

The Legislature of Rockland County



PHILIP SOSKIN
LEGISLATOR-DISTRICT 7
CHAIR, MULTI-SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES
MULTI-SERVICES COMMITTEE
TUESDAY DECEMBER 08, 2015
6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

LEG. P. SOSKIN, CHAIR
LEG. T. EARL, VICE CHAIR
LEG. A. PAUL, 2ND VICE CHAIR
LEG. A. WIEDER
LEG. L. HOFSTEIN
LEG. P. MORONEY
LEG. R. DIAZ

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

LEG. A. WOLFE
LEG. M. GRANT
LEG. C. CAREY
LEG. J. HOOD, JR
LEG. H. CORNELL
LEG. N. LOW-HOGAN
LEG. D. JOBSON
LEG. J. MEYERS
J. BIRNBAUM, ESQ
S. POWERS
P. BRENNAN
M. LEITZES
C. BARBASH
J. MOLOF
Y. WILLIAMS
R. CANSINO
M. BABERO
R. VANCURA

CHAIR SOSKIN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:35 PM.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 24, 2015 MEETING.

MOTION TO ADOPT:

PAUL/WIEDER

UNAN

1. REF.#3657

PROVIDING FOR AN INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM HOURLY WAGE FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES TRAINEES (OFA), YOUTH WORKERS AND STUDENT WORKERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEW YORK STATE MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 31, 2015 [OFFICE FOR THE AGING/YOUTH BUREAU]

(JUNE F. MOLOF DIRECTOR OF OFFICE FOR THE AGING) DL#:2015-05366

MOTION TO APPROVE:

SOSKIN/PAUL, EARL, DIAZ

TRANSFERRED TO B&F 12/08/15

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: LEGS. SOSKIN, EARL, PAUL, WIEDER, HOFSTEIN, MORONEY, DIAZ, JOBSON

Mrs. June F. Molof, Director of Office the Aging, thanked the Committee for remembering her husband in the resolution and added that this recommendation is 100% funded and is mandatory based on the appointment program at the Office of the Aging.

2. REF.#7099 SETTING A DATE FOR A PUBLIC HEARING: A LOCAL LAW TO REQUIRE HOUSING COOPERATIVES TO TAKE TIMELY ACTION UPON APPLICATIONS BY PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS
(HON. ALDEN H. WOLFE LEGISLATURE)

MOTION TO APPROVE:
SOSKIN/DIAZ, PAUL

UNAN

ADDED CO-SPONSORS: LEGS. SOSKIN, EARL, PAUL, WIEDER, HOFSTEIN, MORONEY, DIAZ, JOBSON

Leg. Wolfe explained that this resolution refers to transactions relating to co-op apartments that can be best described as both shares of stock in a corporation and also a pro-priority lease, a lease that is unique to a unit. Co-op means a cooperative housing corporation.

All co-ops are protected under a State and constitutional that gives the housing cooperative the right to create an association. That right gives them the opportunity to approve a prospective purchaser of a unit, because in essence they are applying to be a shareholder in a corporation. What often happens is that the application is made to the co-op, perhaps the board doesn't meet often as it should and a lot of these applications are not acted on a timely fashion, which creates uncertainty for the buyer and the seller for a period of time not knowing if the transaction is going to go through, because the purchaser may not have received approval by the co-op board.

Based on feedbacks from multiple realtors, the recommendation are as follow: the housing cooperative should require to render a decision on an application within a reasonable period of time of 45 days, if not the application would automatically fall into an approved status.

3. REF.#8634 APPROVING THE AGREEMENT WHICH MAY BE EXCESS OF \$100,000 WITH COMMUNITY HEALTH AIDE SERVICES, INC. D/B/A COMMUNITY HOME HEALTH CARE WHICH IS LICENSED TO PROVIDE SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSUMER DIRECTED PERSONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CDPAP) UNDER RFI-2015-008 FOR THE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 1, 2015 THROUGH JULY 31, 2016 WITH TOTAL EXPENDITURES NOT TO EXCEED THE COUNTY'S REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEDICAID PROGRAM, WHICH CAPPED BY LAW, AND AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT [DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES]
(CAROL L. BARBASH DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES) DL#:2015-04339

MOTION TO APPROVE:
SOSKIN/EARL, PAUL, DIAZ

TRANSFERRED TO B&F 12/08/15
UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: LEGS. SOSKIN, EARL, PAUL, WIEDER, HOFSTEIN, MORONEY, DIAZ, JOBSON

Ms. Carol L. Barbash, Director of Social Services ,stated that this item is in reference to two different agreements related to the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP) in Rockland County. She added that DSS had issued a request for information which was awarded to Community Health Aide Services.

4. REF.#8983 APPROVING THE AGREEMENTS WHICH MAY BE IN EXCESS OF \$100,000 WITH NINE (9) AGENCIES LICENSED TO PROVIDE SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSUMER DIRECTED PERSONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CDPAP) UNDER RFI-2015-005 FOR THE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 1, 2015 THROUGH JULY 31, 2016 WITH TOTAL EXPENDITURES NOT TO EXCEED THE COUNTY'S REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEDICAID PROGRAM, WHICH IS CAPPED BY LAW, AND AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENTS [DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES]
(CAROL L. BARBASH DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES) DL#:2015-03608

MOTION TO APPROVE:
SOSKIN/MORONEY, EARL, DIAZ, PAUL

TRANFERRED TO B&F 12/08/15
UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: LEGS. SOSKIN, EARL PAUL, WIEDER, HOFSTEIN, MORONEY, DIAZ, JOBSON

5. REF.#3977 DISCUSSION ITEM- HOMELESSNESS IN ROCKLAND COUNTY
(HON. ALDEN H. WOLFE LEGISLATURE)

DISCUSSED

Leg. Wolfe explained that this item refers to the challenges of identifying the homeless problem within Rockland County. The challenges they face are also with regard to the services available to them.

What can County Government do to address it better?

Mr. Raoul Cansino, President of Helping Hands, explained from the time he joined to now nothing has change, in fact the numbers have risen enormously. They are now counting a total of 4,612 people whom they are having difficulties finding shelter. They are being sent to us by the jail, the Department of Social Services and hospitals. He also added that the grant received by the County is not enough.

Mr. Ya'el Williams, Executive Director of Helping Hands, stated that Helping Hands takes a small amount of money and makes it go a long way. The main goal of the organization is to increase the well-being of the people who do not have a place to stay. He added that they serviced 189 people last year on the budge for 4,612 overnights on \$20,000. They are trying to raise extra money to continue these services and they need assistance.

Leg. Wolfe asked if the Helping Hands was utilizing volunteer services.

Mr. Williams replied that the organization actually had 8,000 volunteer hours available and over 20 volunteers. In fact, Helping Hands raised \$1 million in value according to New York State in volunteer hours in the last 5 years.

Leg. Wolfe asked for more details on the use of funds being allocated to certain populations.

Mr. Williams explained that most homeless people in the County are undocumented. When they get services provided to them they refuse to leave the County.

Leg. Wolfe wanted to clarify that one of the challenges being that based on federal regulations if one doesn't live in the County he or she cannot benefit from any funded services.

Mr. Williams answered they are facing the same challenges they have been facing for the past years, individuals documented and undocumented with mental issues are being referred to us by Nyack hospital and Good Samaritan hospital.

Leg. Wolfe asked if Helping Hands could make a recommendation to the County for this cycle not to repeat itself. What can be set in place to provide continuing mental health rehabilitation, job placement and training, permanent housing and services that may allow homeless to get back on their feet.

Mr. Williams recommendation was for affordable housing and a shelter. The minimum wage for someone living in Rockland County is \$10/hour and average rent is estimated at \$1,600/month and Rockland County is the only County without a shelter. They have to refer these people to DSS and assign them a case manager. Since they don't have enough resources to help them they offer them a ticket out of the County.

Ms. Barbash describe the problematic issues of people making too much money for affordable housing, and people coming out of jail really do not have enough resources to help. She added the homeless problem is a real problem and the shelter issue is a reality The department works very hard to address this issue, but they just can't make it. Undocumented are not eligible for the program as they cannot benefit from State and Federal grants.

Leg. Wolfe asked what the Legislature can do to address this issue.

Mrs. Barbash stated that they need help at the local level, they need funds allocated from the County to help to these people.

Leg. Low-Hogan stated that Helping Hands is an incredible partner, but they are right, there is not enough resources to provide help to these individuals.

Chair Soskin added that knowing the nature of the situation I don't know if they can really help at this point. I know they were getting grants from areas like Orange and Rockland. What I can suggest is to have larger corporation become volunteers.

Leg. Cornell stated by cutting and cutting from the budget they have to admit that they are down to a considerable amount of money. It's not about finding a place to sleep at night, but making sure that some programs are also in place so these people can make something out of their lives. They cannot just pass a budget and move to other things they must try to help sheltering the people.

Chair Soskin added they will make no promises but they are going to do what they can to help.

ADDENDUM

6. REF.#8873

APPROVING A CONTRACT IN EXCESS OF \$100,000 WITH NEW YORK CORRECT CARE SOLUTIONS FOR PHYSICIAN SERVICES FOR THE ROCKLAND COUNTY CORRECTIONAL CENTER IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$1,254,669.00 FOR THE PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 31, 2015 THROUGH DECEMBER 30, 2016 WITH THE OPTION TO RENEW FOR TWO (2) ADDITIONAL ONE (1) YEAR TERMS AND AUTHORIZING ITS EXECUTION BY THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE [DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES-DIVISION OF PURCHASING (\$1,254,669.00)
(PAUL J. BRENNAN DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT DGS PURCHASING) DL#:2015-05513

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
SOSKIN/PAUL, EARL, MORONEY, DIAZ**

**TRANSFERRED TO B&F 12/08/15
UNAN**

ADDED SPONSORS: LEGS. SOSKIN, EARL, PAUL, WIEDER, HOFSTEIN, MORONEY, DIAZ, JOBSON

Mr. Paul Brennan, Purchasing Director, stated that the Department of Hospitals closing decision was made to put funding in Sheriff's budget for 2016. Fortunately the nurses that worked for the hospital will continue to do so for the County in the Correctional Facility.

Mr. Brennan explained that it is clear the demand will be for more than one doctor assigned to the jail. The hospital used to manage this task before and it was a whole lot easier. Therefore the administration and the Sheriff's Department decided to hire physician services, for example a full time Medical Director, Nurse Practitioner, a full time Psychiatric and a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner. This staffing level is much higher than what the coverage has been in the jail over the years, but the Sheriff has a report from the Commissioner of Correction that has mandated this level of service, which explains why they are looking to recruit to meet this level of service. They received 3 proposals in the Unites States in the North East and Rockland County was the only County in the Metropolitan area that provided their own medical services to their correctional facility. He highlighted that the County only contracts the physician services from outside not the medical services.

Mr. Michael Leitzes, Commissioner of Mental Health, explained that mental health is an important component of the services that the County provides, therefore a firm with experience in mental health will be the best of choice as a contractor.

Chair Soskin said that he thought the County was working to keep the current employees.

Mr. Brennan answered that there are 2 positions in this contract that are current employees and all the nurses and social workers positions remain as County employees. Only 2 doctors and 2 nurses are covered under this contract.

Chair Soskin asked if the Union is aware of this.

Mr. Brennan stated that he cannot answer that question as he doesn't know if the Union has met and discussed with these individuals.

Chair Soskin asked for clarification on how many people would be hired from the outside?

Mr. Brennan clarified by saying that 4 position are being recruited currently for the jail, which only now has psychiatric coverage for 4 hours a day Monday to Friday.

Chair Soskin asked if any of the employees being laid off would be able to fill out those vacant position.

Mr. Brennan answered that at this time none of them are able to fill out the position of Nurse Practitioner and Psychiatry.

Deputy Sheriff Babero and Sheriff Vencura explained to the Committee there is a need to fill these positions. It will not only increase coverage but, guarantee mental health services to the Correctional Facility.

Chair Soskin asked what the calculations are.

Mrs. Babero answered that the department holds \$50,000.00 that will be between the 3 companies.

Leg. Cornell asked if other locality have had good experience with their services.

Mr. Vencura said that Westchester County is running a much bigger operation for over a 1,000 inmates.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:7:57 PM.
EARL/MORONEY**

UNAN

Respectfully, Submitted

Lesly Senatus, Committee Clerk

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