

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES LEGISLATIVE
COMMITTEE MEETING
January 25, 2006
OSWEGO COUNTY BUILDING
4TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: John Proud, Chairman
Barbara Brown, Vice Chair
Dan Chalifoux
Leonard Ponzi
Paul Santore
Kimberly Seager

Staff: Kathleen Fenlon, Executive Director, Youth Bureau
Donna Kestner, Director of Veterans' Services
Frances Lanigan, Commissioner of Social Services
Larry Schmidt, Director of Office for the Aging
Kathleen Smith, Commissioner of Health Services
Marlene Jones, Senior Typist, Department of Social Services

Guests: Nicole Kolmsee, Director of Mental Hygiene
Stephen Lyman, County Administrator
Steve Yablonski, Editor, Oswego Daily News
Sara Sunday, Aging Services Specialists

Excused: Arthur Gearsbeck

Chairman Proud called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Proud asked for a motion to approve the November 23, 2005 minutes. Legislator Brown moved a motion to approve the minutes, second to motion by Legislator Ponzi. 5-Ayes – Proud, Brown, Ponzi, Santore, Seager. 1-Abstain – Chalifoux. Motion approved.

Chairman Proud welcomed Legislator Chalifoux to the Committee.

2. HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Commendation Honoring Ralph D'Amico

Ralph D'Amico was appointed to the Board of Health in 1971 when it was instituted and served through December 31, 2005. Mr. D'Amico declined reappointment to the board. Mr. D'Amico was an invaluable asset to the board through the years.

Commissioner Smith and the Board of Health recommend that the Legislature honor Mr. D'Amico for his long-term commitment to the community.

Legislator Brown moved a motion for the Legislature to honor Mr. D'Amico at Legislature meeting, if he wishes. Second to motion by Legislator Ponzi. Motion unanimously approved. 6 Ayes – Proud, Brown, Chalifoux, Ponzi, Santore, and Seager.

Appointment to Board of Health

Commissioner Smith and the Board of Health recommend that the Legislature reappoint Mame Clark to the Board of Health for a 6-year statutory term. Term to expire on 12/31/11.

Legislator Brown moved a motion to reappoint Mame Clark to the Board of Health, second to motion by Legislator Seager. Motion unanimously approved. 6 Ayes – Proud, Brown, Chalifoux, Ponzi, Santore and Seager.

3. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Commissioner Lanigan introduced Nicole Kolmsee, Director of Mental Hygiene Services to the Committee.

Appointments to Community Services Board

Commissioner Lanigan and the Community Service Board recommend that the Legislature reappoint Carol Alfieri, Frank Church and Mame Clark to the Community Services Board for the statutory term of 4 years. Terms to expire 12/31/09.

Legislator Santore moved a motion to reappoint Carol Alfieri, Frank Church and Mame Clark to the Community Services Board, second to motion by Legislator Brown. Motion unanimously approved. 6 Ayes – Proud, Brown, Chalifoux, Ponzi, Santore and Seager.

4. YOUTH BUREAU

Budget Modification - US Tennis Association Award

Director Fenlon submitted a budget modification for Committee review and approval.

- Budget Modification to amend the Youth Bureau budget to accept \$1,400 grant awarded to the Youth Bureau to promote tennis to children within Oswego County.

USDA is on track to get more children to play tennis. Part of the money will be used at Camp Hollis and the remaining money will be used for local municipal programs.

Legislator Seager moved a motion to approve the request, second to motion by Legislator Brown. Motion unanimously approved. 6- Ayes – Proud, Brown, Chalifoux, Ponzi, Santore and Seager.

5. OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Selection of Legal Services Provider

Director Schmidt reviewed the selection provider process to contract for legal services. OFA in conjunction with Purchasing issued RFP for professional legal services. Only two (2) proposals were submitted. Proposals were reviewed by the Administrator of OFA and by a special Committee of the Office for the Aging Advisory Council.

The last 10-12 years Reynolds and McGowan have provided legal services. Reynolds and McGowan's proposal was a little higher than Legal Aid Society. OFA is extremely satisfied

with the work that Reynolds and McGowan have provided. They are highly experienced and highly qualified. Received negative feedback regarding Legal Aid Society.

Legislator Brown moved a motion to approve Reynolds and McGowan to provide legal services to OFA, second to motion by Legislator Santore. Motion unanimously approved. 6 Ayes – Proud, Brown, Chalifoux, Ponzi, Santore and Seager.

Information Regarding Proposal for Single Point of Entry System

Director Schmidt reviewed information on the Single Point of Entry System (SPOE).

New York State is going to mandate a One Stop for Long Term Care. Through the coordination of services, the level of need will be determined. Once the need has been determined will be able to funnel to a single source. Expect that things will be in place the first part of 2007.

Information from the state is not clear at this time. Commissioner Lanigan has concerns as to whether SPOE program is a funded or non-funded mandate by the State.

Director Schmidt and Commissioner Lanigan will be attending a meeting this afternoon in Utica.

Committee members expressed concerns with the report from NYS regarding too many nursing homes, which includes Oswego County. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Smith will be attending a meeting on 2/16/06. Commissioner Smith believes the state is looking for alternatives to nursing homes.

Director Kestner requested that she be included in any updates. Will invite her to the next meeting.

Chairman Proud requested that Commissioner Smith report back to committee on the 2/16/06 meeting.

Medicare Part D Implementation

OFA received a grant to educate the public regarding the new Medicare Part D Program.

Director Schmidt introduced Sara Sunday. Sara has been assisting the public with their problems with the new Medicare Part D Program.

Sara reported that the transition period has been very trying. There was a break down, as data was not supplied to the plans.

Ongoing problems with pharmacies charging higher co-pays, prescription(s) not covered by their plan, leaving pharmacy without prescription, can't get through to plans, EPIC issues, etc. Many plans do not cover anxiety medication.

NYS to provide temporary prescription drug coverage for elderly and disabled Medicaid (dual coverage) recipients who have been denied access under the Medicare Part D Program. State to work out plan to get reimbursed. This is not happening. Discussion ensued.

Director Kestner reported that many veterans are now utilizing Veteran clinics for prescriptions.

Committee asked what should they tell their constituents? Sara suggested that they call 1-800-Medicare . When someone calls Sara with problem(s) she calls Medicare, works with pharmacy, etc and gets back to the individual. Sara has had counseling sessions with individuals to review plans to see what plan best would meet their prescription needs. Legislators can have their constituents give her a call and she will assist them.

Director Schmidt to keep Committee updated on Medicare Part D Program issues.

6. **VETERANS**

Director Kestner will attending training in Albany, which includes Veterans Health Care and Medicare Part D.

Pulaski office is working out fine.

Veteran Services does not cover all prescriptions. Veterans have a choice of using Medicare or VA for prescriptions.

7. **NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday Feb. 22, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. Listing of meeting dates will be issued in the near future.

Chairman Proud asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Legislator Brown moved a motion to adjourn the meeting, second to motion by Legislator Seager. Motion unanimously approved. 6 Ayes – Proud, Brown, Chalifoux, Ponzi, Santore and Seager. Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.