

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Community Mental Health Committee
DATE: May 20, 1992
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE:
LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Busick and Legislators
Irwin, Sottile, and Husted
LEGISLATORS EXCUSED: Legislators McConekey, Pecora and
Bertone
OTHERS ATTENDING: Ernest J. Townsend, DPA, CSW,
Director; Marshall Beckman,
Deputy Director; Legislator Lyn
Bauer

The following items were on the agenda:

The minutes of the April 15, 1992 meeting should reflect that Eileen Sottile was excused rather than absent.

1. The Committee unanimously approved a resolution to transfer funds within the Alcohol Clinic budget from the part-time employment account to a newly created line item for a staff psychiatrist who will be working more than part time and receiving benefits. Motion made by R. Irwin, seconded by E. Sottile, passed.
2. The Committee unanimously approved the annual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the New York State Office of Mental Health and Ulster County. This agreement designates the County Mental Health Department as a Comprehensive Outpatient Program Provider, entitling the Department to the enhanced Medicaid rate. Motion made by R. Irwin, seconded by E. Sottile, passed.

3. There was extensive discussion about the increased criminal order charges that the Department is currently holding. Department representatives expressed concern that, due to continuing budget reductions, criminal order charges may begin to compete with funding for existing programs. Committee members agreed that it was not the intention of the Legislature to curtail ongoing mental health services in order to pay for these charges, which the Department has no control over. It was unanimously agreed that the Committee Chairman, Legislator Busick, would urge the Legislature to address these costs as contingency expenses in the beginning of 1993. Chairman Busick further stated that these charges should be attached to the general fund and not the Department.
4. Dr. Townsend made a presentation regarding managed care. He stressed that managed care has been mandated by the state for Ulster County. If the Department does not take a pro-active position about the managed care structure, it stands to lose a sizeable portion of its Medicaid revenues which would directly result in an increased County contribution. The proposal advocated by Dr. Townsend is one in which the Mental Health Department would become manager of care for the mental health Medicaid eligible population. The Community Services Board will make a final recommendation at its June meeting, which will be brought forward to the legislative committee in June. This item will, therefore, be discussed by the Committee in June, with consideration to be given to establishing a special "steering committee" which would be used to expedite the decision making process.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M. on a motion made by R. Irwin, seconded by E. Sottile and unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles E. Busick, Chairman
Community Mental Health Committee