

Minutes

Human Services Committee

May 16, 2018, 5:15 pm, Room 331

Gerace Office Building, Mayville, NY

Members Present: Wilfong, Whitford, O'Connell, Pavlock

Member Absent: Rankin

Others: Tampio, Ames, Dennison, Chagnon, Lis, Schuyler, Anderson, Luka-Conley

Chairman Wilfong called the meeting to order at 5:18 p.m.

Approval of Minutes (4/18/18)

MOVED by Legislator Whitford, SECONDED by Legislator O'Connell

Unanimously Carried

Privilege of the Floor

No one chose to speak at this time.

Proposed Resolution- Confirm Appointments - Chautauqua County Youth Board

Chairman Wilfong: OK, Kathleen Geise from Hamlet Street in Fredonia. Any comments? Questions? We also have Angela Pucciarelli from Fredonia. Any questions? All in favor? Opposed?

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution- Amend 2018 Budget Appropriations and Revenues Associated With Juvenile Services Team (JST)

Mrs. Schuyler: The Juvenile Services Team is a collaborative working agreement between our department and the department of probation. By entering into a formal memorandum of understanding we get State reimbursement as long as the goal and objectives and conditions of the memorandum agreement are followed. (*Inaudible*) the children and family services will reimburse us for 62% of the cost. So as you can imagine, this is a local share savings because probation does not receive very much reimbursement. The work that we do

together with the Juvenile Services Team working with our high risk youth- adolescence mainly who are at high risk of being removed from their homes-we call PINS which stands for persons in need of supervision. Our case workers along with the Juvenile Probation Officers provide intensive services to these kids and their families to try to keep them in our community and not sent away to state facilities, which you may recall that it's very expensive when they are sent for detention. This memorandum of understanding was in effect quite a few years ago now under the previous probation director. At that time we realized that there was a need for intensive preventive services to keep children out of placement and it did a lot of good work.

Unfortunately, things kind of deteriorated in that aspect and we have now seen our placements climb high again. We are hoping that this agreement helps to solidify and clarify the goals and objectives that we need to follow in order to keep these kids out of placement. This will hold my staff accountable as well as probation staff accountable for working together to do what we need to do to try to provide preventive services within our community for our high risk youth. The County Executive had put in some funding arbitrarily into the budget, not knowing exactly what the numbers would shake out to be. This is an actual accounting of it and when it's all said and done there is a decreased use of the fund balance of the \$19,202 for the 2018 budget.

Chairman Wilfong: OK, any questions? All in favor? Opposed?

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution- Authorize Capital Project for Purchase of Microsoft Surface Pros

Mrs. Schuyler: Leanna Luka-Conley is the Deputy Commissioner for Children and Family Services. The County Planning board has approved this project and I actually got it in writing today. This is for the purchase of Microsoft Surface Pro tablets and it's for use by our CPS workers to increase their efficiency and streamline and improve their case record keeping in the field. We will be utilizing what is called North Woods Traverse Software. North Woods is a provider of this software that is specialized for human services agencies. This in particular is for child protection. It enables us to connect with the state system which is very antiquated. I have been in conversation with North Woods and with other commissioners, specifically with the Commissioner of Social Services for Chemung County who went down this road with this specialized software in 2014 and she has seen dramatic increases in efficiency, including the time for record keeping, for notes to be entered, their overtime has decreased immensely. They use the iPad technology. Our County IT really doesn't support the iPad technology- the Apple technology here. I believe that Microsoft Surface Pros are thought to be better equipment anyway because they have the Microsoft Office Suite on them. This will enable our workers- when they go into the field they can have consent signed right on the screen, they have all of our local forms as well as all the State required forms at their fingertips. It eliminates multiple trips back and forth between the office and someone's home to get these sorts of things done. The case notes in Chemung County decreased from an average of 35 of completion to three days. Case notes is something that we have struggled with here for as long as I've been around or longer. I come from a health care background where you don't leave the hospital from your shift if your notes aren't done and if you didn't chart it, you didn't do it. The child welfare world is a little different and no matter how I've tried very hard to change that, we just can't get our staff to that point. I'd be happy with- even the State standard is within seven days which I still think you

have trouble remembering things when you don't write it down right away. We have tried other alternatives. We have tried laptops, we have tried having clerical people type notes for them, we have tried voice recognition and none of that has worked. You still have to go back to the office to get the forms that you need. The State system doesn't allow you to scan forms to even upload them, so you have giant paper files. We have talked before at our committee about the turnover we have had in CPS in particular. It takes a year to train a CPS worker before they can carry a case load and it has put us in a very precarious position. The young staff that we have been able to hire now is just that, they are young and very savvy with technology; they are completely overwhelmed when looking at a case file that is this thick and thinking that they have to live with paper. So, they will- hopefully, I believe they will embrace this technology. Our overtime budget- we have completely surpassed that in our first quarter this year. For 2016 our overtime was \$123,000 and the year before that it was only about \$8,000. That shows you the high cost of turnover and when workers can't take full caseloads and in my talks with the Chemung County Commissioner, they have saved 1-2 hours per day on paperwork. We figure 40-50% of a case workers time is spent on paperwork. So anything that we can do to improve the efficiency and decrease time spent on actual paperwork means more time that our workers are out there with children and families and doing the job that we need them to do, plus decreasing the overtime that's killing everybody. Obviously it is a very stressful job as it is and when you are putting in the kinds of hours that our CPS workers and supervisors are putting in right now, we have severe burnout. This project itself, we do receive 65% reimbursement. That's why the total project cost was \$82,000 but then we do get 65% reimbursement so the local share of this is the \$27,662. This is just for the hardware for the Surface Pros. The software itself we have built into our operating budget. By doing it this time of the year, which is not when we would normally go through with our capital project requests, there is an early adopter incentive with the North Woods company for 50%. We have a drastic savings on the cost of the software, which does include full training. They will come here, they will go out in the field with our workers, they have an intensive training and implementation project that just doesn't go away and it doesn't go away after one year either. I have kicked the North Woods software down the road for years hoping that the state was going to come in and update their system so we wouldn't have to do this. I was at the commissioners meeting in Albany in January and was told that the State is nowhere near coming out with their own system. North Woods just this year turned this into a Cloud based system so if the State actually does ever come up with their own system to be able to do what North Woods does, then this will be compatible. It's not a concern that this is going to be a standalone waste of a project if the State comes through. It was only this year that you could use anything other than the iPad technology so it seems to be like the stars are finally aligning that we maybe can get something like this in the hands of our workers.

Legislator O'Connell: So the iPad is what you're replacing with the Surface Pros?

Mrs. Schuyler: We don't have any iPads. They just have laptop computers and many of them are up for replacement anyways but the Surface Pros will act as their desktop. They don't have a desktop and a laptop so now they will just have a tablet and some might want a larger monitor but they already have those.

Chairman Wilfong: How about technical support? You said they are going to come out-

Mrs. Schuyler: Yeah it is all included in the cost of the software. This resolution is for the purchase of the Surface Pros- the hardware itself. The Sheriff's Office uses Surface Pros- all of their deputies on patrol use Surface Pros and I believe the Department of Mental Hygiene also uses Surface Pros for their care coordinators that are out in the field. It's good technology, there is nothing like what North Woods offers and honestly our staff deserves to have the tools they need to help them do their very difficult jobs.

Ms. Lis: One other slight improvement-maybe a great improvement is the access. A lot of places that we go there is no internet access and the laptops can't communicate but this is right on their Surface Pro. They won't have that problem.

Legislator O'Connell: Do they provide training on an ongoing basis? Is there a fee after the first year and what about the maintenance and upkeep?

Mrs. Schuyler: There is annual-

Ms. Lis: The training is a one-time fee. It's a train the (*inaudible*.) The software which used to be something you would purchase is now something that you subscribe to so there is an annual cost to the software and that will be in our operating budget.

Mrs. Schuyler: And we do get 65% reimbursement.

Chairman Wilfong: Oh, even for that?

Mrs. Schuyler: Yes. It's ongoing and part of the child welfare reimbursement from the State.

Legislator Pavlock: Do you believe the cost of this in this year's budget could be saved by the savings in overtime?

Mrs. Schuyler: Most of the Counties that have implemented the North Woods program itself have fully recouped their cost within 18 months. By doing this now, it's going to be probably January 1 before training is completed and this is really (*inaudible*) with staff. So, I can't promise there is going to be a tremendous amount of savings between now and the end of the year but if we wait until next year we are just putting this off that much longer. I do believe that we will see- we have about a half a dozen workers that will be completing their State training and will be able to take caseloads so I think there is going to be a combination of factors that we are going to be able to save on our overtime moving forward.

Ms. Luka-Conley: We have many new workers that are coming up so I think this is going to be a great transition start to get them going. It's more of the seasoned workers- to change that culture on adapting this new technology but our new workers that we have coming up will help to retain them and give them what they need out in the field.

Ms. Lis: Another reason to do this now rather than next year is that 50% savings on the software and training costs.

Mrs. Schuyler: It's a huge savings.

Chairman Wilfong: Anymore questions? All in favor of this resolution say aye. Opposed?

Unanimously Carried

Other-

Proposed Resolution- To Accept Increased Cancer Services Grant Funding

Mrs. Schuyler: I completely apologize because it is my fault that this is under other. It is imperative that we get this through this month because we have to have the signed contract back to the State Department of Health. We already have the cancer services program, that's one of our established grant programs that we have had for a long time. We are getting an additional amount of money from the State Health Department so this is to accept the additional funds and it's a complete offset on appropriations and revenue.

Chairman Wilfong: Any questions? All in favor of accepting this? Opposed?

Unanimously Carried

Discussion: Temporary Assistance Report- Christine Schuyler and Diane Anderson

MOVED by Legislator Pavlock, SECONDED by Legislator O'Connell to adjourn

Unanimously Carried (5:55 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,
Olivia L. Ames, Committee Secretary