

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
April 26, 2006
OSWEGO COUNTY BUILDING
4TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

Present:

Legislators

John Proud, Chairman
Barbara Brown, Vice Chair
Dan Chalifoux
Leonard Ponzi
Paul Santore
Arthur Gearsbeck

Staff

Kathleen Fenlon, Executive Director, Youth Bureau
Frances Lanigan, Commissioner of Social Services
Larry Schmidt, Director of Office for the Aging
Kathleen Smith, Commissioner of Health Services
Kim Briest, Senior Typist, Office for the Aging
Donna Kestner, Director of Veterans' Services
Billie Crandall Brady, Traffic Safety Board

Guests

Stephen Lyman, County Administrator

Chairman Proud called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Proud asked for a motion to approve the March 22, 2006 meeting minutes.

Motion: Legislator Santore moved a motion to accept the minutes of the March meeting.

Second: Legislator Brown

Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

2. **YOUTH BUREAU**

Reality Check Resolutions

K. Fenlon distributed two handouts regarding the resolutions being presented to make our youth more aware of the manipulations by the tobacco industry in movies and in advertisements.

In 2004, a poll conducted of 223 high schools in New York State determined that 70% of magazines sent to school libraries contained tobacco advertisements. Reality Check programs across New York State are asking for support from school boards, community groups, etc. in terms of a resolution that supports an effort to remove such advertising from publications sent to school libraries.

It has also been discussed that movies contain subtle tobacco advertising. Reality Check programs across New York State are asking for support of a resolution that causes movies to be rated "R" if they contain reference to or visual of tobacco products while ensuring there are no pay-offs to movies to represent tobacco products.

Motion: Legislator Santore made a motion to approve the proposed resolutions.

Second: Legislator Brown

Chairman Proud stated that he was not comfortable with voting for a resolution that limits the first amendment. He believes that not allowing tobacco in youth related films may be flirting with first amendment rights for freedom of expression. He stated that sometimes with the intent of accomplishing something, you take away from something else. A discussion followed.

Legislators Santore and Brown withdrew the motion to approve the two resolutions.

Motion: Legislator Chalifoux made a motion to approve the proposed resolution for eliminating the presence of tobacco products in motion pictures.

Second: Legislator Santore

Vote: Chairman Proud voted no. All others were in favor. Motion carried.

Motion: Legislator Chalifoux made a motion to approve the proposed resolution for eliminating tobacco product advertising in publications sent to school libraries.

Second: Legislator Santore

Vote: All were in favor. Motion carried.

TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD

Chairman Proud introduced Billie Crandall Brady of the Traffic Safety Board to the Committee. A resolution appointing members to the Traffic Safety Board was presented appointing or re-appointing the following members:

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| Sgt. Brian Woodard | New York State Police | 12/31/06 |
| Tom Gunn | Oswego City Schools Transportation | 12/31/06 |
| Chris Sharkey | Oswego City Schools Transportation | 12/31/06 |
| Capt. Matthew Coffey | Oswego City Police | 12/31/06 |
| Sgt. Paul Warren | Oswego City Police | 12/31/06 |
| Raymond Haynes | State Farm Insurance | 12/31/07 |
| Margaret Beers | Oswego Hospital | 12/31/07 |
| Orlo Green | Fulton Police Department | 12/31/07 |
| Joanne Hutchinson | M.A.D.D. | 12/31/07 |
| Diane Oldenburg | Oswego County Health Department | 12/31/07 |
| Paul Stoner | Oswego County STOP-DWI | 12/31/07 |
| Christopher Nelson | State Farm Insurance | 12/31/08 |
| Linda Jewett | Tobacco Free Network ICP | 12/31/08 |
| Christina Wilson | Tobacco Free Network ICP | 12/31/08 |

Motion: Legislator Santore moved to accept the resolution as presented.

Second: Legislator Brown

Vote: All were in favor. Motion carried.

3. **HEALTH**

Isolation and Quarantine Drill

The Health Department will be holding its first isolation and quarantine drill on the morning of June 14, 2006. They are required to perform the drill as part of the emergency preparedness grant. The drill will be based on the plan the Health Department submitted to the State two years ago. A discussion followed.

Eat Well/Play Hard Grant

The Health Department is submitting an eat well/play hard grant. It is a grant to establish these programs in schools and communities to encourage an increased consumption of low-fat foods and fruits and moderate physical activity. The grant is for \$85,000 a year, renewable for five years. There will be eight grants awarded in New York State. Oswego

County will receive five extra points toward its score as it has never received the grant before.

Annual Best Tasting Water Contest

The Health Department is sponsoring its annual best tasting drinking water contest in Mexico on May 6, 2006.

4. **SOCIAL SERVICES**

Director of Finance Position

Commissioner Lanigan presented the Committee with several handouts detailing the position of the director of finance and the need for such a position. She explained that this is a request for the reinstatement of a position that was previously in the Health Department budget. The Department of Social Services has been assessing the situation. Due to the constantly changing figures and regulations at the State and Federal levels dealing with the claims and expenditures for the many programs the department operates, it is critical to have the director of finance and program staff working together. The position is reimbursable at 75% State and Federal share. Commissioner Lanigan emphasized how important it is to have someone focused completely on getting the County the proper reimbursement for staff and other program time. The Department of Social Services budget provides for the program divisions of Mental Health and Employment and Training as well.

Discussion:

Chairman Proud acknowledged Legislator Gearsbeck. Legislator Gearsbeck stated that he will not support this position as Commissioner Lanigan's salary package (including benefits) is over \$100,000 per year and he feels that she should have the responsibility of the financial needs of the department included with her job duties.

Legislator Ponzi asked if Commissioner Lanigan had selected someone for the position already. Commissioner Lanigan replied that she had not. She was in contact with the Personnel Department for their input for the position. Commissioner Lanigan also informed the Committee that Legislator Gearsbeck had been in to see her regarding any grants that the Department of Social Services has. She prepared a handout for the Committee outlining the complexity of management of the many programs under the department. The allocations are different every year. She emphasized the importance of a financial officer to ensure that reimbursements are being given the attention the County deserves.

Legislator Santore asked Commissioner Lanigan how many people she was responsible for. Commissioner Lanigan responded that she has eight people who report directly to her with approximately 250 employees. Legislator Santore asked her to approximate how many clients the department is responsible for. Commissioner Lanigan stated that there are over 20,000 Medicaid clients in Oswego County and that is just one program. Legislator Santore noted that there is a large number of people the department is responsible to provide services for with no time left for the finance area. Commissioner Lanigan stated she has a good general knowledge of the financial works of the department, but she is not an auditor and not an accountant, therefore, she feels that it is a disservice to the County to not have a finance officer.

Administrator Lyman noted that the position is competitive. Whoever is hired for this position will need to take a civil service test to qualify for it. Right now there is one person who reports to the Legislature, he feels it is important to have another. He agreed that

Commissioner Lanigan has a good knowledge of all areas of her department. However, with the financial aspect being such a critical function to the County Government, he feels it is a risk to the taxpayers to deny this position. Also, in looking out for the best interest of the County Legislature, there is no one to talk to at this time if the Commissioner is away. By approving this position, this person will be in contact with the Legislature and Administration, especially at budget time. Without this position, the County could be under taxing or overtaxing by 10% in just Social Services alone. He also agreed that with the rules changing at both the State and Federal levels on a regular basis, it is important to make the link between the finance department and the program staff to ensure maximum reimbursement.

Chairman Proud reminded the Committee that they are not creating a new position. The request is to replace a position that existed prior to a resignation. Legislator Gearsbeck said that he could support the request if the Committee says that the department could be downsized to work better. Legislator Chalifoux said that he understood Legislator Gearsbeck's point, but that with this position, the department is trying to save taxpayers money and is doing exactly what the Legislature has asked to be done.

Motion: Legislator Ponzi made a motion to approve the resolution to reinstate the position of the Director of Finance to the Department of Social Services and asked for a roll call vote.

Second: Legislator Brown

Vote:

Legislator Gearsbeck – no

Legislator Santore – yes

Legislator Brown – yes

Legislator Ponzi – yes

Legislator Chalifoux – yes

Chairman Proud – yes

Motion carried.

Commissioner Lanigan informed the Committee that May is National Foster Care Month. There will be a foster parent recognition dinner for those people bringing needy children into their homes. The dinner will be at the Holiday Corners Restaurant in Pulaski on May 6, 2006.

As there was no further business at this time, Legislator Santore made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m. Legislator Ponzi seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.