

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Health & Human Services**

The regular meeting of the Health & Human Services Committee was held in the Legislative Conference Room, Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 8:30 AM.

Present: Mr. William Standinger	Chair of the Committee
Mr. Tracy Monell	Legislator {arrived 8:32 AM}
Mr. Dennis Mullen	Legislator
Mr. Ray Bunce	Legislator
Ms. Lori Morgan	Director of Community Services
Mr. Chris Korba	Director of Administrative Services (MH)
Mr. Shawn Yetter	Commissioner of Social Services
Ms. Mickelle Andrews	Director of Administrative Services (DSS)
Ms. Heather Vroman	Public Health Director
Mr. Denis McCann	Director of Administrative Services (PH)

Guests:	Mr. Jackson Bailey	County Administrator
	Ms. Elizabeth Myers	Deputy Commissioner (DSS)
	Ms. Cathy Haskell	Legislative Clerk
	Ms. Marte Sauerbrey	Chair of Legislature
	Mr. Peter DeWind	County Attorney
	Ms. Abigail Stephens	MSW Student
	Ms. JoEllen Rose	Owego Resident {arrived 9:10 AM}

Legislator Standinger asked for a motion to approve the January 7, 2025 HHS Committee minutes as written. Motion made by Legislator Bunce. Seconded by Legislator Mullen. Motion Carried.

**MENTAL HYGIENE**

1. Financial
  - Mr. Chris Korba noted that the 2024 budget accruals have not been finished yet. There is also \$250,000 in Revenue that will be moved back to 2024. He expects to have a return to local share. The 2025 budget is showing nothing unexpected.
2. Old Business
  - Criminal Psych – There may be one person in-patient, but no invoices have been received yet. Communication between State & County is lacking.
3. New Business
  - None

#### 4. Personnel

- Jason Seidel, CASAC, resigned 1/27/25
- Dr. Tara Belsare, PT Psychiatrist, started 1/29/25
- Dr. Bezirgianian retiring as of 2/1/25
- Christina Hust, Mobile Crisis Sr. SCW, starting 2/10/25
- May have a Peer Specialist starting soon for the Mobile Crisis Unit. Two vehicles have been ordered as well for the Mobile Crisis Unit.

#### 5. Resolutions – Legislators approved resolutions to move forward

- Resolution Reappointment Robert Williams to Community Services Board
- Resolution Reappointment Dr. Keith Nichols to Community Services Board
- Create & Fill Permanent, Full-Time Clinical Social Worker Position (Will be covered 100% by Fee-For-Service revenue)
- Appropriation of Funds Budget Modification 2025 Mental Hygiene (100% pass through State Aid – no local share)

#### 6. Proclamations

- None

### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

#### 1. Financial

- Mr. Denis McCann reported that he expects to have a return to local share from the 2024 budget, but due to some usual delayed revenues (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter State Aid, & 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter grant Claims) and accrued expenses back to 2024, the amount is unknown at this point. There is nothing unexpected in the 2025 budget.

#### 2. Old Business

- None

#### 3. New Business

- Agency Report for January 2025 forwarded to committee. Ms. Vroman shared the H5N1 Bird Flu is widespread in New York State. There were 2 cases in cattle of the infection in Suffolk and Ulster Counties. Nationwide there are 67 human cases, but only one death. TCPH is working on a Preparedness Plan with the State. PH is spreading awareness about this infection to the community, as to not cause alarm. Ms. Vroman noted that all PH staff attended a de-escalation presentation last month. She recommends it highly to other departments. They will continue to have an animal control officer at all rabies clinics for added security.
- Dental Van - As part of the Dental Van Security Quality Improvement project, Ms. Bennett made signage stating that no medication or cash is kept on the dental van. Still looking into a security system for the dental van and have several security demos scheduled. Ms. Vroman also gave a shout out to Buildings & Grounds for staying late on a Friday to take care of a severe leak in the dental van. She is very appreciative!

- Community Health Assessment Year – The required steering committee is coming together. After receiving the surveys, the committee will plan on how to address any issues.
4. Personnel
    - Albert Knapp, Public Health Sanitarian, retired 1/3/25
  5. Resolutions – Legislators approved resolutions to move forward
    - Amend Resolution No. 31-25; Authorize Salary Reallocation Within CSEA Salary Schedule for Public Health Technician
    - Amend Budget & Appropriate Funds (Wellhead Grant)
    - Authorization to Apply for Grant (Visions-Car Seat)
    - Amend 2025 Budget & Appropriate Funds (Year 12 Performance Incentive)
    - Authorize Agreement with Crediblemind for Software Application (PH working in collaboration with Mental Hygiene) IT and Attorney Dewind are also involved in the planning.

County Administrator Bailey thanked Ms. Vroman & her team for the visit where he had scheduled meetings with PH staff.

6. Proclamations
  - None

### **SOCIAL SERVICES**

1. Financial
  - Ms. Mickelle Andrews reported that Foster Care continues to run over budget. However, there is Admin savings of \$640,000 from payroll. Safety Net and rest of program lines are on target or below. It is too soon for return projections. The 2025 budget is tracking well.
  - There was discussion on the reasons Foster Care is over budget. Most cases are from substance abuse in the home. Ms. Myers expects the trend to continue. Out of the 55 kids in care, 6-8 of those are being adopted and will come off the FC number. Commissioner Yetter & Ms. Myers have a meeting scheduled with Ms. Morgan to determine if some of the opioid money can go towards households dealing with substance abuse concerns.
  - Legislator Mullen expressed his concerns with the new changes to direct care (PPL). This will negatively impact providers and families.
  - Buildings & Grounds will be converting a training room into offices. Plexiglass will be installed around the Employment receptionist. Mr. Gary Hammond has approved the changes.
2. Old Business
  - None

### 3. New Business

- Caseloads – See Caseload Summary  
During January, Cash Assistance increased 6 cases, with Family Assistance increasing 7 cases and Safety decreasing 1 case.  
MA-Only increased 52 cases.  
MA-SSI decreased 7 cases.  
Total Individuals on Medicaid increased 64 to 3,443  
SNAP increased 38 cases.  
Day Care remained flat
- Tioga Career Center report is attached. The TC unemployment number has risen slightly.
- Code Blue Discussion – Code Blue policy goes into effect when the temperature hits or drops below 32 degrees. Per this policy, the county must implement emergency measures for the homeless during inclement winter weather. Tioga County only receives \$5,000. Counties are lobbying NYS for more funds towards this program due to the growing need & costs associated with it. (See resolution). The number per night in Tioga County is anywhere between 15-20 people. Through the State OMH program, Catholic Charities of Cortland Co. does outreach on cold nights. There has been some success with getting people into rehab. There is a new rehab facility in Pennsylvania. The DSS on-call staff have seen an increase in referrals for homeless people. As there is no shelter in Tioga County, the Sunrise & Deepwell motels are typically used. However, surrounding counties are also using the same motels. The Dandy Marts in Waverly & Nichols do allow people to come in out of the cold and will provide them with coffee.

### 4. Personnel Changes

- Corrine Whitmore, P/T Social Services Investigator, resigned effective 1/7/25
- Ashton Lewis, Caseworker, resigned effective 1/24/25
- Chase Bullock, Office Specialist II, hired effective 1/27/25

### 5. Resolutions – Legislators approved resolutions to move forward

- Appropriation of Funds and Amend 2025 Budget (SAFE)
- Appropriation of Funds and Amend 2025 Budget (NR DV)
- Appropriation of Funds and Amend 2025 Budget (Code Blue)
- Appropriation of Funds and Amend 2025 Budget (APS III)
- Authorize Chair of Legislature to Sign Application for Grant Funds (Mobility Management)
- Advocating for Reform and Increased Funding for NYS's Code Blue Program

### 6. Proclamations

- None

**ADJOURNED:**

Health & Human Services Committee adjourned at 9:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Gail V. Perdue*

Executive Secretary, Social Services