

Minutes

Human Services Committee

July 18, 2018, 5:15 pm, Room 331

Gerace Office Building, Mayville, NY

Members Present: Wilfong, Pavlock, O'Connell

Member Absent: Whitford, Rankin

Legislator Rankin was conferenced in via phone call

Others: Tampio, Ames, Dennison, J. Anderson

Chairman Wilfong called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m.

Approval of Minutes (6/20/18)

MOVED by Legislator Pavlock, SECONDED by Legislator O'Connell

Unanimously Carried

Privilege of the Floor

No one chose to speak at this time.

Proposed Resolution- Confirm Appointment and Re-Appointments – Chautauqua
Opportunities Board of Directors

Chairman Wilfong: Is there anyone to speak to this? I see some very familiar faces there. All these gentlemen are nice people and I think they will do a very great job. All in favor? Opposed?

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution- Budget Modification for Actual Youth Bureau Allocations Received

Mr. Anderson: This is to reflect the actual allocation that we did receive. It includes the runaway-homeless youth allocation which is RHYA funds and not just the base allocations that we knew about when this was put in. It just reflects what it really is.

Chairman Wilfong: OK, any questions? All those in favor please say aye. Opposed?

*Unanimously Carried*Proposed Resolution- Reallocating Salary Grades for Caseworker, Caseworker (CPS), Senior Caseworker, Senior Caseworker (CPS), Case Supervisor B, Case Supervisor B (CPS), and Case Supervisor A

Mr. Anderson: This is some information given to me by Jessica Wisniewski. Jessica couldn't attend and neither could Christine Schuyler or Valerie Lis, so I'm here representing the department of health and human services. Christine submitted a request to Human Resources to increase these seven titles and the pay grades associated with them. What Human Resources did was they researched various counties throughout New York State with the same or similar titles and compiled salaries for these titles. In the findings, HR found that Chautauqua County was either at the average or low points even with those two pay grades increased. Even with those pay grades increased it will still be in the average range with a few titles below average. Also, per CSEA 6300 bargaining agreement must be a reallocation vote amongst the County Executive, HR Director and Union President. With this research and the departments reasons stated in a memo by Christine Schuyler, the vote was unanimous to approve this. So basically, we are requesting those reallocations primarily because back in September- it was between March and September of 2017, we had a vacancy rate of these titles in the department of over 51% which made things very difficult. It still is very difficult as a result of that. It takes about twelve months to fully train a caseworker in this title. It is very hard work, which also contributes to the turnover rate. There are other options in the county including- as far as employment options, caseworkers are required to have a bachelor's degree. We lose many of our trained staff to the Department of Probation and that has been happening for many years. There is a difference in pay, it's a different work requirement and we also- I believe in the last two or three years, Medicaid redesign has resulted in some organizations in our community (*inaudible*) in hiring new positions called care coordinators. They require the bachelor's level as well and most of these agencies get a higher rate of pay. What we are seeing is, and this is based on exit interview information, is that people are leaving and they are stating it's because of pay grade and because they can find work at a higher pay rate that doesn't necessarily require them to go into people homes and ask them personal questions that are sometimes about dark family secrets where there could be drug manufacturing or dealing going on in that home. At the same time that we are losing staff, our performance on State requirements, which are related to safety assessments in the home, completing an investigation, etc., we decreased with 55% of caseworkers having more than 15 cases open. The State recommends 15 as the number. We had over 55% at more than 15 and some as high as 30. What happens in those cases is it makes it very difficult for the staff to get out and even assess the safety of children, which puts us all at a huge liability. Over a third of all investigations have been overdue and slightly less than half of the assessments completed on time, so we have had some struggles in those areas. That's pretty much what I had to share. The cost, if you are interested in that,-

Chairman Wilfong: I am. I'm interested about the budget impact.

Mr. Anderson: The budget impact- you have to consider also during this time- in 2014, 2015, and 2016, the most we paid in overtime was \$7,800. The year prior to 2016 was \$4,800,

the year before that was \$6,300 and that's pretty consistent. In this same period where we are having these issues arise, it was \$122,000.

Chairman Wilfong: And that's for the whole year?

Mr. Anderson: For the whole year from 2017. This year for 2018 we are on target for about \$100,000 with overtime costs. We would like to see that number go back down to a much more reasonable level. The total cost of this salary upgrade is \$136,000 and that is for 77 employees that will be impacted by this.

Chairman Wilfong: Is that money budgeted somewhere in the 2018 budget?

Mrs. Dennison: Not specifically in 2018, no.

Chairman Wilfong: OK.

Mrs. Dennison: In the 2018, all of these positions are budgeted at the current rate. As Jon said, it would be additional wages above and beyond the current budget.

Chairman Wilfong: Of \$136,000?

Mr. Anderson: That's salary only. With salary and fringe benefits is \$166,900.

Legislator Pavlock: So the total package is \$166,000?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. We do get 65% funding and that is about \$108,000 leaving a local share difference of about \$58,000. When we take into consideration the cost for overtime and the associated local share costs according to our fiscal analysis, it's between \$5,000 and \$10,000 increased local share. That could be even less because with less turnover we are sending far fewer people to Albany for weeks throughout the year as they get trained. We have fewer hotel costs, mileage costs, meal costs, etc. So, we are anticipating that it would be much lower than that as we stabilize back to where we were before.

Chairman Wilfong: So we are saying that we had \$100,000 in overtime costs and our share for this would be \$58,000? So, it would be almost half? Am I reading that correctly?

Mr. Anderson: Well, the overtime costs will be on target this year for \$100,000. The \$58,000 is the local share we are talking about.

Chairman Wilfong: For these upgrades.

Mrs. Dennison: Just for the wages and the fringe benefits.

Mr. Anderson: Right.

Legislator Pavlock: Is there a documented turnover rate?

Mr. Anderson: There probably is and we have probably calculated that. I have some information here about where it has been in the past. We range anywhere from 20-30% with a high of up to about 55%. That is not for vacancy specifically. That is actually for people who can actually take a caseload because while they are in training they cannot touch a case, so we don't count a new hire as somebody that is even a filled position because they can't take any cases.

Legislator O'Connell: Are you losing primarily the lower grade people?

Mr. Anderson: Primarily caseworkers. The reason that all of these titles were included as a package was to keep things consistent and not have the lower grade titles at higher rate than the title above them.

Mrs. Dennison: I should say, just for the record, that all of the financial analysis and budget impact was done by Social Services and was not done by the Department of Finance, not that I distrust any of the information. My comments are just to substantiate that the proposed increase is not in the current 2018 budget.

Chairman Wilfong: When will this be put into place?

Mr. Anderson: They are hoping soon.

Chairman Wilfong: OK.

Legislator Pavlock: So it will affect this year's budget?

Mrs. Dennison: It will affect next year's as well.

Chairman Wilfong: Anymore questions? All in favor? Opposed?

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution- To Accept New York State Department of Health Nurse Family Partnership Program Grant

Mr. Anderson: This is a grant and the impact is that the grant is in the budget and we lowered our Medicaid revenue projections which were over estimated.

Chairman Wilfong: What does that mean?

Mr. Anderson: It means that we had a grant and in the original grant the revenue was not grant revenue, it was Medicaid reimbursement revenue for the program for (*inaudible.*) The grant is going to cover the revenue as opposed to Medicaid dollars.

Legislator O'Connell: Is there a shortfall in the budget or-

Mr. Anderson: I don't have the details. I wish Valerie were here. What she told me was that it is not coming in as high as what they had anticipated.

Chairman Wilfong: OK.

Mrs. Dennison: I did have an email correspondence with Ms. Lis about this just to back up what Jon is saying. She said that the federal revenue is not coming in as strongly as anticipated, but that there was this grant coming from the State so the federal- the grant would equalize the decrease in the federal sources. It is budget neutral.

Chairman Wilfong: Any questions? All in favor of this proposal please say aye. Opposed?

Unanimously Carried

MOVED by Legislator Wilfong, SECONDED by Legislator O'Connell to adjourn

Unanimously Carried (5:31 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,
Olivia L. Ames, Committee Secretary