

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 6, 2006**

The Health & Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, March 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, Julia Fullerton and Sally DeFauw. Eric Johnson and Ruth Anne Tobias were absent. There was a quorum present. Others present were Mary Olson, Liz Carney, Haley Murray, Herb Holderman and Greg Millburg.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Ms. DeFauw, seconded by Ms. Fullerton, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended minutes from January 2006.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

VETERAN'S ASSISTANCE COMMISSION INTRODUCTION AND UPDATE BY HERB HOLDERMAN

Chairman Rosemier introduced Mr. Herb Holderman, Superintendent for the newly created DeKalb County Veterans Assistance Commission. Mr. Holderman said that their services are similar to the Township's assistance except his department is helping the Veteran's only. The guidelines that they are using are the Public Aid guidelines, which is about \$1200 a month for a family of 2. They help with assistance for transportation, shelter, food, utilities, and sometimes for gasoline. Some veteran's will use the Green Line that travels between DeKalb and Sycamore. They really can't help with transportation for the southern part of the county unless it's monetary. If someone needs money for transportation they have the gas station take a voucher from them and then they report back to the Finance Department when turning the vouchers in.

Mr. Holderman said that he could report to this committee monthly if they want him to? Chairman Rosemier said that he feels that twice a year is all that he needs to do. Mr. Holderman said that he does do a monthly report that he could share with the committee. The committee said that that would be fine to share with them each month and then they can include it in the packet with the minutes for all county board members to see.

The Commission is funded by law or required to be funded by law, said Mr. Holderman. It has been in existence right after the Civil War. It is a little used statute. In some cases it was used for public aid. The County itself can use it for assistance for veterans, he further stated.

Mr. Holderman said that one of the services that they are working on right now is trying to get transportation for the veteran's in DeKalb County to go to Madison for medical help.

Chairman Rosemier asked Mr. Holderman if some of the Vets would be willing to drive? Mr. Holderman said yes and that they could provide volunteer drivers. So, said Chairman Rosemier, if VAC could provide the vehicle, then you, legally, could provide the drivers? Correct, said Mr. Holderman. He further stated that some of the Vets use Fox Valley Older Adults transportation at the southern end of the County.

Mr. Holderman also said that DeKalb Township is referring all the Vets to him now. There are about 17,000 Veteran's here in the County. He said that he has worked with 4 of the Vets who returned from Iraq. He further stated that he is working with another 3 Vets who returned from the War in Iraq who have asked for post-traumatic stress treatment. He is working with Ben Gordon Center on this issue and the Mental Health 708 Board.

Ms. Fullerton asked Mr. Holderman if he has prepared a budget yet? Mr. Holderman said yes he did in June or July of 2005. He originally asked for \$189,000 and that after the county reviewed his budget they increased the salary line, which in turn increased his total budget to \$203,000. However, the county has given him only \$50,000 for now. He said that he does plan on hiring one other person to help him in the office and he does have volunteers who can help him, too.

Mr. Holderman then informed the committee that the commission is comprised of 16 Veteran Groups and that 14 of them signed the petition for the Referendum. They meet monthly right now. A delegate member and an alternate members represent each group at the meetings.

Ms. Allen asked Mr. Holderman, what does she tell her constituents who ask her why he needs \$500,000 to run the office if he only budgeted for \$203,000? Mr. Holderman said that the County has asked the commission to apply some of that money to help build a new building by the nursing home facility to house their office and others. The total amount that the county is asking the commission to contribute, he said, is \$850,000. He feels that after paying the \$850,000 in about 4 years time, that they would be able to lower the rate of taxes from the maximum rate.

The committee discussed that the referendum sets the maximum rate that the Commission can ask for. The money that is collected just stays with the commission, the money does not go back to the county board.

Ms. Supple, DeKalb County Board Coordinator, further explained to the committee that Mr. Hanson stated at the last Finance Committee meeting, that this money is also to be collected for demand of services that the Commission has not seen yet, that is, for unforeseen services.

Chairman Rosemier asked if he was going to be working with the County's lobbyists to have them work for the Commission? Mr. Holderman said yes. Currently, we are working on trying to provide a bus to Madison, Wisconsin, for the Vets and for a clinic here for the Vets to go to for outpatient cases. He would like to centralize this clinic within the County.

MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT UPDATE BY LIZ CARNEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Liz Carney, Executive Director of the DeKalb County Mental Health 708 Board, updated the committee on what her department has been doing since her last visit. She first wanted to thank Ms. Julia Fullerton for her years of service on the mental health board and to the community. Ms. Fullerton has recently resigned from the board. She then went on to thank Ms. Eileen Dubin for volunteering to take Julia's place and serve on the Mental Health 708 Board.

Ms. Carney then passed out a summary of the programs funded by her board for Grant Year 2006. She said that the total allocation for the current grant year was \$1,408,000. She said that Ben Gordon Center gets \$753,000. They also receive an in-kind donation for rent of \$200,000, which is on top of the \$753,000. She said to remember that they are mandated to serve whoever walks in their doors for help, like other agencies do in the County.

She said that she sits on the drug court planning team and that the 708 Board is very supportive of her sitting on the this team.

She then explained her handout to the committee as to who are the various agencies and services that are provided in DeKalb County (Please see the report attached to these minutes) for mental health needs. She said that under the Jail Based Services, they serve the jail about 20 hours a week by visiting with the prisoners in the jail. The Consumer Advocacy Council help people who have severe mental health problems who need groceries or things like that. This is a safety net for these people, she said.

The committee thanked Ms. Carney and Mr. Holderman for both of their very informative reports.

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIOR SERVICES TAX LEVY PROPOSALS BY MARY OLSON, DIRECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Ms. Olson, Executive Director of the DeKalb County Community Services Department, passed out the Senior Services Tax Levy Proposal Materials to the committee. She said that the hearings will be held at the committee's April 3rd meeting. The agencies are invited to this meeting and will be there to answer questions only if the committee members have any. The second meeting will be devoted to the assessment of these requests and then the allocations will be made.

The committee agreed to hold the second meeting on Monday, April 17, 2006 @ 6:00p.m. to assess the request and make the allocations.

Ms. Olson notified the committee that there are two new applicants included in the materials this year. One is from the Ben Gordon Center and one from Prairie State Legal Services.

Ms. Olson said that the total amount requested this year is \$533,000.00. The total amount of funds available this year is \$401,000.00.

The committee asked Ms. Olson to update the agenda showing the agencies being drawn randomly. The committee agreed that if an agency shows up late for their time slot, that the committee will put them at the end of the meeting. They will take one 15-minute break during the evening around 7:00p.m. and they will try to end the hearings at 8:30p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Robert Rosemier

Mary C. Supple, Secretary