, Support Services, etc. An award of \$15,000 was provided by the State and allows the County to complete imaging of records, allowing the department to go back one year, and will also provide for training. After the first year there would be a per-page cost associated with the imaging. The purpose of this project is to improve the ability to utilize the files from a computer, thereby eliminating the necessity to provide hard copies to other counties. Ms. Carey noted an average file is four inches thick due to required documentation to receive services. It is anticipated imaging would occur on-site within the next three years but at the present time the files are being sent to a firm in Broome County; although there is always the concern of confidentiality, the State has vetted this firm and encouraged counties to use it. The records are Federal Expressed and turned around within a day. She said if they had not committed to undertaking the project by last October, the funds to provide imaging for one-year’s records would have been lost. She also indicated that she does not believe the project would be stopped due to the State’s budgetary situation as too much funding has already gone into the project.

Budget Adjustments

It was MOVED by Mr. Burbank, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted, to recommend adoption of the following budget adjustment to the full Legislature. BUDGET ADJUSTMENT APPROVED.

<u>Revenue Acct</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Amt</u>	<u>Approp Acct</u>	<u>Title(s)</u>
6305.54400	Basic Substance AFCU Tax Assistance Program	\$10,000	6010.54400	Program Expense

Explanation: Resolution No. 12 of 2009 provides \$10,000 for AFCU VITA Program

It was MOVED by Mr. Randall, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted, to recommend adoption of the following budget adjustment to the full Legislature. BUDGET ADJUSTMENT APPROVED.

<u>Revenue Acct</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Amt</u>	<u>Approp Acct</u>	<u>Title(s)</u>
6010.344389	Federal: Other Public Safety	\$33,624	6010.351000087	Salary
6010.344389	Federal: Other Public Safety	\$12,105	9101.58800	Fringes
6010.344389	Federal: Other Public Safety	\$18,120	6010.54412	Travel/Training

Explanation: Transferring funds to the Department of Social Services may allow for state aid on program. Resolution No. 263 of 2008 authorized the Department of Social Services to accept a two-year Federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) planning grant for a program called “Safe Havens”. These budget adjustments will cover the 2009 personnel costs for the recently-hired Supervised Visitation Program Coordinator and for the travel and training costs which the Department will incur for that person, the Commissioner, and our partner

April 14, 2008  
Health and Human Services Committee

agencies for the mandated training/conference sessions. All associated costs are funded one-hundred percent through this grant.

Budget Transfers

The Committee was provided with budget transfers for information only.

Monthly Reports

The Committee received the written copies of monthly reports. In response to Ms. Robertson's question, Ms. Carey said the funding is at the level they were informed it would be; it could be modified at a later date. The allocation letters from New York would not be received for 3-4 weeks. At that time the department would review and determine what is needed and it would come forward to the May meeting. Mr. Proto asked if it was known why the Family Health Plus item was lower than the 2008 figure. Ms. Carey said some is due to clients being moved to Medicaid; changes in criteria have caused shifting, it does not mean an individual is not covered but they may be in a different program.

Health Department

It was noted the resolution to name the conference rooms is following the new procedure.

**RESOLUTION NO. - DEDICATION OF THE CONFERENCE ROOMS AT 55 BROWN ROAD – TOMPKINS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

It was MOVED by Mr. Randall, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, to recommend adoption of the following resolution to the full Legislature. Ms. Cole explained the process used to determine the naming of the conference rooms. Employees were provided the opportunity to select individuals for the dedication, with the majority vote indicated within the resolution. A brief discussion regarding the naming of the conference rooms occurred, with questions raised about naming them at this time and what would occur later. It was noted the policy does provide the ability to amend dedications at a later date if desired. Mr. Randall spoke of having known Ms. Brazo and what this honor would mean to her. A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 5; Noes – 0. RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

WHEREAS, James Rice was a Charter and fifty (50) year member of the Tompkins County Board of Health, and

WHEREAS, Clara Goodman was a Supervising Public Health Nurse for greater than forty (40) years and organized the Certified Home Health Agency still in operation today, and

WHEREAS, Joanne Brazo was a clerical employee with greater than forty (40) years of service and an expert in the Physically Handicapped Children's Program, and

WHEREAS, John Andersson was the former Director of Environmental Health and a consummate Civil Engineer with greater than thirty (30) years of service in Public Health,

WHEREAS, Mr. Rice, Ms. Goodman and Ms. Brazo are deceased and Mr. Andersson retired as of May 4, 2007, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Tompkins County Board of Health, the Health and Human Services Committee and the Government Performance and Workforce Relations Committee, That in recognition of his service to Tompkins County, and as a lasting tribute to him, we hereby dedicate the main conference room to James Rice, and name it the James Rice Conference Room,

RESOLVED, further, That in recognition of her service to Tompkins County, and as a lasting tribute to her, we hereby dedicate the small side of the main conference room to Clara Goodman, and name it the Clara Goodman Conference Room,

April 14, 2008  
Health and Human Services Committee

RESOLVED, further, That in recognition of her service to Tompkins County, and as a lasting tribute to her, we hereby dedicate the Children With Special Care Needs and Planning and Coordination conference room to Joanne Brazo and name it the Joanne Brazo Conference Room,

RESOLVED, further, That in recognition of his service to Tompkins County, and as a lasting tribute to him, we hereby dedicate the Environmental Health area conference room to John Andersson and name it the John Andersson Conference Room.

**SEQR ACTION:** TYPE II-20

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Update on New York State Budget

Ms. Crosby reviewed the updated spreadsheet regarding the budget, noting it reflected information known regarding the Legislature budget as of April 3<sup>rd</sup>. She said the State is still working on the language and how it would be interpreted. In addition, some trend factor calculations may become effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, which would reduce impacts. The largest reduction is the \$111,501 Public Health Preparedness grant, which was eliminated in the adopted State budget and will affect 1.6 FTE on the Health Department staff. Previously approved grants are anticipated to remain at the amount reduced in August 2008. Ms. Cole provided a written document that indicates what work has been completed as a result of the Public Health Preparedness grant; she does not anticipate the work could be completed at the same level without the funding.

Ms. Robertson spoke of making decisions of what portions of work might be absorbed or funded in another manner, and what might be funded locally.

Mr. Proto noted these discussions would come up during the budget retreat. Mr. Mareane said the retreat would allow discussion on all aspects of the budget with the framework part of what the Legislature would visit. Ms. Robertson spoke of determining if funds might be available elsewhere to enable continuation of the program.

WIC Grant Application

Ms. Cole provided written information regarding the Request for Application submitted to New York State Department of Health. This application, if awarded, would designate the Health Department as the WIC sponsor for a five-year period. It will be several months before the Department is informed of the status.

**Mental Health**

Update on Budget

Mr. DeLuca said although there is a great deal going on with his budget the majority of items have been covered at previous meetings. He reported the majority of the budgetary items do not directly impact the County, although some agencies are affected.

Appointments

It was **MOVED** by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to recommend the following appointments to the full Legislature:

Mental Health Subcommittee

Leslie Anne Connors – Community Member – term to expire December 31, 2012

Substance Abuse Subcommittee

Nancy Zahler – Community Member – term to expire December 31, 2012

April 14, 2008  
Health and Human Services Committee

**Liaison Assignments**

Mr. Proto reported Mr. Stevenson offered to serve as liaison for the Office for the Aging Advisory Board. There was no objection to the appointment.

**Introduction**

Mr. Schlather was in attendance with his daughter, who was introduced to the Committee.

**Executive Session**

It was MOVED by Mr. Burbank, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to enter into an executive session at 4:55 to discuss personnel matters. On motion the Committee returned to open session at 5:05.

Mr. Burbank was excused at this time.

**Committee Goals**

Mr. Proto requested members of the Committee review the potential Committee goals and provide any suggestions to Ms. Fuller at the Legislature office.

**Adjournment**

On motion the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk*