

## **Minutes of Meeting**

### **SOCIAL & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING Department of Social Services**

June 25, 2012

Present: John Salka, Town of Brookfield  
Lewis Carinci, City of Oneida  
Roger Bradstreet, Town of Nelson  
Alexander Stepanski, Town of Stockbridge  
James Goldstein, Town of Lebanon  
Michael Fitzgerald, Commissioner  
Mark Scimone, Administrative Assistant to the Chairman  
Brad Murray, Intern for Mark Scimone

A joint meeting with DSS and the Veterans Agency was held to discuss a recently-held meeting with the funeral home directors. A resolution was passed in 2007 setting burial rates for the indigent, effective January 1, 2008. No changes have been made since and funeral home directors wanted to meet to discuss any increases in rates. The last revision included numerous changes in wording and categories so they were not looking at any revisions there, but just in reimbursement rates. The funeral home directors were tasked with making their recommendations no later than July 13. From there, DSS and Veterans will evaluate the proposals for costs and present a recommendation to the committee for board action. Options explored with the funeral home directors included doing an RFP, which would likely lower costs, but result in families having to travel greater distances for the funerals. The funeral home directors were unanimous in their praise for both DSS and Veterans in the process to apply, communication, and payments. The all expressed high satisfaction with the county.

Mike began his meeting by reviewing the meeting minutes from the May 21, 2012, committee meeting. There were no corrections and on a motion by Lewis and seconded by Roger, the meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Mike next reviewed the caseload and expenditure report. Through five months, there were no “surprises” to announce. Heading into the 2013 budget, there are significant and numerous concerns, but 2012 should end without much struggle.

Finally, on the agenda was an out-of-state travel resolution. The resolution was to send a DSS employee to Dallas, Texas, for the Crimes Against Children Conference being held August 12 to 16, 2012. The MDT/CAC is supporting the payment for the conference out of its training funds and the Criminal Justice Committee had already approved the travel, as did Government Operations. Mike was alerting the committee of the pending travel. No committee members expressed opposition.

Off agenda, Mike was aware that the Public Health Committee and Board of Health would be discussing the recent spate of bath salts cases wreaking havoc in Madison County. Mike informed the committee that DSS has also seen a dramatic increase in cases being identified as being impacted by bath salts. His concerns were the rapid escalation of the cases (only begun in

February), the non-typical nature of the families it is affecting (well established, working class, with no prior DSS involvement), and rapid decrease in the families' ability to safely parent (within weeks, kids are being removed to safer homes). Mike wanted to express his support of any local laws that banned possession and use in addition to sale and distribution. He is on the local task force addressing education and treatment, but with enforcement, he fears the situation will continue to deteriorate.

There being no further discussion, the Mental Health Department began its presentation.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Fitzgerald  
Commissioner

Approved by Committee Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_