

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
August 3, 2006

The Health & Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Thursday, August 3, 2006, @ 6:00p.m. in the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Robert Rosemier called the meeting to order. Members present were Marlene Allen, Eileen Dubin, and Paulette Tolene. Members absent were Sally DeFauw, Julia Fullerton and Ruth Anne Tobias. A quorum was present. Others present were Frank Bierlotzer, Jackie Loften and Mary Olson.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Ms. Allen, seconded by Ms. Tolene, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – MS. JACKIE LOFTEN

Chairman Rosemier introduced Ms. Jackie Loften, Office Administrator of the DeKalb County Family Community Resource Center, once known as Public Aid. Ms. Loften said that her agency offers a variety of programs for their clients to choose from. They offer programs for assistance with money, medical and food stamps. They have 11 caseworkers and 2 clerical employees.

They accept new applications, determine eligibility, maintain caseload and handle referrals. The cash programs are for aid to the aged, blind and disabled. They also have cash for their TANF program, which is a program for temporary assistance for children under the age of 19. The medical program also is available to the aid to the aged, blind and disabled. They also offer the food stamps program, which can also be used with the cash or medical program too.

They see approximately 60 people a day or 1200 people a month. They see about 440 new intake applications a month. Of those 200 of them are medical applications only. Those medical applicants can apply via the mail and do not have to come into the office to apply. The nursing home customers do have to come into her office and apply. They take applications from 8:30a.m. to 5:00p.m., Monday through Friday. They have 5,000 approved cases in the County currently, which equals 9,500 people.

She said that they have to re-determine eligibility for certain programs. The TANF program cases have to be re-determined every 6 months for eligibility. The food stamps program cases are also re-determined every 6 months for eligibility.

Of the 5,000 cases approved, approximately 120 TANF cases (A State of Illinois Program), where a mother and one child receive \$292.00 a month. These people are those that live in subsidized housing and utilize LIHEAP, too. That is a work program and there are a lot of requirements that need to be met to be qualified for this program. The TANF clients, like Ms. Loften stated earlier, need to meet certain requirements for the TANF grant to qualify for daycare (subsidized, where they do not have to pay). They offer a medical card for children too.

With the cash assistance program for the Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled there are 45 cases. That is a small grant of \$20 to \$30 offered to each client for a month.

Ms. Loften said that the clients use these programs with their individual Link cards. All of the medical coverage, cash assistance, food stamps and TANF grants are all placed on the Link cards. Ms. Loften also said that the Link cards can be used in all of the states now.

Ms. Loften also stated that they have about 500 bilingual cases that are active currently. She said that they see about ten bilingual clients a month. Because of this she has hired a bilingual staff person to help these clients fill out the applications and such.

They have 385 group care cases that include people that reside in nursing homes where they are assisting them with some level of care. They have 550 food stamp cases (A Federal program), which include people that just receive food stamp assistance and nothing else. They have 321 spend down cases, which are people that receive medical assistance. The majority of these clients are included in the Aid to Aged, Blind and Disabled program.

There is no duplication of services and the TANF program is the highest level of assistance that her office offers.

Before ending, Ms. Loften asked for assistance from the committee and the County for help with getting transportation to her office for her clients. The committee stated that the M.P.O. has applied for funds for transportation needs in our county.

Ms. Tobias arrived at 6:55p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Rosemier said that last month the issue of taking action on a smoking ban policy in the rural parts of the county was brought up.

Ms. Allen stated that restaurants should be able to determine that themselves, not the government.

Ms. Dubin stated that evidence shows that second hand smoke is dangerous.

Ms. Tolene said that she read recently that the Marriott Hotels went smoke-free all over the nation. She feels the market is moving in that direction and people will go to those places that ban smoking.

Ms. Tobias said that she is not in favor of a county smoking ban.

After a brief discussion, it was Moved by Ms. Tobias, seconded by Ms. Tolene to table this countywide smoking ban indefinitely. There were 2 yes votes and 2 no votes. Motion failed. Ms. Tolene said that if the committee was voting on tabling the issue, she didn't realize that the committee could just dismiss the issue all together and she wanted to change her vote to a nay.

Moved by Ms. Tolene, seconded by Ms. Allen, to remove the issue from the table and that it is no longer old business. It was carried unanimously.

Chairman Rosemier said that he had a lengthy discussion the other day with a constituent about cooling centers in and around DeKalb County. After this discussion he suggested that possibly the County could purchase some fans with the monies left over from the Senior Services Tax Levy monies. Possibly 100 fans for the elderly, at about \$12 a fan for a total of \$1200.00. We could have the determination of need for the fans made by Elder Care, and the distribution possibly made by the Boy Scouts working toward their Eagle status.

Ms. Olson said that the Lt. Governor already has a program that is called the Fan Club where certain agencies throughout the county received 9 fans each. Ms. Olson said that most of her 9 fans went to the elderly, the disabled and to families with children two years and younger.

Chairman Rosemier also spoke about the survey that he sent out regarding grant assistance. He reviewed the responses that he received again for the committee. He said that he received 20 responses out of 37 surveys that were mailed out. He was pleased with the number of responses.

Ms. Olson said that she sits on the Training Consortium here in the county and she mentioned that a course on grant writing and where the agencies could locate the funds would be beneficial she felt. It was agreed that she and Chairman Rosemier would get together to discuss this issue further.

Chairman Rosemier said that at the September meeting the committee would be visited by Ms. Olson on her block grant and from Herb Rueben on affordable housing.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Dubin said that she and Ms. Tobias sit on the nursing home board and they were thinking of making a video tape about the nursing home and then going out to the Kiwanis and Rotary and publicize the nursing home. Ms. Tobias said that there are many changes already on Medicare, population, etc. This would be something that we could do to be proactive. Ms. Dubin said that the county has a tremendous network that we could tap into on this issue. She said that maybe we could use interns from NIU. Ms. Tobias suggested that possibly a marketing class could help out with the project.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Tolene, seconded by Ms. Allen, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Rosemier, Chairman

RR:mcs