

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
Monday, February 12, 2024 - 10:30 AM

Joe Pete Wilson, Chairperson  
Charlie Harrington, Vice-Chairperson

Chairman Wilson called this Human Services Committee to order at 10:45 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Matthew Brassard, Robin DeLoria, Shaun Gilliland, Charlie Harrington, Kenneth Hughes, Steve McNally, Jim Monty, Cathleen Reusser, Favor Smith, Matthew Stanley, Michael Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Davina Winemiller, Meg Wood and Mark Wright. Chris Clark and Derek Doty were excused.

Department Heads present: Angie Allen, Judy Garrison, Krissy Leerkes, Mike Mascarenas, and Terri Morse. Linda Beers had been previously excused.

Also present: Jessica Darney-Buehler, Jackie Thomas, Bridget Moran, Christine Palmer, Dan Sadowski and Tiffani Tromblee.

News Media present: Alania Penny - Sun Community News.

WILSON: Alright, good morning. I'll call the Human Services Committee to order and first up is the Department of Social Services, Angie Allen.

ALLEN: I almost set a beat box for Jackie back there but she got a little embarrassed so before we take a look at the report I just wanted to take this moment to recognize Jacqueline Thomas we call her Jackie from the Accounting Department. Do you need to close the door in case I embarrass anyone by doing a beat box? As of 24<sup>th</sup> of February Jackie will have been here more than 37 years of service three of those years are actually with the Department of Social Services but she's bounced around, many titles, different units she actually just let me know that she originally started as a summer intern which brings things full circle. So Jackie has been with us, she will be returning part-time to help in our accounting because she is the claims guru and you all have learned how important the claims are so if you guys wouldn't mind joining a hand with me and Jackie would you please stand for the recognition. Thank you.

WILSON: Did you want to pass a resolution?

ALLEN: Yes.

**RESOLUTION OF CONGRATULATIONS AND APPRECIATION TO JACQUELINE "JACKIE" THOMAS UPON HER RETIREMENT FROM ESSEX COUNTY WITH OVER 36 YEARS OF SERVICE. Hughes, unanimous.**

WILSON: And thank you for your years of service and thank you for being willing to come back and work during your retirement that makes a big difference for us. Thank you very much. Back to you Angie.

ALLEN: Well, actually back to you guys any questions?

HUGHES: I would just like to say there's not many employees of the County that come from Essex and I'm incredibly proud of Jackie who has been huge supporter of my onboarding to the County

and she has just been a really great human being and I'm grateful for her and all that she's done for the various departments and the Town of Essex and she served as the Planning Board secretary for us, just a really great human being so I just want to say congratulations to you. Thank you.

ALLEN: Any other questions in regards to my report? Short and sweet. Do you want to the beat box? I was prepared. Charlie, do you know what a beat box is? It's a beat for her to have a parade to that's all.

HUGHES: How does Judy write that up? *(laughter)*

WILSON: Thank you very much Angie that was inspiring. Next up is Mental Health and Terri Morse.

MORSE: Good morning everyone. I hope you had a great super bowl weekend and enjoyed the game and were able to stay up until after 11:00. I fell asleep.

I wasn't here last month so I included my peer information again in this month's report and I just wanted to, we talked about peer services a few months ago and I just want to let you know that Essex County Mental Health has their first family peer advocate and she has already in a month's period of time, has reached out to about ten different families and one in particular I just want to share this story, one in particular the woman was like afraid to leave her house and was just didn't feel confident in going and getting a job and she called Jessica last week and said I applied for three jobs and I think I'm going to get one of them so that's the beauty of the peer experience because it is an individual with a lived experience working with somebody with some struggles and so that was just exciting to share that with you. Just to make sure because I know you guys always want to know how is peer funded it is reimbursable by Medicaid and managed Medicaid services. Of course, there's always advocacy at the commercial insurance level too.

I've got some cool, positive impact stories you're welcome to read. I also wanted to bring to your attention there is, I wanted to educate the new supervisors about something in Essex County that we did not talk about last week called LEMHRS. It stands for Law Enforcement Mental Health Referral System. This was established back in 2018, as a result of the law enforcement both State Police and local police and also Sheriff's Department sending 13 individuals to get trained for a whole week on de-escalation of mental health and substance abuse issues and then we were kind of thinking this is great that they know this but how do we connect with the people that they are working with that fall into that category with the provider system? So what we did is we established an online referral form that law enforcement individual would fill out and that referral form would hit our system on our end and we would read what the situation is and then respond to it. So this has created 259 referrals in 2023, those are duplicated just so you know it is not 259 people but it has helped the law enforcement feel like they are not always responding then don't know what to do with the person so we go on the back end and we outreach them in person or sometimes you can't get ahold of them and do letters but we've found that this has helped us get services in the hands of people that law enforcement are encountering and don't really know what to do. So I wanted to let you guys know about that.

I have some great, exciting news. The Mental Health Association submitted an ESSHI grant which stands for Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative was awarded so this goes to the Housing Task Force they were awarded the grant and they partnered with Regan Development. It's my understanding it's a 90 unit facility with 15 of those units earmarked specifically for individuals with disabilities and the very broadest sense of that term. So that's exciting. What that means, people like, okay, what does that mean? That means that that funding will go to, it lasts for five years and that funding will help support the Mental Health Association for doing the wrap

around services for these individuals that live there. So that's really exciting news.

HUGHES: That's great.

MONTY: I've got to ask, dollar amount?

MORSE: I haven't seen it yet. This is just like hot, off the press news.

MONTY: That's wonderful. Congratulations.

MORSE: We've been working very – this is the third time MHA has applied for an ESSHI grant so we are really excited that we got it and that was it that I wanted to highlight for my report.

WILSON: Any questions? Thank you very much.

MORSE: I have one, tiny little resolution. It's to add, appoint Leslee Mounger to the Essex County Community Services Board as outlined on the resolution.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF LESLEE MOUNGER AS A MEMBER OF THE ESSEX COUNTY SERVICES BOARD (CSB) FOR A TERM EFFECTIVE 1/10/2024 – 12/31/2026 AND AS A MEMBER OF THE ALCOHOL SUBSTANCE ABUSE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR A TERM EFFECTIVE 1/10/2024- 12/31/2027. Brassard, Wood**

WILSON: Any questions?

HUGHES: I have a quick question, I noticed that the term of the sub-committee is longer than the term of the membership.

MORSE: That is correct.

HUGHES: Is that supposed to be like that?

MORSE: Yes, because some people are on the subcommittee and are not board members.

HUGHES: Okay but this person is?

MORSE: Yes.

HUGHES: So how can their subcommittee membership be longer than their actual CSB membership?

MORSE: Because they are set up wonky like that.

HUGHES: Okay

WILSON: Any other questions? All in favor, aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

MORSE: Thanks.

WILSON: And for Public Health Linda Beers is not here but Jessica Darney-Buehler is with us.

DARNEY-BUEHLER: Good morning everybody and we also submitted a report that I think you have in front of you. What we tried to do with this report was follow some of what we did this year for new board members which to give you an overview of all of the different programs and services that we have within the health department and to also include with that some of the numbers regarding how many investigations we're doing, cases we're looking at, people we are serving with those programs that's the format a the current report that we're looking at and we're very interested in your feedback if you have anything in addition that you would like to see in our monthly reports please reach out to Linda or myself so that we can work on that on your behalf. Just a couple of things from that report that I wanted to point out, we successfully hired somebody for our emergency preparedness coordinator position I'm really excited to have her. She's been with the Health Department before and she returns to us. As a note as other people have talked about our staffing struggles I understand how they impact us all and that for position specifically over three years we had six different people that have been or have left that position so Cori McCauliffe who is in the position now is our sixth person and I hope that she stays. We're working really hard on creating a really pleasant work environment and happiness within her role within our department to keep her on board with us.

Some other things that I just wanted to point out was within the family health program we currently have two certified lactation consultants and an additional consultant in the WIC program and we're working really hard on reaching out to new moms to support them so we had worked on an in person lactation support group that was in Elizabethtown and a separate one in Ticonderoga. While they weren't really well attended what we also started doing was a Facebook live event for those support groups wherein our staff covers specific topics and then that was available through Facebook. We've had over 1,000 views on our support group that we had that way and I think because of our geography, how busy people are how people now today like to access information online and through their phones and things like that, that this is going to be a really successful format so if you would, please do check out our Facebook and if you would like to see some of that snip from our Facebook live from our Little Feeder support group you can find that on our Facebook page. Any questions on the report?

WILSON: Do you have resolutions?

DARNEY-BUEHLER: I do have resolutions they are all separate just because of all the balance sheets and things like that but these are resolutions to move funds forward from 2023 to 2024 and there are six different award for grants where we are requesting to move those funds forward. I can answer any questions on each of those or if you need me to read them aloud.

MASCARENAS: I think the board can pass them anyway they would like if they feel comfortable with them. They all do appear to be resolutions moving funds from 2023 to 2024, I think you could if you chose to approve them as a package deal if you want to?

WILSON: Would someone like to move them?

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BUDGET AMENDMENTS IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS, FROM VARIOUS UNEXPENDED 2023 GRANT FUNDS TO 2024 GRANT FUNDS. Wright, Wood**

WILSON: Any questions about each or any or all of the resolutions?

HUGHES: There's ten resolutions what resolution numbers are we including in this omnibus?

WILSON: One through ten, thank you.

HUGHES: One through ten?

WILSON: Yes.

MASCARENAS: The way you are going to see them on ways and means is going to be separated just like you see them here in terms of weighted vote or a vote on that.

WILSON: Any other questions?

DARNEY-BUEHLER: If you want I can talk about each one super quickly to give you an overview? I don't want to take up your time if you find it unnecessary.

WILSON: I don't think, unless anybody has a question? Okay all in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

DARNEY-BUEHLER: Alright, thanks so much.

WILSON: Thanks so much for being here and we are onto Office for the Aging, Krissy Leerkes.

LEERKES: Good morning. So everybody has a copy of my report before I hit my resolutions I do just want to make a note that you guys have heard me talk a lot about our Americorp volunteers formally known as RSVP so utilize volunteers significantly for our transportation program. The volunteers are older adults themselves and that pool is decreasing significantly because as they age out or have their own health issues and are no longer able to volunteer we're not getting those younger 60 folks in there so with that being said, one of our volunteers from Mr. Monty's town Richard Graver actually passed away last week, two weeks ago, January 30<sup>th</sup> and just a little notation about Mr. Graver he was one of our amazing volunteers since 2006, so that right there tells you a lot about how kind and caring he was. Since 2006, he had over 1900 hours of volunteer time and that's what he logged. He did a lot of trips on his own that he did not request reimbursement for or just did not put in the time. We started tracking miles back in 2015, so since 2015, he logged over 20,000 miles of transportation for older adults to and from medical appointments or shopping or other areas so it's a huge commitment to our older adults and he will definitely be missed also one little tidbit is he was our 2017 honoree for Older New Yorkers from Essex County.

WILSON: Mr. Wright would like to make a resolution of appreciation?

WRIGHT: Yes and condolences to his family.

WILSON: Thank you Mr. Wright.

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO RICHARD GRAVER, LONG SERVING VOLUNTEER FOR THE ESSEX COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING AND SINCERE CONDOLENCE TO HIS FAMILY ON HIS PASSING. Wright, unanimous**

MONTY: I would also like to add on top of that, he also volunteered at ACAP to transport as well when he wasn't transporting for Krissy he was a tremendous community oriented man.

LEERKES: Yes. The first of each year I have to put in a plan to the State Office for the Aging, it's an annual update and this year is actually a four-year plan. With that, we take our county budget and kind of put it as our road map for the year for the next four years of how we anticipate how we are going to deliver services. I have to give older adults and members of the community an opportunity to hear said plan in a public hearing forum. We don't know when we'll get the plan, we have a big portion of it done but I would like permission to hold the public hearing for the review of the 2024-2025 New York State Office for the Aging annual plan. When we have more information I will get the information as to time and date and place and give that to Mr. Mascarenas to share with everybody.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR REVIEW OF THE 2024-2025 NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE AGING ANNUAL PLAN. Hughes, Stanley**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

LEERKES: The next is a resolution authorizing our office to enter into an additional contract with Cornell Cooperative Extension in the amount of \$5,543.27, for March 1 – September 30, 2024. These are some ARPA funds that will be going away on September 30<sup>th</sup> so we want to increase the opportunities that we have here in the county with Cornell through that time frame. Our intent is potentially to get Sam Davis certified in some other programming so that way it is a sustainable plan going forward.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH OFFICE FOR THE AGING AND CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,543.27, FOR THE PERIOD MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup> – SEPTEMBER 30, 2024, TO INCREASE EVIDENCE BASED HEALTH PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER ADULTS. Brassard, Stanley**

WILSON: Any questions?

HUGHES: What does PHC6 mean?

LEERKES: PHC6 is the actually funding code through ARPA and it's tied to our Title IIID which is our Evidence Based Health Promotion Programming. We have SSC6, PHC6, PHC3 besides that I don't know what it means. I just know it goes to IIID, SSC6 is IIIB.

HUGHES: Got it.

WILSON: Any other questions? All in favor aye, opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

LEERKES: Next is permission to accept an additional \$8,250.00, from the ADRC-Covid-19 Vaccine Access funds. These are the funds that we originally utilized last year to purchase all the at home Covid health monitoring kit for older adults. We were one of the few counties that expended all the funds so we were pooled if we wanted additional funds or not so we said, yes and they are giving us \$8250.00.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,250.00, ADRC-COVID-19 VACCINE ACCESS FUNDS. Stanley, Wright**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

LEERKES: The next one is to carryover FFCRA Stimulus Covid 19 funding from '23 to '24. We have through September 30 to spend these funds in the amount of \$73,112.35.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$73,112.35, CARRY OVER UNEXPENDED 2023 FFCRA STIMULUS COVID 19 FUNDING. Hughes, Brassard**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

LEERKES: And the last one is to carry over from 2023 to 2024 our DSRIP which is Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program in the amount of \$167,361.48.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$167,361.48, CARRY OVER UNEXPENDED 2023 DSRIP. Stanley, Wright**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, opposed – motion carries. Thank you. Do you have one more?

LEERKES: Yes, I was seeing if anyone was paying attention because I wasn't. Yes, I have one, last one and that is again, carry over 2023 funds to 2024 from Adirondack Foundation and Sun Fund grants in the amount of \$13,426.82.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$13,426.82, CARRY OVER UNEXPENDED 2023 GIFTS AND DONATIONS FROM ADIRONDACK FOUNDATION. Brassard, Wright**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

LEERKES: And I have nothing else unless anyone has any questions for me?

WILSON: Any questions for Krissy? Alright, thank you very much. Anything else to come before this committee?

MORSE: I just wanted to get back to Jim Monty's question so the ESSHI grant is, each unit those 15 units are awarded \$25,000 a year to do that supportive work so if you multiply \$25,000 times 15 that's \$375,000 so it's not like a \$1.6 million dollar award but the other thing remember I said it lasts five years a lot of times those are renewed so I just want to clarify that.

MONTY: I just want to congratulate you because I know how hard you've worked on these in the past and it's huge. Any amount of money you can get in is huge and it's right up the alley that you were looking for the collaborative help.

MORSE: I appreciate that. Thank you guys for your support.

WILSON: Thank you Terri. If no one has anything else, we are adjourned. Thank you very much.

As there was no further discussion to come before this Human Services Committee it was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk  
Board of Supervisors