

Social Programs Committee Minutes
July 8, 2014 - 4:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Lucia; Supervisors Lunde, Jenkins, Martin, Allen, Tollisen, Wood, Barrett, Veitch, Richardson and Sausville; Press.

Chairman Lucia called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Martin the minutes of the June 10, 2014 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Carr distributed copies of an explanation of what services are provided through the Preschool Special Education Program and the associated rates. He said current the rates are \$35/per half hour, which includes physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. The rates were established when the Special Education Program was moved out of family court in the late 1980's. The Preschool Special Education Program is mandated through the State Education Department and the service rates are set by counties. He said currently the county's share is approximately \$576,463.

Mr. Hellwig said a couple of years ago the providers had expressed hardships in terms of providing the services at the existing rate. There was a subcommittee formed in 2011, and based on other challenges that the county was faced with there was no ability to even remotely consider an adjustment. The issue has resurfaced again, driven by the same argument, which is that the cost of traveling and materials has made it more difficult to provide the services.

Mr. Carr said currently the rates that are being paid are locked in from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. If the Board of Supervisors choses to adjust the rates they would not take effect until July 1, 2015.

Mr. Lunde asked what percentage is done individually versus a group. Mr. Carr said currently it is 90% individual, 10% group.

Mr. Barrett said Saratoga County's rates are below other counties and have not been changed for some time. He said he would support an increase; however, with any increase or expenditure in the budget we need to be careful. He suggested having an increase over time that would work toward a goal over a number of years, as opposed to a very large increase that could be a large increase to the budget all at one time.

Mr. Veitch agreed that there should be an increase in the rates. He said he supports increasing the rates over a time period.

A motion was made by Mr. Lunde, seconded by Mr. Martin to table any rate adjustments until committee members have had time to review the rates and budget impact. Unanimous.

On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Martin the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom