

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
January 5, 2006**

The Health & Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Thursday, January 5, 2006, @ 6:00p.m. in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Robert Rosemier called the meeting to order. Members present were Marlene Allen, Eileen Dubin and Sally DeFauw. Eric Johnson, Ruth Anne Tobias and Julia Fullerton were absent. There was a quorum present. Others present were Mary Olson, Liz Carney and Kathy Ostdick.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Moved by Ms. Allen, seconded by Ms. DeFauw, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended minutes from December 2005.**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Ms. Olson would like to be added to the agenda for the purpose of discussing the senior service tax levy. Chairman Rosemier added another item to the agenda regarding the annual meeting dates list.

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

**ANNUAL MEETING DATE SCHEDULE APPROVAL**

The committee agreed to the dates that appeared on the list for the committee meetings for FY2006.

**SENIOR TAX DISCUSSION**

Ms. Olson, Community Services Director of DeKalb County, said that she has made minor changes to the format for the Senior Tax Application.

Chairman Rosemier changed the subject for a moment to let the committee know that Elder Care has not hired anyone just yet for the Medicare Part D program that we awarded some senior tax money to. The person that they wanted to hire, had a death in the family and they were trying to give her the grieving time that she needed. She is now ready to come aboard so hopefully she will be starting soon with Elder Care and help with the Medicare Part D Program consultations.

Ms. Dubin then asked what was happening with the County's Drug Prescription Card? Ms. Supple, DeKalb County Board Coordinator, said

that she has sent out 16,500 cards so far out of 20,000 and that they are at every pharmacy and clinic in the County except Eggleston's and Lehan's.

Going back to Ms. Olson's change in her format for the Senior Tax application, she said that the agencies need to return them by February 17<sup>th</sup> and that her office will have a little over a week to get them to this committee for the March meeting.

Chairman Rosemier said that last year the committee ran the open hearings that were different than in years past. The agencies were only there to answer questions, he continued. He is proposing that we hear them and ask our questions and then about a week or two later to hold another special meeting to make the awards.

### **LLOYD PLETSCH – EXPERIENCE WORKS PRESENTATION**

Chairman Rosemier introduced Mr. Lloyd Pletsch the Field Operations Coordinator of Experience Works, which was also known as Green Thumb. It is an organization for people 55 years and older, low-income, and unemployed. They find them training assignments with not-for-profit organizations. They train there and receive new skills so that they can get back into the work field. They train for about 18 hours a week and they pay them to do this at minimum wage, through Title V funds from the Department of Labor.

Chairman Rosemier asked if IETC helps with the job search? Mr. Pletsch said yes, they can sit down with the individual, get them on the computer, fill out criteria and then send out their resumes. The individuals have to be below the poverty level. People can contact him or his assistant, Mr. Gordon Block, who works out of the IETC office. They will speak to the individuals over the phone, and if they meet the criteria, they then go out to the client's homes and meet them.

The program did place 33,000 Americans nationally through the program in the 2001-2002 program year.

The committee thanked Mr. Pletsch for his presentation.

### **LESLEY WICKS OF HOPE HAVEN**

Ms. Lesly Wicks, the Director of Hope Haven located in the City of DeKalb, introduced herself to the committee.

Ms. Wicks said they started in 1986 when PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) began providing food and shelter to the homeless in DeKalb County. In October 1990 the doors were open to a permanent

shelter accessible every day of the year. Along with the new shelter came a new name, Hope Haven. They provide food and shelter for the homeless families. She said that in the 1990's the homeless families figures started to explode. The other fastest growing population that is homeless is the elderly. They can stay in the emergency shelter for up to 90 days and then after 90 days the staff will evaluate the situation and then they could stay month to month.

Their second major program is the Transitional Housing Program for homeless families. They have 12 rooms in the shelter for homeless families. It is predominately a H.U.D. funded program and they can stay in the program for up to 2 years. They are trying to transition the families from the shelter to permanent housing and maintain it. Most of the women with children in their shelter have limited work skills, but that most of them do work and that a lot of their clients are the working poor. They work very closely with H.U.D. and have opened up a new housing project called Dresser Court. Ms. Wicks thanked the county board for all of their support and donation of the land for this project. It houses 26 people in 1-bedroom apartments. It is owned by H.U.D., Hope Haven runs it, and is for people with disabilities. She said that 23 out of 26 people have mental disabilities. It opened in 2004 and filled up very fast. They are at full occupancy currently and they have a waiting list.

Ms. Wicks said that Hope Haven has been full everyday. They have 12 bedrooms for 12 families, dorms for men and dorms for women. She said that they get great support from the churches that help provide meals. In 2005 they served 26,000 meals to people at Hope Haven.

Ms. Wicks said that they do try to help the families work on their educational and life skills. They are trying to help them to be able to make enough income to afford housing. She has been able to refer working moms to the CNA program at Kishwaukee College. She explained that for only a short period of time to go to school, they can learn a new skill and then when finished they can earn anywhere between \$14.00 to \$18.00 a n hour.

The Committee thanked Ms. Wicks for a very informative presentation.

### **FUNDING SURVEY RESULTS AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Chairman Rosemier said that he did not receive any responses from the committee regarding the evaluation process of this committee. He encouraged the members present to please look at it and get back to him on their feelings of what direction they would like to see the committee go in. One of his suggestions would be to present a State of

the County Report from this committee to the full board and he asked them if they would like to participate in producing this.

The survey results were not able to get done in December because of the holidays. Would we like to go ahead and have workshops that the County would sponsor? The staff would come from N.I.U. he said. He thinks that from the surveys that he received that there was enough places who would like some help.

Ms. Dubin asked if we, as a committee, has a good idea of where we could make some progress for what the needs are in the county and where we can make progress? Ms. Olson said that there is a group of those out there in the County that are thinking of doing a county-wide needs assessment. She will keep the committee informed about this group as they begin this process.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman Robert Rosemier

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Mary C. Supple, Secretary