HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Monday, September 14, 2026 - 10:30 AM

Davina Thurston, Chairperson
Cathleen Reusser, Vice-Chairperson

Chairwoman Thurston called this Human Services Committee to order at 10:31 a.m. with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Matthew Brassard, Kenneth Hughes, Mary Lamphear, Tracie McGill, Clayton Menser, James O'Bryan, Timothy Pierce, Richard Preston, Cathleen Reusser, Matthew Stanley, Davina Thurston, Michael Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson and Meg Wood. Chris Clark, Timothy Follos and Steve McNally were excused.

Department Heads present: Angie Allen, Linda Beers, Jim Dougan, Judy Garrison, Krissy Leerkes, Mike Mascarenas and Terri Morse.

Also present: Renee Bruno.

THURSTON: It's 10:31, we will call this meeting of the human services committee to order. Angie Allen.

ALLEN: Good morning everyone. You received my report. You received an announcement and two program summaries a lot in front of you. Any questions on anything you have in front of you?

MASCARENAS: Angie, I sent out an email to the board last week notifying them of the SNAP reduction error rate if you don't mind explaining that at a little more for the folks that maybe missed the email or didn't understand it. I'd appreciate it.

ALLEN: And you sent them the news article I sent you?

MASCARENAS: Yes, I did.

ALLEN: Okay good. So that also had an interactive map –

MASCARENAS: Yes.

ALLEN: So the SNAP error rate is cow tailed under the word fraud that's how it was kind of sold at the Federal government. I have no political agenda here but that's how it got sold that there was actually fraud happening in the SNAP program and that's just not true. Error rates do not translate to fraud and actually the SNAP program itself has a relatively low error rate and the ability for fraud to exists in that program is next to impossible because it's based on a formula that is driven and it is based on applicants and numbers received so the idea of an error is not because fraud is happening it's because there is an error if that makes sense. So the intention of fraud is very, very little the idea of error is based on three things. It can be based on client, employer or human error within the department of social services again, not for fraud but because of error. We do have some SNAP pieces that get referred to our fraud department and that is based on employer information or wrong employer information so when there is actually a concern for fraud that does get referred to our fraud program which then works with the state police.
So let's talk about the error rate New York State takes a look at, so right now the state's error rate surpasses the Federal deems assessable. Essex County does not drive that. Our percentage within the county is so low they can't give me a report on it which is pretty interesting but that

doesn't work so it's really based on three categories New York City, the big eight counties and rest of the state we're are considered rest of state. The big eight counties are Suffolk, I don't have them in front of me but Westchester, Schoharie, can you recall some of them?

MASCARENAS: You're on the right track.

ALLEN: It's those right, really the big ones I think Orange is on there, there's a few. So what happens is we get absorbed into the rest of the state. For some of the programs the numbers are just impossible to stay on top of take a look at the number of applicants that New York city will have compared to my report and applicants we have there's jobs that are doable and there's jobs that are not so under the idea of fraud NYS is unable to meet the federal percentage so of course they are using the word fraud, New York State did not absorb the $1.3 billion dollars that is anticipated in the error costs not costs itself but the penalty for error so there's actually an error rate, an error amount of money and then there's a penalty we are talking about a 15% penalty we're not talking about the actual cost of error. I do have that report I think I sent that to you and Mike as well which actually will show you the amount of errors in New York City, across the state, the rest of the state and the big eight so if you want to talk a little about, if you want more information about the actual dollars I can provide that to you. Prime example, I do want to say the rest of the state had I think it was 163 thousand some odd dollars accounted for and I think there's was only sixteen thousand dollars unaccounted for the amount fees and dollars being spent and then having to be recovered through errors is really minoot and there's the idea that we can refute it's not about fraud it's about just being an error. So New York State cannot afford that amount so of course in New York State fashion it gets pushed down to the localities and that's why we are seeing what is being predicted and it's just a flat 15% across the state, it is not county specific either so that's where the numbers are coming from.

MASCARENAS: So we're anticipating just so everybody knows an increase of about $1.1 million when we look at both our SNAP administration and error rate what essentially happened was there wasn't really change into qualification either that's kind of big misknown so what the real change was who was going to pay and I think if you can take anything away from that take that away that you know try to block out all the *inaudible* and sensationalism and get to the root of what it was and what it was the Federal government reduced what they paid from 50% to 25% that cost then got pushed to states the states do have the opportunity to absorb it if they would like ours has chosen not to and that cost then ends up at the backs of your property tax payers and it's one thing you'll hear from me a lot I've been around a long time and you'll see this happen regularly they are really cost shifts they are not tax reductions nobody's income taxes went down either at the Federal or State level while they are shifting hundreds and millions and billions of dollars to the local property tax payer whether it's the Feds doing it or whether it's the state doing it it's still impacting our property tax payer and way we have to fund budgets and projects there's no other mechanism to do that and your option locally is to raise your taxes or cut service in another area that's really your option and it's a problem moving forward so I just wanted you to be aware of where we are at with that that's an automatic $1.1 million dollar gap in your budget going into next year that you didn't have a place holder for last year so where do you get it? Your tax cap is $800,000 so you're already in the hole before you buy any supplies, before you pay an increase in electricity rates, before you pay raises to people and health care costs and all those fun things you're already $1.1 million dollars behind. Now I'm not trying to alarm anybody that's not my goal here I'm trying to inform people of the truth and how these things actually work and we will have a plan for dealing with it and we'll see that plan develop over the next couple of months as we learn more but I just wanted to kind of fix the conversational piece so that we are all on the same pager. I think it is also important to understand that SNAP recipients aren't' what

people think. People seem to have a perception of who is receiving SNAP nobody is aging faster than Essex County there might be one community in Florida that is slightly older than us but that's even iffy at this point and at this point in time you know, I'm going to say the last time I looked it was 40%-45% and they could probably tell you better than I could right now of those aging individuals that are receiving SNAP these are folks that are functioning members of society for most of their life, they were working, they have been on fixed incomes for many year. I have no issues with those individuals getting SNAP that's what it's for and I think we need to correctively learn of who these recipients are and who they are not.

ALLEN: The other thing I would like to add is when you take a look at the actual numbers so I did include the actual numbers for over 60 in my report but when you take a look at eligibility it is also families that have a four year college degree, it is teachers, it is not what you believe and think that you see on the news so it is the working class that is still accessing these services and is still in need of these services because of the cost in other areas and you're having to choose when you see a family of four with two working adults and you see gas prices go up, you see the food prices go up there's also individuals that are working hard and working to be a part in the system and the system is just working against them so I just wanted to kind of add that as well. I love the fact that Mike brought this to your attention before my budget meeting so just keep that in mind.

MASCARENAS: It's going to be bad.

ALLEN: It's going to be bad but I'm not asking for much and I can't ask for much this year so it's going to be good that way. The other thing Mike that I appreciate you brought up I just really wanted to let people know that it's not the ability of my staff at all they are doing what they need to do and I can show you those exact numbers if error and fraud is in the forefront of your brain because that's what's on the news but again, our error rate is so low that the state can't even provide me with a report so that really speaks to the staff. There are some increase administrative burdens because the state has to push the problem some place and why not spread the problem evenly verses the eight counties and New York City that's really driving this and so there will be administrative increase burden more audits and things like that however they are taking money away from us to increase our administrative burden so that's the other thing to kind of keep in mind is they are increasing the administrative burden and not providing the funding we may need to hire extra staff so it is the cycle.

TYLER: What is upsetting is the State, this year it's $62 billion is their budget and they can't help out the localities at all. It's crazy. I mean, $62 billion dollars in one year and last year it was, I don't know how much was it last year? They just keep on increasing it and decreasing the money they give to the counties it's just – I don't know if people are going to wake up one of these days finally and come out of their stupor and vote these people out of office? I don't know how they do it.

THURSTON: It is clearly unsustainable. Any more comments, questions?

O'BRYAN: Angie I just wonder when you talk about fraud, in my family's business we work with SNAP and I don't feel like I agree with you I see people who need it that I'm 110% behind in having that opportunity to use it especially children. I don't see the abuse. I don't feel like I see the abuse coming through the process at least at our level so I'm wondering what type of fraud are we talking here? Is it just people who are not qualified like you said signing up when they should be on SNAP or is it something more than that?

ALLEN: So there's a couple different piece of the pie right and I cannot pretend to know them all

in totality but there are times when people may get a job increase or rate pay or promotion in a job and they are not required to always report it so again, that could be an element of fraud but we don't have the administrative requirements, actually not administrative requirements the ability to always check those things right so somebody could get a promotion and just fail to report that is the piece of it. There are times when we are aware that people sell their SNAP just like they do with WIC checks so someone maybe known to sell their SNAP benefits for cash to use for other purposes sometimes healthy purposes sometimes not healthy purposes right so that's another type of fraud. We may see that it takes quite length of time and due diligence to kind of sort that out so the process also doesn't support the quality assurance it needs.

O'BRYAN: What happens when they sell their SNAP card their benefits? How are they turned over by the second party? What do you typically see?

ALLEN: Sometimes it is an anonymous report. It could be funny things when neighbors get mad at neighbors it could be someone that knows a mother is selling her SNAP card or is concerned for the health of a baby because they know their mother is selling the SNAP benefit so it could be a report from anyone. It could be a report from one of our own internal programs that has observed something or it just doesn't add up right when you're in the home. So there could be formal and informal referral sources and then it goes to our fraud worker Melissa Estes who kind of takes a prelim our attorneys take a prelim look and then when it passes a certain threshold in terms of not just finance but also evidence based then we turn it over to the DA office and we work hand in hand with the State police.

O'BRYAN: I guess the question I'm trying to understand is what happens to that fund, that money that SNAP benefit when I sell it to Mr. Tyler what does he do with it?

ALLEN: So as accounted we recoup that money and report it back and pay it off we are a pass through but I would love to say we keep some of the money no but it's a pass through to pay off the program. I do have Renee Bruno here.

BRUNO: Are you kind of asking why that happens? Like what the purpose is?

THURSTON: Renee come up here please.

O'BRYAN: What is the benefit I get other than you sell me $150 of SNAP and I pay $100 for it and I take and pay less than what it is worth whoever gets the sale and I'm trying to understand the back end of that sale if something happens to that monies or that benefit what is that. Does he turns it in as the person who bought it? Does he sell it off to somebody else?

BRUNO: So usually it's for the purpose unfortunately buying drugs usually we see that why we see that happening. If we are able to catch onto this as an agency as fraud we can then recoup as Angie was saying those dollars that have been misused. Does that answer your question?

O'BRYAN: I'm just trying to understand what the benefit is for me to go out and buy your SNAP benefit other than I'm buying it for less dollars than what it's worth I'm sure. I'm doing something with that as an entrepreneur who just bought this asset I'm doing something with it and I guess I'm either using it or I'm selling it off to someone else.

ALLEN: That's it. You are either going to use it or you're going to sell it to someone else.

O'BRYAN: Okay at a cheaper price, okay thank you.

THURSTON: Any other questions about that while we have Renee up here?

PIERCE: Yeah, following Jim's question. They are issued a card and then what happens is Ike takes my card and then uses it.

BRUNO: With a pin, there is a pin number assigned to the card.

PIERCE: I give you my card and the pin.

ALLEN: Or I stand behind you in the grocery store.

BRUNO: So sometimes what will happen will you might have a card with $200 with SNAP benefits and you may say to somebody that you've got $200 here's my card, can you give me, like you want just drugs, whatever it may be and it maybe worth half of that but now you have $200 in free food that you can spend. We actually don't work on a lot of those cases it's not as prevalent as you would think. I mean I think it's out there a little bit but we don't get a lot of reports on that most of it is unreported income.

MASCARENAS: Right somebody is working under the table would be a more likely fraud case getting paid cash.

BARBER: So there's no way of identifying the person to the SNAP card? Correct?

ALLEN: There is a client and a SNAP card and the SNAP card has a pin so we can always bring those two things together. Who they sell it to right if we are able to figure that person out then absolutely but it's usually the card holder. Usually individuals that want to conduct fraud it's a very, very tight knit group because it usually is for drugs.

BARBER: So that's my question there's no way to identify the person that's dedicated to that card?

BRUNO: It has their name on it.

O'BRYAN: We are not allowed to.

THURSTON: There's no photo ID.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, it's no different Mr. Barber than going over to Stewarts and swiping your card and if you give your kid your pin they can get your thing or they can just run it as credit and they get out.

MENSER: It used to be when you got a credit card, I'm saying used to be I'm talking 20, 30 years ago you would go to the store and buy something use your card and they would ask for the photo ID besides in order for them to accept that transaction with this, there's nothing saying you have to provide any kind of identification other than that.

BRUNO: We are actually not allowed to even ask for it.

O'BRYAN: There's a whole list of things we can't ask. Which I understand I don't want people to feel out of place.

BRUNO: And ultimately it's the card holders responsibility they are the ones passing that onto somebody else unless of course their pin has been stolen that's a different story.

MASCARENAS: And when fraud happens it is important to understand that ultimately the card holder is responsible for the money on that card and when fraud is detected and eventually brought through our legal system they will be sanctioned and won't be eligible to receive those benefits again so there is a risk there for those individuals you'll sometimes see paper articles that we've done in the past with people who have been brought up on fraud charges for a variety of reasons but those people are sanctioned for how long Renee?

BRUNO: I think we are trafficking maybe permanently them.

THURSTON: Okay any other questions? Thank you.

ALLEN: Well, I have one Why is the math text books always so sad? There's too many problems.

THURSTON: Thank you. Mental Health.

MORSE: Good morning everyone. I have a large batch of resolutions to go through today so I'm going to just jump into those but first I want you to join me in celebrating that our waiting list at Essex County Mental Health as of this morning is 42. That is a cause for celebration. If you ask me why I'd say it's because we've been able to increase our staff and so that is just super exciting. It takes a lot of pressure off.
So I arranged the resolutions from the simplest to the not so simple so you ready? So the first one is to add a board member to the Community Services Board Alcohol Substance Abuse Subcommittee Jessica Perkins from July 8, 2026 finishing out the 2026 year.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF JESSICA PERKINS TO THE ESSEX COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD FOR A TERM BEGINNING JULY 8, 2026 TO DECEMBER 31, 2026. Pierce, Hughes

THURSTON: All in favor signify by saying aye, any opposed – thank you.

MORSE: In 2025, we received funding from NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) this funding from OASAS was for the opioid settlement the regional abatement money that's the money that comes from OASAS to the community services board not the direct funding that goes to the county. The amount was $62,552.00.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF $62,552.00, NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF ADDICTION SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (OASAS) Reusser, Wood

THURSTON: Any questions? All in favor signify by saying aye, any opposed – thank you.

MORSE: We want to set up a reserve account for the opioid settlement funds that we get from OASAS because we do not need to zero out that money at the end of the year so the carryover

that we need to do from 2025 to 2026 in the amount of $141,751.00.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDEMENT IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF $141,751.00, CARRYOVER 2025 DIRECT SHARE OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS. Wood, Lamphear

THURSTON: Questions, comments? All in favor signify by saying aye, any opposed – thank you.

MORSE: The Office of Mental Health is awarding every county in New York State funding to allocate a full-time person to function a Children's Single Point of Access otherwise known as C-SPOA. The amount that we have been provided in 2026 is $128,577.00.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDEMENT IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF $128,577.00, NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH FUNDS FOR A FULL-TIME POSITION IN THE ESSEX COUNTY CHILDREN'S SINGLE POINT OF ACCESS PROGRAM (C-SPOA). Pierce, Preston

THURSTON: Any questions, comments?

HUGHES: Good morning. Is this funding help me understand please going towards, is it programmatic funding or is it personnel funding?

MORSE: It's personnel some of the excess funding can be used to support individuals that the Children's SPOA serves but it is just for personnel, mostly for personnel and that is annual.

HUGHES: Thank you.

WOOD: Is this one time?

MORSE: No, it is –

WOOD: So this will be reoccurring?

MORSE: Correct.

THURSTON: Any other questions, comments? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries.

MORSE: I know you just approved it but I just wanted to add, the purpose of the funding from NYS Office of Mental Health is to ensure that the children of the highest needs, highest risks are appropriately referred to adequate services and so if that children SPOA position is one-third of the time it needs to be the Office of Mental Health wanted to make sure there is person that is funded to serve that purpose of making sure that kids get referred to the proper services. The individual is not allowed to do any direct services.
Essex County Mental Health Department receives federal funding called Federal Salary Sharing actually every state gets this or every county gets this money. This funding is utilized for various purposes to assist organizations that provide mental health, substance use or person's with intellectual development disabilities a lot of the time this funding was used to offset Essex County

Mental Health's deficit in 2025, Essex County Mental Health's revenues verses expenses was at a level that I didn't need to use that funding to help zero us out. So we're going to allocate $164,538.00 to go into a reserve account so that we can utilize that for other uses in the future.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATION OF SURPLUS FUND BALANCE IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT FROM FEDERAL SALARY SHARING IN THE AMOUNT OF $164,538.00. McGill, Reusser

THURSTON: Questions, comments?

HUGHES: It says Brief here. Is that Building Resilience in Essex Families?

MORSE: Yes, thank you for that right now that's the account we are going to transfer to then when we get the reserve account set up we are going to move it from Brief to the reserve account but the reserve account is not yet set up.

MASCARENAS: With any of those expenses that are authorized will also have to come through this board. Terri's group has done a much improved job of recruiting costs so when it comes to those insurance payments they are way more aggressive than they ever were they have individuals who are very dedicated in making sure that Essex County gets every dollar for every service they are providing in turn that created a good situation for us in terms of while we are seeing an increase in expenses our revenue is growing at a faster rate than our expenses are you can't say that very often when you're looking at government type programs with that being said, these funds are always intended to be used for mental health purposes it's not just funding I can grab and push back into the general fund and later utilize it for something else it needs to stay with them in order for us to be compliant so –

MORSE: And technically it falls under the community services board, not even Essex County Mental Health.

WOOD: I'm not an accountant but is there a reason why you are using the Brief step instead of just setting up the account and moving it from here into that account? Why the extra step?

MASCARENAS: I don't know that answer today because I didn't go through it but you can absolutely –

MORSE: It's an extra step because I needed to bring this to the board today and the accounting department just didn't have the opportunity to set it up sorry.

WOOD: But we are already approving that we will be moving it so why can't we just –

MORSE: Because I don't know where we are moving it to.

MASCARENAS: So the reason why this says it's coming from appropriated fund balance is because it got sucked in unintentionally it should have never been sucked to the appropriated fund balance account because it was money that was intended for another purpose so now we are pushing it into there. I have the authority to do transfers within approved budget line items I don't have authority to take appropriated fund balance and simply recorrect that that has got to be an action of the board.

WOOD: Thank you.

HUGHES: I'm not a huge, the miscellaneous that seems like that's a stop of where we've got to go but you did mention setting up a reserve account I would really like to see reserve account whatever of a very specific reason than kind of just whatever. That's the sentiment I got when you just said setting up a reserve account.

MORSE: And that's a really good question Mr. Hughes when I look at the language in the consolidated fiscal report CFR, it's really vague and, but as I spend it I'm happy to report that out to you.

HUGHES: And you have to and I know you do an excellent job.

MORSE: Right because it's part of the consolidated fiscal report.

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

MORSE: Okay the last resolution please refer to the spreadsheet that I included in the report. So over the years the county and the department have allocated funding to pay for individuals who are deemed not competent to stand trial those are called 730 evaluations you may have heard me talk about those before. If someone who has two evaluations and they don't do just one they do two to make sure that it's not biased if that person is deemed not competent to stand trial they are sent away to NYS Office of Mental Health program forensic unit hospital in order to be restored to the competency. Once that individual is restored to competency they return to Essex County and stand trial. There is a cost associated with doing the evaluations which is minimal and that's in the far to the right column that's how much money we spend on the evaluations and what I also gave you is the number of evaluations that we have been asked to do over the course since 2014 you can see those numbers have increased dramatically over the last few years. I also gave you information about how many times a person has been found not competent and then the cost of the restoration for that restoration process. In July of 2026, we are proposing that we need more money for that restoration account because a long time ago we were able to allocate, budget $25,000 and for many, many, many years we didn't use any of it but that number is starting to climb as you can see in the column that says court ordered confinement expense. We don't have enough money this year in our account to cover an extravagated number to the end of 2026 so I'm asking to take from fund balance $325,000 to put in that court ordered confinement bucket to be able to pay the future costs. Anything else Mike?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, so make a long story short last year when we budgeted we knew this was an issue. When you look at this year's numbers as a fiscal administrator you like to at least I like to have a certain amount of data before making forever decisions. This has been one of those things that has been a moving target for quite some time when you look at 2025, there was 11, 2203, 14, 2024, 4 so it's kind of been all over the place again, going back to 2020 is kind of where we saw that first jump in terms of budget to actual expenses the only expenses we had prior to that was $475 in 2014 and now we're up over a half a million so when we budgeted that going into 2026 we essentially took a five year average of kind of where we were at and here we have exceeded that amount. Going to the high end I try to be cautious doing that because high end doesn't represent what is always is happening it represents what happened in a point in time but knowing what we know now we are going to have to increase that budget line again it's been growing on an annual basis. It is something that again has been somewhat of a new phenomenon and here we are.

STANLEY: Can that amount of money we moved to capital reserve in the last two resolutions cover that this year?

MASCARENAS: No because they are not capital reserve costs. Capital reserve costs are really building and facilities.

STANLEY: Yeah but we are just moving money into the Mental Health Capital Reserve.

MASCARENAS: Oh, in terms of the Brief Miscellaneous and expense? That's a question I don't know what exactly her funds are tied to. That's a great question I don't know.

MORSE: I will review the language and see if that's possible.

REUSSER: Did we move on a motion a first and a second yet?

THURSTON: No, we have not.

REUSSER: I will move that.

THURSTON: Mr. Pierce moved it but you could second it.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A TRANSFER IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT FROM THE ESSEX COUNTY FUND BALANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF $325,000.00, TO COURT ORDERED CONFINEMENT. Pierce, Reusser

THURSTON: Questions, comments?

REUSSER: Thank you I have a question. Are there provisions in private insurance or other public insurance that this person may be eligible for are those utilized or sought after?

MORSE: No mam.

MASCARENAS: Medical is different than confinement.

REUSSER: Understood.

MASCARENAS: I view this similar to my DSS days as you have agencies that are certified to meet the needs of this individual that's your having to confine and the cost of doing business is that it wasn't unusual for us in DSS in terms of foster care to spend $1000 a day on somebody for the level of treatment they needed so in terms of that person then got appendicitis we'd get Medicaid but confinement was a whole different definition that didn't necessarily fall you're paying for a facility, you're paying for individuals, you're paying for all those types of things.

REUSSER: So I'm proposing that the person comes to a court for issues from a potentially other insurance that would cover confinement, mental health stays for stability whatever addiction or maybe coverable options that might reduce this number is my proposition too.

MORSE: I have no control over that, that is a New York State decision additionally one of the things that most often people that are in that get sent for restoration have been incarcerated and once 30 days is done their Medicaid gets shut off so they have no insurance after. I agree with

your thinking and it's not my decision.

BRASSARD: Mr. Pierce brought to my attention is another thing the state used to pay 50/50 now the county pays 100%.

MORSE: And at the conference of local mental hygiene directors for the last four years have been fighting with New York State to help us. There are counties that have in the millions of dollars for this.

O'BRYAN: I probably know the answer to this but I'm going to ask on average who did the numbers here of confinements for restoration on average, how long do they stay I imagine it's based on need?

MORSE: Correct I've seen two to four weeks and I've seen six to nine months. It's about $1300 a day.

MASCARENAS: Yeah and I think you can see that kind of in 2024 there was four people but you hit a high of almost $600,000 a year so the number of cases you have doesn't always correlate to the amount of money you spend.

MORSE: And they come in November and stay until June so there's a little bit of an overlap.

HUGHES: This just seems out of control.

MORSE: I don't disagree.

HUGHES: It feels to me that the tail is wagging the dog and I'm curious if your numbers here, is this anticipation numbers or are these reality numbers that we're now essentially behind on that we need to get back?

MORSE: The individual that is currently in restoration could be there until the end of the year and that's why the number is what it is.

HUGHES: Okay. I just don't love touching fund balance.

MORSE: No, I know.

HUGHES: And I empathize with you on this situation and glad you brought it to our attention.

MORSE: There are some counties that are doing restoration in the jails but you would have to have psychiatrist allocated in the jail, you would need to have a whole pod allocated to that and there's just not enough population.

HUGHES: Your request is understood something about just doesn't seem right about it because we want to make sure we get this services they need so they can stand trial and face justice and do what they've got to do there just everything top to bottom if you look at the top half verses the bottom half they can be charged for plans it looks like.

MORSE: I understand.

THURSTON: Come up Linda.

BEERS: So I am a representative for public health and mental health at the NYSAC conference and there has been an ongoing resolution through NYSAC and they are well aware of this, this is a 730 new form you can look it up they have all the costs per county, this is happening across the state and quite honestly less than Terri than many other counties it is very similar to we write a check for having no control over the situation and the facilities that are housing these people are not good about giving bills or even saying what they've done so more than that is the care the people are receiving while they are $1300 a day what did they actually receive? Also coupled with that is some of these folks might have learning disabilities and honestly never be able to stand trial because their IQ precludes them for that so you can't fix this problem when you have a mental health concern if somebody carried out a crime that can't be restored so this has been a really big problem but I do encourage you all to look at your NYSAC people I represent the state in public health and mental health and my counterpart in mental health has been faithful in this job so I will say NYSAC is really aware of it and really fighting with the Governor's office on this just so you know.

MORSE: Yes, thank you Linda.

HUGHES: You said, your words, sent away – they were sent somewhere else to get the services are those services in Essex County or are they outside of Essex County?

MORSE: No sir they are not inside Essex County they are in St. Lawrence County, Marcy is in I can't think of where Marcy is – Rochester.

MASCARENAS: To make a long story short our ability to say is not existent what we think matters and what we lobby for in terms of getting our in making the right people responsible for assisting with those payments is one thing but a court ordered confinement is just that, it's something that we are obligated to pay by court order failure to do so would result us being in contempt.

HUGHES: Is that supreme court?

MORSE: They are coming from town court, county court.

HUGHES: Doesn't make a difference.

MORSE: Correct.

THURSTON: Any other questions before we move on? All in favor aye, opposed – motion carries.

MORSE: That's it. Thank you.

THURSTON: Public Health, Linda Beers.

BEERS: Good morning everybody. My report stands, a couple things I would just like to call out and thank you to those that attended our community baby shower that was a success and it was great fun and I think we are looking to move it to Jay next year because Jay has already offered and as it grows in popularity and again, just to give you an idea I just want you to imagine this is the bulk of the group and in order to get to the gift of prizes down there you have to meet with every single one of you and you get your raffle ticket stamped so people are there and you're

learning about SIDS-sudden infant death syndrome, you're learning about breastfeeding, you're learning about car seat, you're learning about nutrition anyway in case you're wondering how our baby shower was and also kudos to schools yay Essex County our health department visits in school nurses probably I'm not sure what other counties do it we help our school nurses because there is only one of them in every school and they spend that time rurally for the rest of the school year and when they have stuff they don't have anybody to talk to anyway this year we had 11 of the school nurses come before school started and did a full day in service and great kudos from everybody so kudos to the staff and all the schools that sent their people. The rest of my report feel free to read lots of good stuff going on in the health department and I'm going to go right to resolutions as well.
Mine are straight forward I want to go to contract with Great Range. I already went out to RFP and agreed to that successful request of proposals, we did that. Great Range is an organization that we've used multiple times it's public service announcements and we already have the funds they exist in the health department budget and they are not to exceed $12,500, again this was awarded to them through RFP. This is are request to go to contract.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH GREAT RANGE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $12,500.00, WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM BUDGETED FUNDS. Hughes, Stanley

THURSTON: Questions, comments? All in favor aye, opposed – motion carries.

BEERS: This has been an ongoing thing. This is our mobile unit you know we sold it right anyway we did but now the money went to general fund just exactly what Mike said and I would like to buy a car. We sold that mobile unit for $67,500, this is to adjust the health departments budget for the funds of the sale of the mobile unit and allow the health department to go out to bid with those funds to purchase another vehicle and that's what the resolution is.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF $67,500.00, SALE OF MOBILE UNIT. Preston, Pierce

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASING AGENT TO GO OUT TO BID FOR A NEW TRANSIT VAN IN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT. Preston, Pierce

THURSTON: Questions, comments?

PIERCE: Do you know what the new vehicle will be used for?

BEERS: We use it for all the public health outings and events, we fill them up. We are really trying to get one of those transit vans but they are out of stock we have been looking at one for a long time to hold our staff whenever we do one of these public health events we will use that van to get there. If you see us in your neighborhood that's how we got there with the van.

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

BEERS: The next one is JUUL settlement funds that's the big lawsuit that happened and money came in again to the county and we want to bring it in to revenue and expenses because in this county we move JUUL settlement funds to the health department and we dispense in all the

appropriate ways to spend the money.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF $34,824.31, JUUL SETTLEMENT FUNDS. Hughes, Wood

THURSTON: Questions, comments? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries.

BEERS: Kudos to our new staff Cecile she's done an amazing job in WIC. You know WIC breaks even and we work really hard to stay in that. All those extra things WIC does there's no money for them. These are those little grants that we get. This one is really nice $3,320, you've heard me come here for eighty, seven, ninety, one hundred so thank you to Elizabethtown Community Hospital just be fair, we asked for $5,000 but they gave us $3,320 and I would like to increase my money to $3,320 to spend.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF $3,320.00, ELIZABETHTOWN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL MINI GRANTS. Stanley, Hughes

THURSTON: Questions, comments? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries.

BEERS: I have one that I'm walking off the floor. It is the same thing, it is to receive monies from 2026 Auction International Funds what that is is they sold a car for us for $810.00, it goes to general fund again. I would leave it there but after talking to Jim I need to bring that money in because we have a fender bender and I need to fix the fender bender and so I want to bring $810.00 for a car that was sold at auction back into our account and the resolution is to bring it in through account 426550 $810 and it is expended out of account 541001 $810.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF $810.00, 2026 AUCTIONS INTERNATIONAL VEHICLE FUNDS. Stanley, Reusser

THURSTON: Questions, comments?

STANLEY: Did you turn that fender bender into insurance?

BEERS: We did and this is left over. Yes, thank you that was a good one. Somebody hit us but what they gave and what it cost was a deficit. Anyway we are always going to take what money is coming to us and bring it back in. We used to leave it in there but I feel like we're going to bring it in.

THURSTON: Any other questions, comments? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Are you all set?

BEERS: I am all set.

THURSTON: Thank you. Office for the Aging – Krissy Leerkes.

LEERKES: Everybody has a copy of my report. Just a couple of things we are gearing up for HEAP we don't have a lot of specifics just yet so those of you that are new there are a lot of

specifics that are required. We are also gearing up for open enrollment I talk about it a lot. We have I think right now 17 open enrollment events set up whether it is in your community, whether it's in our building if we have not touched base with somebody in your township yet to arrange that we will be doing so we are adding that as time allows hoping that this will be much better for your constituents and we do not have a lot of staff so hopefully this will be helpful for us.
I do have two resolutions and just remember I'm the last one before lunch so bear with me. So the first one is a resolution for a budget amendment and authorization to purchase a new and unused copier from state contract or either the purchasing department is going out to RFP fairly soon for copiers in different departments this is not to exceed $10,000, in speaking with the purchasing department we thought it might be between seven to nine but costs are going up so let's just be a little on the safe side. This will be funded out of Unmet Needs funding. It will not be at any cost to Essex County. It will replace a copier that is no longer on contract it's a pretty old one it's from 2014 she likes to jam, she likes to blink a lot of nice colors at us so it's time that she goes away.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASING AGENT TO PURCHASE A NEW AND UNUSED COPIER FOR THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $10,000.00, WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM UNMET NEEDS FUNDING. Reusser, McGill

THURSTON: Questions, comments?

HUGHES: Procedural question does the county not have a countywide contract with copier provider?

MASCARENAS: Yes sir it's by machine so once a machine hits a certain age typically you can't get it under contract even covered for repair.

HUGHES: I will use the example National for example.

MASCARENAS: Yes that was one we used to have.

HUGHES: So if we need a new machine we have a contractual relationship with them and would we not just go to the company and get a new one to avoid the state contract process?

MASCARENAS: Those individuals will no longer hold prices longer than like 30 days because the market has gone crazy so what are prices today in terms of computers there isn't even a buy list for computers anymore we haven't been able to get one in months because the nature of that beast is really evolving so rapidly but yes, you used to be able to do that and you could guarantee what your price would be over a period of time not the case right now. Symquest is our hired group that does our contracted repairs typically we will get a Kyocera or one of those type multi units that are coming in but to get a state contract price is almost impossible right now it just is. That's why I think they will go out to mini bid is what they will do on that which is why they are saying we're saying seven to nine but we'll see it's evolving pretty rapidly.

REUSSER: Can you trade in?

LEERKES: I believe Linda Wolf is going to be wording the bid quite elaborately I don't know. We've been told if you're going to call us you're going to pay some pricey costs for those parts because again it is too old, it is a back-up for us we use it only when we absolutely have to.

REUSSER: With the stuff that is left over that is surplus for us correct?

MASCARENAS: Yeah it would go to surplus, we would likely resell it or if it has as many problems as she's saying it would go to electronic recycling for its final resting place.

THURSTON: Any other questions or comments?

WOOD: I just want to thank Heidi for coming in and checking with me on a regular basis on the needs of our town.

LEERKES: Good. I'm hoping the rest of my staff are doing that with you as well or at least somebody in your office.

WOOD: She checks in and it's great to know she's around.

THURSTON: All in favor, any opposed – motion carries.

LEERKES: The next one again is also utilizing that Unmet Need funding and going back when we started to receive unmet need funding it's flexible in the sense that it needs to meet an unmet need and I think unmet needs is flexible at eye level. There is a very lengthy approval process to get anything funded first they go through Mike because of course if you guys are not going to be on board with it I'm not going to go through the state process. So, we are seeing across the county more in some more in some areas than others that transportation is in a barrier in every town yes but we are seeing up in Wilmington that area we have great programing that Cornell is putting on for us in the Town of Jay we are just not able to get those other towns right next door to that programming and our goal is to do that. Our goal is to also get more older adults out and about to other health and wellness opportunities civilization shopping. We were approached by town board members in the Town of Wilmington in regards to how can we partner, can we partner to get some type of transportation for older adults in Wilmington to expand their reach and to other communities. So in talking with Mike, in talking with the State, seeing that there was an unmet need and in working with the town board of Wilmington we would like to enter into a contract with the Town of Wilmington in the amount not to exceed $68,000 it's a one-time funding opportunity to purchase a 12-14 passenger van. The only expense it would be to Essex County would be this contractual amount. They would purchase the van, they would become owner, they would own the van, they would insure the van, they would have all expenses to it. In the event that they were not able to complete what the contents of the contract was that van would then be returned to Essex County.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH THE TOWN OF WILMINGTON AND THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $68,000, FOR TRANSPORTATION FOR INDIVIDUALS 60 AND OLDER. Stanley, McGill

THURSTON: Questions?

STANLEY: I think this is great because we have the space to handle more seniors in our program which is program by Cornell Cooperative Extension so getting more people to take advantage of what we currently have I think this is a wonderful use of unmet funds.

LEERKES: And I think also just looking at the big picture and not just right now, not next year but

how could this help other programing not just our health and promotion from Cornell so I think the bigger picture that we are looking at and we want to look at this data and how if we can, and this funding continues to exists how can we replicate throughout Essex County if the need is there which we feel that it is.

THURSTON: Any other questions or comments? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries.

LEERKES: That's all I have.

THURSTON: Any other questions for Krissy? Thank you so much. Do we have anything else to come before the committee? 11:32 we are adjourned.

As there was no further discussion to come before this Human Services committee it was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk
Board of Supervisors