

**Health and Human Services Committee**  
**MINUTES**  
**July 6, 2006**

The Health and Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Thursday, July 6, 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, Sally DeFauw, Paulette Tolene, Julia Fullerton and Ruth Anne Tobias. Others present were Herb Holderman and Mary Olson.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Moved by Ms. Tobias, seconded by Mrs. Allen, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from May 2006.**

**Moved by Ms. Tolene, seconded by Ms. Dubin, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from June 2006.**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

**VETERAN'S COMMISSION BUDGET REVIEW FOR FY'07**

Mr. Herb Holderman, DeKalb County Veteran's Assistance Commission Superintendent, presented his proposed FY2007 Budget to the committee.

Mr. Holderman then told the committee that he went to Reno, Nevada, for the National Association of County Veteran's Service Offices, which was an accreditation training. It gives them the right to represent veteran's all the way to the court of veteran's appeals. Linda Drake is the new employee that he has hired as his Administrative Assistant. She and Herb went to the training in Nevada together. They both completed the training and they both passed. They took 32 hours of instruction in this training session.

Chairman Rosemier asked Mr. Holderman what kind of appeals do they handle? Mr. Holderman said that appeals are heard by the Board of Veteran's Appeals, which is comprised of people like himself. If the appeal is not approved then it could move all the way to the Court of Veteran's Appeals. The appeals are paid for through his budget. It costs \$75.00 to begin the process.

Mr. Holderman said that Illinois was 48<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states for Veteran's benefits. Since this was pointed out, our legislators have been working with the V.A. Claims that are submitted now are being approved much more quickly compared to the 14 months that they used to get approved.

Chairman Rosemier asked Mr. Holderman how his office is letting the Veterans know about their services? Mr. Holderman said that they will have a Vets Fair in August and they will be at the Sandwich Fair, too. The local newspapers have been very good to them and the local veterans organizations are very good about getting the word out. He also said that there is information on the County's website regarding his department.

They are currently seeing four veterans a day. Their space is tight which is not very conducive to private consultations.

Ms. Dubin asked how many veteran's are there in DeKalb County? Mr. Holderman said 16,000.

Ms. Tobias asked Mr. Holderman if they provide any transportation for the veterans? Mr. Holderman said that they are currently using TransVac. They are also paying for people to take veterans to the V.A. Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin. They are trying to acquire a van from Madison that would cost \$231.00 a month. They would try to sign up 45 volunteers to transport the vets from here to Madison. This cost would equal about \$2800.00 a year for this van. They could run multiple trips to Madison if need be if they acquire the van. The van would be housed here in DeKalb County in a garage at the highway department or health department.

Ms. Tobias asked Mr. Holderman that if a veteran gets sick later in life, do they still get the services? Mr. Holderman said that if their income is less than \$43,800 and their assets are less than \$80,000 (not including their house) they could get the service.

Ms. Allen asked if Trans Vac goes to Madison? Mr. Holderman said currently they do not.

Mr. Holderman also said that his office assists the vets with their utility bills, like water, electric, etc. They follow the poverty guidelines when interviewing the vets for this service.

Mr. Holderman said that in the new building his office will be 1700 square feet, with a conference room. They will pay \$850,000 for their portion of the new building. The County will lend them the money and the Veteran's Commission will pay them back.

Mr. Holderman asked the committee how does the budget process now work? Chairman Rosemier said that if any board members have any questions with the budget that they meet with Mr. Bockman and Mr. Hanson first. Then, he believes Mr. Bockman and Mr. Hanson would meet with department heads so that their questions are answered too.

Ms. Dubin said, referring to the budget process, as a committee could we, for example, ask to have the county hire a grantwriter to work with a variety of county departments? The committee thought that yes we could ask Mr. Bockman and Mr. Hanson.

Chairman Rosemier asked the committee what they should do about this request? Should we be discussing this in August? The regular meeting is August 7<sup>th</sup>, but there are some of the board members that will be out of town at the NACo Conference in Chicago. We could hold the meeting on August 3, 2006, if you want? The committee agreed to hold their August meeting on August 3, 2006 @ 6:00p.m.in the Administration Building's Conference Room East.

The committee thanked Mr. Holderman for his informative presentation.

#### **PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL BY THE SURVEY CONSORTIUM**

Chairman Rosemier reviewed who was present at the last month's meeting regarding the Needs Assessment Consortium. They asked us for financial support and we discussed where we thought it might come from, he said. One of the places it could come from is the unspent senior tax levy monies. It has grown now since it started about ten years ago, with interest, to \$45,000,

said Ms. Olson. This does not include the unspent monies from this year. We set aside at least \$25,000 at the inception of the tax levy for cash flow purposes, just in case, explained Ms. Olson.

Ms. Olson also explained that there is the money unspent from Family Services Agency again this year, per the attached 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report for the Senior Tax Levy Monies, which amounts to \$22,096.80. We also have the monies left over from last year that are unspent, too. There is \$21,000 unallocated funds from this year, too. Some of this money may go to the pilot program by Ben Gordon, said Chairman Rosemier.

Ms. Olson said that the Needs Assessment Group would need between \$8,000 and \$12,000 that the County would contribute for the assessment. This would come from the Senior Services Tax Monies and would pay for seniors only. The assessment is a one time only event. Then every year it would need to get updated. In five years the plan would have to be updated all over again.

Chairman Rosemier said that he does not have a good idea of when we would spend the money. At the next meeting the Needs Assessment Consortium will be talking to a consultant about the first Phase of the project, that is, gathering demographic information. That will have some costs, but the largest cost will be for the actual needs assessment, which will come later, and will be driven by the analysis of the first phase. That's the plan so far, said Chairman Rosemier. They will ask for our contribution, whether it will be for Phase I or II, I don't know. Ms. Olson said that she feels it will be for Phase III.

In October, Ms. Olson will be bringing her Community Block Grant to the committee. Hopefully, it will be for level funding this year. She continued by stating because of this, she has lost one employee who was part-time. She used to have 4, now she has 3 employees. She would like to go back to 4 employees if the Block Grant is approved.

Ms. Dubin asked Ms. Olson if more families were coming in under the poverty level? Ms. Olson said yes, our numbers are smaller than Kane County because their population is larger than ours.

Chairman Rosemier said that he would like the committee to revisit Ben Gordon's pilot program in the future, but it's just a matter of when we can get the players together.

Chairman Rosemier then asked Ms. Olson if she had heard of anything called and IDA or Individual Development Accounts, which helps people to purchase their first homes? He said that the family makes an investment and then it is matched through this program. He heard about this on TV and when he asked Mr. Bockman if he had heard of it, an ex-intern was visiting with Mr. Bockman at the time from Rockford, who said that he has.

Ms. Olson said that she has heard of it and that at one time she did take it back to her board to look at it. They were reluctant to adopt it because of the poverty level clients that they were seeing at the time and they are not really eligible for this program. This is because the federal program can only be used to buy a home and they are not any where close to that income to purchase a home. They can be used for education but the clients that they see are already qualified for a PELL Grant. It can also be used to start a business and we have only one business in all the clients that they have served. She feels that it is a good program and would look at it again if the committee wanted her to?

She continued by stating that they do have something like it. They start individual savings accounts. It basically is the same thing only they match them 1 for 1 match. If the client saves \$500 then her program matches that with \$500. People who have used this program have purchased dental work, used the money for rental deposits, purchased a car, etc.

Before closing, Chairman Rosemier asked the committee if there was anything else that they would like to discuss at the August meeting? We have the possibility of hearing from the public aid person and discussing a grant writer or hold a workshop for grant writing, so far. Ms. Tobias said that she would like to discuss the no-smoking bans in unincorporated parts of counties that is currently being discussed by counties around us.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectively submitted,

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Robert Rosemier, Chairman