

SOCIAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE MEETING

March 11, 2008 – 3:15 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Wormuth; Supervisors Jenkins, Richardson, Veitch, Wright; Southworth; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Sandra Cross, Office for the Aging; Wes Carr, Youth Bureau; Tina Potter, Samantha Ernst, Social Services; Sam Pitcherale, Jerry Lundgren, George Martin, Treasurer's Office; League of Women Voters representatives; Steve Williams, Daily Gazette

Chairman Wormuth called the meeting to order.

Mr. Jenkins moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 4, 2008. Mr. Richardson seconded. Unanimous.

Chairman Wormuth appointed Mr. Lucia as Vice-Chairman.

Mrs. Cross requested a **resolution authorizing the renewal of EISEP contracts with Home Care Agencies**. She distributed copies of a list of these agencies and their rates, and she said the rates are set by the State. **Mr. Wright moved to approve this resolution. Mr. Veitch seconded. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Cross requested a **resolution authorizing a contract with Care Links for administering the volunteer program**. Mrs. Cross said they are out of the Clifton Park Senior Center. Last year, they received a \$30,000 grant from Senator Bruno that expanded them into Mechanicville. She said they find people who want to be volunteers to provide services to needy seniors, i.e., mowing, raking, shopping, etc. She said this program has won numerous national awards. She said she would like to duplicate this into the northern end of the County once it is in the southern end of the County. She mentioned the contract period is April 1 through March 31. **Mr. Richardson moved to approve this resolution. Mr. Jenkins seconded. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Cross requested a **resolution authorizing a contract with GTL, Inc. for personal emergency response systems**. She stated this is called Link to Life, and they currently contract with them under a minor contract at \$7,500/year. We have 17 clients, and we would like to increase that contract

to \$12,000 to service 48 individuals, she stated. **Mr. Richardson moved to approve this resolution. Mr. Veitch seconded. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Cross requested a **resolution authorizing renewal of a contract with registered dietician Peggy Ghanime.** She stated Peggy works 18 hours per week at \$35/hr. **Mr. Wright moved to approve this resolution. Mr. Jenkins seconded. Unanimous.**

Mr. Carr requested a **resolution accepting a \$10,000 grant for the Saratoga County Council on Autism.** He said Assemblyman McDonald, through the NYS Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, is offering a special legislative grant to support autism awareness in Saratoga County in the amount of \$10,000. He stated Saratoga County's Council on Autism was formed to promote the development of services and resources for individuals with pervasive developmental disorders or autism throughout their lifetime. **Mr. Richardson moved to accept this grant. Mr. Veitch seconded. Unanimous.** Mr. Veitch said being a father with two children with autism, the rates are out there, and his rates are 100%. He said he is a member of the Saratoga County Council on Autism, and this money will be put to good use. Chairman Wormuth mentioned Supervisor Anita Daly has been working on this, and we are excited to see this move forward. Mr. Veitch stated there will be a symposium on April 5th at Saratoga Bridges from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and the public is welcome. It will be an eye opener for some people, he said.

Mrs. Potter stated the Food Stamp Initiative for Working Families began on January 1st. She said it is a new project intended to increase food stamp participation amongst working families. She said they have the responsibility to review all food stamp applications, and the face to face interviews have been waived, and individuals will do phone interviews. The applicant will no longer have to travel into the office to come in to apply for recertification, she said. She stated the resource limit was taken off for the food stamp population in order for the family to incur some savings. At the end of this year, there will be a pilot program where individuals can go to facilitated enrollers, and in 2009, the goal will be to have full internet access to apply for benefits and be able to check the status of benefits, she stated. She said they received a food stamp bonus award to expand this program, and they will be eligible for \$31,900 to purchase 11 computers and software packages and headsets for those individuals taking phone interviews. She

said they will evaluate and work with Personnel to get some temporary staff to deal with the increase of potential applicants.

Mr. Veitch asked for a clarification on a resource limit. Mrs. Potter said in the past, you couldn't have more than \$2,000 in savings or \$3,000 if you had a disability or were over 60 years of age, but that is being eliminated. It will just be based on income only to allow individuals to have savings in case of a crisis.

Mrs. Potter gave an update on the HEAP program. She said they sent a letter to all Supervisors regarding their additional funding for this low income assistance program. She said this will remain open through May 15th. Effective February 11th, there was a second emergency benefit put into place, and a letter was sent to all HEAP applicants. The County received additional administrative funds in order to keep our temporary staff, she added.

Mr. Jenkins displayed a report he received from the Office of the New York State Comptroller on "Recovering Costs Related to Social Service Programs" that was issued in December, 2007. He said the Comptroller audited five counties, and within that, they found substantial differences how direct and indirect costs are allocated. He said he discussed this with our regional director of the Comptroller's office, and he indicated these five test counties were low and may not be processing right. He said there was \$1.3 million in lost revenues between the counties. He suggested that this County's DSS staff could get a report from the Comptroller's office. This indicates there may be some problems, and some issues should be updated, he stated. Chairman Wormuth said this report has been forwarded to Bob Christopher, and they have had discussions with our Treasurer and his staff. They are comfortable with the things that we do, she said. Mr. Jenkins said in looking at the results, it looks like there could be potential problems.

Mrs. Potter said they analyzed that report regarding recovering costs. We thoroughly examined this and feel confident we are not deficient in any of the areas that were noted, she said. We are comfortable we are doing what the recommendations were, she added. She said they bill for appropriate services for different agencies. They do not really have prosecutions. We work with a new procedure where the State has an Administrative Law Judge who makes an order which works very effectively as an alternative to going to prosecution, she stated. Mr. Pitcherelle said if there are any

questions regarding indirect costs, they can answer them. I believe we are one of the better counties, he stated. Mr. Jenkins said he anticipated that we were doing a great job.

On a motion by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Richardson, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann