

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

November 28, 2012

PRESENT:

**Elizabeth Young, Chairwoman
Matt Murell
William Hughes, Jr.
Arthur Bassin
Ellen Thurston**

ABSENT:

**Edward Cross
Richard Keaveney**

ALSO PRESENT:

**Gail DiCosmo, Clerk
Kary Jablonka
Michelle Ublacker
Kenneth Schomaker
Paul Mossman
Gary Flaherty
Lynn Kutski
Michael Williams Riordon
William Fisher
Ronald Caponera**

PRESS: 1

Chairwoman Young called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

OFFICE FOR THE AGING: K. Jablonka

Resolution Request: Authorization for contract renewal with the Eddy Visiting Nurse Association to provide meals for Long Term Home Health Care Program patients at a rate of \$6.26/meal, motion by W. Hughes, Jr., seconded by M. Murell, carried. Forward to Finance.

Resolution Request: Authorization to modify 2012 budget by transferring a total of \$3,200.00 (\$2200 from Computer Supplies; \$500 from Office Supplies/Paper; \$500 from Motor Fuel) to Building Maintenance to install a vestibule at the Al Tripp Nutrition Center in Philmont to control heat/air loss, motion by W. Hughes, Jr., seconded by M. Murell, carried. Forward to Finance.

VETERANS: G. Flaherty

Military Academy Candidates: Three (3) candidates are from Columbia County this year.

Veterans' Day Activities: G. Flaherty attended the Hudson Parade on Veteran's Day.

Vet-Track Re-Organization: Met with Judge Nichols to re-organize this program.

G. Flaherty responded to 129 phone calls, assisted to 30 office visits and 27 mailings, including applications for Government Grave Markers and Presidential Memorial Certificates.

There are 1.1 million backlogged applications at the VA.

FAIR HOUSING: W. Fisher

W. Fisher distributed to the committee on fact sheet on Apple Meadows Village located at 53 Apple Meadow Road in the Town of Greenport. The property has 58 Apartments. Current Market Rents: 1 BR - \$610.00, 2 BR - \$700.00, and 3 BR - \$800.00; at a prior committee meeting, Supervisor Hughes mentioned a letter which had been sent to the residents of Apple Meadows. This letter basically stated that effective January 1, 2013, rents would be at full market value rates. These monthly rates are listed above. In a recent conversation with the facility manager, it was learned that this does not mean that ownership will no longer accept vouchers from HUD, but that ownership has decided to have no direct communication with HUD, or in obtaining the tenants financial information to determine their eligibility for said vouchers. Management has indicated that this change will affect 48 units, but that the arrangement which currently exists will continue on 10 unites. Unless a third party entity such as Housing Authority, not for profit, or private management group comes forward to administer the voucher program subsidy will stop; and

tenants will be with the burden of paying the entire rent even though HUD has been allocated funding for the voucher program. The affect of this change could result in the tenants' inability to pay and ultimate eviction.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES: P. Mossman

Commissioner Mossman informed the committee that he is very upset to critical comments of his agency that were made at a panel discussion that took place Tuesday evening at Time & Space Ltd. in Hudson. This meeting that was called, Commissioner Mossman was not aware nor invited to. This was all in reference to processing claims more rapidly, Commissioner Mossman said he was "proud of his staff" and that they "should be commended" for their efforts. He also stated his employees are working overtime, into the night, weekends and even holidays to process claims. Also stating there were still out-standing cash assistance applications waiting to be processed since September, which are to be processed within 30 days. The Commissioner also commented that he lost some of his staff to the state, which is beginning the process of taking over Medicaid applications from other counties in the state. Commissioner Mossman stated his department averages 600 to 700 applications a month for benefits. In October, there were 735 applications alone, and that we have made significant progress in reducing the number of outstanding cases, and we are going in the right direction. The bottom line is that the sanctions are intended to make people more accountable meeting with regulations as to looking for work, attending mandated alcohol and substance abuse treatment or searching for housing.

Resolution Request: Authorization to fill Two (2) vacant, budgeted positions of Social Welfare Examiner, GR 12, 2012 Step 1 salary \$32,018.00, motion by W. Hughes, Jr., seconded by A. Bassin, carried. Forward to Budget and Salary Review, if approved forward to Finance.

Resolution Request: Authorization to fill One (1) vacant, budgeted position of Senior Social Welfare Examiner, GR 13C, 2012 base salary \$43,165.00 and to fill any vacancies created due to internal appt. to this position, motion by W. Hughes, Jr., seconded by M. Murell, carried. Forward to Budget and Salary Review, if approved forward to Finance.

Resolution Request: Authorization to transfer \$136,320.00 from .4 accounts within the Department that are not being fully utilized to other accounts with the Department that require additional funds, motion by W. Hughes, Jr., seconded by A. Bassin, carried. Forward to Budget and Salary Review, if approved forward to Finance.

Budgets for each department under the Human Services Committee were reviewed.

With no further business a motion to adjourn at 6:03 PM by W. Hughes, Jr., seconded by M. Murell, motion carried.

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