

**Draft**  
**Health and Human Services Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**February 7, 2005**

The Health and Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, February 7, 2005 @ 5:30p.m. in the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Robert Rosemier called the meeting to order. Members present were Marlene Allen, Eileen Dubin, Sally DeFauw, Eric Johnson and Ruth Anne Tobias. Ms. Fullerton was absent. Others present were Ms. Karen Unger, Ms. Mary Olson, Mr. Greg Millburg and Mr. Ray Bockman.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by Ms. Allen, seconded by Ms. Tobias, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Moved by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from January 2005.

**DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

Ms. Karen Unger, with the DeKalb County Housing Authority, briefly reviewed what the services are that the Housing Authority provides for the residents of DeKalb County. She said that they are an Illinois Municipal Organization governed by a five-member board that is appointed by the DeKalb County Board Chairman. They are a non-taxing authority and receive their funds from the federal government (HUD) for their voucher program. Currently HUD is making cutbacks and locally they have been cut dramatically and in turn, they are unable to assist all the people who request help from them. In the past HUD issued them 539 vouchers in their program and also given an amount of money to work with. At this point in time, funding procedures have changed where HUD gives them "x" amount of dollars and then told to make it work. They try to help as many people as they can with the money that they have. Some of the changes that they have had to make are the minimum rent program and lowering their payment standards, which is how they figure their rent. In public housing and Section 8 they pay 30% of their income towards rent and utilities, they now have had to figure out different ways to lower their portion on the rent that they pay. Ms. Dubin asked Ms. Unger how much have they had to cutback on the voucher system? Ms. Unger said that as of February 1, 2005 at 465 vouchers. They are trying to increase that number.

Ms. Unger said that they have 6 programs that they offer: 280 public housing units, which are owned by the Housing Authority. Those would be the high rises in Sycamore and DeKalb. They have 12 rural development units in Hinckley, 12 (515) units in Shabbona, which are multi-family units; 89 at Sandwich Manor, where they only administer the program. They also have a program called Shelter Plus Care, which is the new building in DeKalb by the nursing home, called Dresser Court. This is a 26-unit facility for the chronically homeless people. They have 12 units on Gurler Road for disabled homeless people. They have a waiting list for all of them. Public Housing has a waiting list. Section 8 housing waiting list have been closed as of 8/1/04 due to the fact that they had too many people on it because people needed to wait for a unit sometimes up to a year. She has taken 124 names off the list so far and will possibly take another 100 names off the list this month, for a total of 224 names. They are currently down to 719 people, not including the 100 that she will be taking off the list

in February. These are just people on the waiting list for Section 8 housing. Public housing has its own waiting list that is not closed yet. They work on a point system as to determine who is taken off the list first.

Chairman Rosemier asked Ms. Unger to explain how Section 8 differs from public housing? Ms. Unger said that all public housing they own and Section 8 they do not – it is privately owned. The only thing that they do for Section 8 housing is that they issue vouchers to the people on their waiting list when the funds are available. People then go out and seek out a unit and a landlord that are willing to accept Section 8 housing applicants. HUD pays a portion of the rent based on the person's income directly to the landlord. The tenant then pays the remaining portion.

Ms. Allen asked what is the dollar amount of the voucher that you issue? Ms. Unger said that there is a dollar amount assigned to it. A new person can't start a new lease where they have to pay than 40% of their income towards rent and utilities. HUD doesn't feel that they will be able to afford to pay over 40%, therefore they won't allow them to enter into a contract. The dollar amount of the voucher is based off of the fair market rent in the area. Currently it is between 90 and 110% of the fair market rent. Currently they are at 95% of the fair market rent.

Locally, what the county board can do for them is support them and their programs. They work a lot with various agencies in the area. The narcotics drug force helps to screen their applicants so that there are no drugs in the units.

Mr. Tobias asked about the Dresser Court Units and if there is much turnover there? Ms. Unger said yes, there have been 4 out of the 26 units that have turned over since 5/1/04. Those units were all filled by August 1, 2004. They have a zero tolerance to drugs. As far as alcohol is concerned, if there are no criminal problems, then there is really not much that they can do.

Ms. Unger also informed the committee that if they have an applicant who has HUD paying more than the 30% for rent, they then have to file with HUD within 10 days that it is higher. If they don't they have to start paying back to HUD the amount that HUD has overpaid monthly. If the amount equals \$3,000.00 the case is then turned over to the States's Attorney's Office for prosecution.

Before closing Ms. Unger pointed out to the committee that DeKalb County needs moderate income housing. The wages in the county are low, therefore, putting more people at the poverty level. Ms. Dubin then asked, what is the greatest need? Ms. Unger said that the rental prices are too high, and again the wages paid in DeKalb County are too low. She also said that childcare in the county is too expensive and that sometimes there is not transportation for people to get to a job.

The committee thanked Ms. Unger for a very informative presentation.

#### **SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Ms. Dubin objected to the meeting starting at 5:30p.m because of people that work, it is hard for them to make that time. The committee left the time at 5:30p.m. for their future meetings.

#### **CORONER REPORTS**

Chairman Rosemier informed the committee that all coroner reports should be give at the Law and Justice Committee Meetings since that is where the Coroner reports to.

## **IMPACT OF MEDICAL MALPRACTICE INSURANCE IN THE COUNTY**

Chairman Rosemier said that there has been concern about doctors leaving the State of Illinois because of malpractice insurance costs. He said that he spoke with the CEO of the DeKalb Clinic, Ms. Marcia Geotsilitis, who did say that some physicians that have left the county because of the rates and then there are those that have stopped specializing, like delivering babies, brain surgery, etc. She also said that we are not as bad as Will County as far as how many doctors have left our county. Ms. Geotsilitis also told Chairman Rosemier that the current rate for malpractice insurance in Wisconsin is \$7,000, in Indiana it's \$50,000 and in the State of Illinois it is \$150,000 – that's why they are leaving. She encouraged him to have our board members contact the State legislators about their concerns.

The committee wondered why the premiums were so high in Illinois? Is it really the insurance industry that we should be questioning or the doctors? Maybe they should bring in certain people to discuss this with the committee so that they can get a better understanding of the problem.

Chairman Rosemier said that one of the problems that the CEO of the DeKalb Clinic said was that in the State of Illinois a person could file a malpractice suit on a case that involved a child up to 25 years after the incident happened. For an adult case to be filed – it would be up to 6 years.

It was agreed that Ms. Allen would speak to Representation Robert Pritchard about these concerns and get back to the committee with her findings. It was also agreed to place this item on the agenda again in the near future.

## **REVIEW OF LIST OF POTENTIAL CLIENT-SERVERS PERTINENT TO THE COMMITTEE**

Chairman Rosemier said that when he made up the annual reporting list, he was thinking about what constitutes human services. They would be educational needs, housing needs and financial needs, to name a few. He then asked himself what agencies are meeting these needs? This is how this list was comprised - of who should present information to this committee and what boards should. He said that Ms. Dubin is on the MPO board now and that he would like her to report back to the committee on their meetings. He would like to restrict their presentations describing what they do to 10 minutes each. The committee and the presenters will then talk about unmet needs and how they could be met and accomplish the goals.

The committee discussed inviting the new Mental Health Board Director, Liz Carney, to attend and introduce herself. They would also like to discuss hunger in the county and the various programs addressing this issue in the county.

Mr. Bockman stressed that when Chairman Rosemier talks to these agencies each month to make sure that they tell the committee what their #1 unmet need is.

Ms. Fullerton arrived @ 7:05p.m.

## **PROMOTION OF GRANT SUPPORT INITIATIVE**

Ms. Dubin said that all agencies seem to be hurting for money and that there are grants out there that they might be able to apply for and receive. The county needs to have someone that can identify these grants for various agencies and departments and help them apply for them and even write the grants. Maybe the county should look into hiring a grant writer was one of the suggestions that the committee made. In some instances if you have a grant writer who works for the county, you could have them

help the agency write the grant application and if the agency is awarded the grant, the county and the agency could split the funds by certain percentages.

It was agreed that Ms. Dubin would look into the issue further and get back to the committee about her findings. It was also agreed that Ms. DeFauw who sits on the Economic Development Committee, who is discussing the same item, would report back to this committee about their findings.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Tobias, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert Rosemier, Chairman

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Mary C. Supple, Secretary

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