

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
of the ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

DATE: June 17, 1998

TIME: 6:00 pm

LOCATION: Conference Library  
Ulster County Building

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Alice Tipp, Robert Aiello, David Donaldson,  
Joan Feldmann, Brian Hathaway, Edward Jennings,  
Sam Magarelli, Philip Sinagra & Robert Wilkins

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: None

OTHER MEMBERS: Terry Breitenstein, Veterans Services  
Kathy Puglisi, Office for the Aging  
Ellen Greczynski, Office for the Aging  
Jim Kelley Smith, Legislator (observed)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

TERRY BREITENSTEIN - Veterans Services

Alice began the meeting by asking Terry to read the letter of response to a letter Terry wrote to the State regarding the personnel problem in his office. The letter stated that due to budget constraints, the additional personnel cannot be given to the local office nor can Bob Tomaszewski be given full time placement. Bob will stay in the county 3 days per week and will start back on July 1st. Terry stated that he still is down two days and has a hard time justifying the office space for a part time employee. Ed asked where Bob is the other 2 days of the week. Terry replied New York City. He lives in Kingston and they send him to N.Y.C.. Alice asked if they should do something further. Terry replied no. Brian mentioned that he had been at Tech City that morning and talked to Kevin O'Connell about the out patient clinic. Kevin told him it should be open in a few weeks but he doesn't know where it will be. Terry remarked that they haven't even completed the RFPs yet. As far as where it will be, Kingston Hospital, Benedictine Hospital and Family Practice are in the running. Joan brought the topic back to the 3 employees that were hired by Mr. Beehan in the State Office of Veterans Services. She asked why they were hired and where they were placed. Terry responded that there was 1 hired as a counselor in Nassau County and 2 were hired as counselors in Albany. Joan asked if they were replacing someone. Terry said he wasn't sure.

Terry then announced that he is now on the Internet which will be helpful to him in locating addresses. He went on to inform the committee that the budget is coming up and they will need a new van. He doesn't, however, know who has the State contract bid. Joan asked if the new van would have a wheelchair lift. Terry stated that he believed that they may need to obtain this. He said that the ADA says that you will provide a wheelchair person with at least the same services as anyone else. He stated

that they would be beyond the ADA with the ambulette. He then told the committee that at the next meeting he would bring the Capital project and the Budget. Robert Wilkins asked about the new fees for the indigent burials. Terry told the members that the VA has paid about 80% of them and he sends appeal letters out on the ones they would not pay. The appeal letters seem to be working. Alice asked what the burial amount is. The total is \$1,850 of which the County pays \$1,350 and the VA pays the other \$450, Terry replied. He also advised that the indigent burials come in spurts and it is possible that they could run out of money. Alice asked if there were any other questions for Terry. There were none. He was excused.

#### Kathy Puglisi - Office for the Aging

Kathy brought the resolution for \$750 from Rondout Savings Bank. It will be used for printing and advertising for Senior Day which will be held on August 26, 1998. Alice showed the committee the Resolution and asked if all were in favor. Robert Wilkins made the 1st motion to accept it, Sam seconded it. All signed the Resolution. A discussion on the Nutrition contract followed. Kathy informed the committee that she, along with Danny Alfonso, Bill Darwak, Alice Tipp, Ward Todd, Arlene Kerans & Jean Patton, met with 6 members of the State Office for the Aging the week before. They included fiscal & dietary personnel. The State had questions regarding the contract. They questioned the rationale in taking the bid that they took. The State also admitted that they themselves had not monitored the contract as well as they should have. They are going to send down a packet with a request for a cost analysis. Kathy told the committee that she had previously requested this be done by the vendor, but it never was. The cost analysis will now need to be filled out by the vendor and returned to the State. Personnel from the State will then come down and do a full monitoring assessment. Kathy advised the committee that they will teach her and the staff involved how to do the assessment with Community Action. An assessment will be done on an annual basis. She stated that the purpose of this is to learn how to monitor the vendor. She repeated that we are still paying higher than anyone else in the State. Kathy informed the committee that the State will compare Ulster County with other Counties. For instance, Oneida County's price is less than Ulster's and they are a profit agency. Kathy told the committee that they are now requiring backups for the vouchers and have challenged, to date, 130 names which have been taken off the meal list. Robert Wilkins asked what Community Action's reaction has been. Kathy stated that Community Action has not met with the State yet, however, the site managers are very resistant. Joan asked what the reasoning was for taking 130 names off the list. Kathy replied: underage, staff and people signing up and not showing or taking the meals out. Joan questioned if a site manager leaves, is someone new trained? Kathy said Community Action trains them. Sam asked how it was left. Kathy advised that the State would send down the cost analysis for the vendor to complete. Phil stated that he thought an independent party should fill out the analysis. He questioned whether all the components were in the bid. Alice said they were not. Kathy said the cost of insurance, dumpsters and rent were not included in the RFP. Phil proposed that if they weren't included, the price would even be higher than it is. Dave suggested reading each bid. Sam, Dave and Phil discussed this for awhile. Bob Aiello commented that there didn't seem to be anything they could do until the State looked at it. He also added that the committee has not seen any of the bids. Sam said that the committee needed to see the information. Kathy remarked that there were 3 bidders involved this year, and they've never had any bidders but the current vendor before this. Robert Wilkins said he would like to see why the lower bidder wasn't chosen. Joan stated that she would like to see the RFPs. Sam agreed. Alice and Kathy both said there was a lot of information. They asked if everyone wanted to see the RFPs. Everyone agreed that they would like to see the information. Sam suggested that a summary be prepared for the

agreed that they would like to see the information. Sam suggested that a summary be prepared for the committee members to read. Dave then asked how long Community Action ran the program. Kathy replied at least 15 years. Brian asked Kathy who she thought had the most knowledge of the contracts. Kathy replied; Purchasing did. Brian suggested they ask Arlene Kerans in to discuss this. Discussion followed on this but it was not decided. Robert Wilkins brought up the point that ever since he came on the committee in August 1997, there seemed to be problems with Community Action. Besides the cost there were problems involved with this vendor cooperating with other guidelines. Sam asked about the money that is funded for the meals. Kathy said that most of the money is from the State and Federal Government and the County contributes when there is a shortage. Alice advised the committee that it is a Federal Program run through the State. Kathy stated that at the rate they are going with the cost of the meals, it is likely they will run out of money again. She said that they would like to cut the cost of the meals and expand the program. Robert Wilkins asked what the yearly cost of the program is. Approximately \$700,000 Kathy replied. Phil remarked that the State & Federal Government could cut off funds for Ulster County if they find problems. Kathy ended the discussion by informing the Committee that the only thing that could be done now was to wait to hear from the State.

The next topic on Kathy's agenda was Senior Games. The staff took the project over this year and Tennis was added. She stated that there were over 300 people involved in the games and Floyd Patterson was there to give out awards. For the most part they were a success. She thanked Alice & Phil for their support.

Lastly, Kathy spoke about "Senior Day" and the Senior Picnics. The applications for "Senior Day" are in the process of being made up for which Rondout Savings bank contributed \$750 for the printing and advertising, and the Care-A-Van will be at each of the picnic sites. She advised the committee members that if they would like to go to any of the Senior Picnics, just call the office for a reservation. Alice asked if there were any further questions for Kathy. There were none. Kathy was excused.

Alice Tipp - Chairman

Alice showed the Committee a Resolution in regard to the Youth Bureau. The total amount to be received is \$12,692 and will be applied to two new programs; CASA and Community Resource Center. Brian made the 1st motion to accept, Dave seconded it. All agreed and signed.

Alice let the committee know that she has been checking in on the Youth Bureau and has been talking to Romey Kelley.

Motion to adjourn made by Brian, Bob Aiello seconded it. Meeting adjourned 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alice Tipp, Chairman  
Community Services Committee