

Health & Human Services Committee
March 26, 2013
Minutes

Members Present: Acting Committee Chair Michael Docteur, Legislators Michael Montigelli, Michael Astafan, John Peck, Anthony Doldo, Chairwoman of the Board Carolyn Fitzpatrick

Others Present: Legislators Philip Reed, County Administrator Robert Hagemann, Deputy Administrator Michael Kaskan, County Attorney David Paulsen, Information Technology Director Gregory Hudson, Office for Aging and Veterans Service Agency Director Pete Fazio, Community Services Director Roger Ambrose, Public Health Service Director Ginger Hall, Watertown Daily Times Reporter Daniel Flatley, Confidential Secretary Jill Jones

Acting Chairman Docteur called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Committee approved the minutes of the February meeting as written.

Cathy Moore, Nutrition and Health Education Leader at Cornell Cooperative Extension Association made a presentation to the Committee concerning their Adopting Healthy Habits Initiative. She outlined their Food & Nutrition Education Program and their Eat Smart NY Program. She said these programs target low income families and youth to teach them basic nutrition skills through services in their own homes such as food preparation, food safety, resource management, and eating healthier and with fresh ingredients. The program also includes a breastfeeding component for Moms and instruction is also done in the home. She said they also work closely with their Farmers Market Nutrition Education Program as food stamps and WIC checks are now able to be used at various Farmers Markets. She said they have found that their agriculture and nutrition programs are overlapping more and more as agriculture starts at the farm and ends at the consumers table. She said their Expanded Food & Nutrition program is focused on bringing about an environmental change process where they are making farm fresh fruits and vegetables more easily accessible to the consumer. This has program has been assessed for cost effectiveness through a US Office of Management & Budget evaluation and for every \$1.00 that is spent on the program it saves \$9.59 in health care costs.

Legislator Docteur understood one of Cooperative Extension programs helped those out in rural areas to have healthier choices by showing people how to plant gardens and then also teaching them how to can the food. Ms. Moore related that their nutrition programs are “soup or nuts” and help from growing to use to storage, and the initiative is focused on how a community has access to healthier foods and how they have exercise opportunities available to them.

Steve Ledoux, Cooperative Extension Local Food Educator spoke to the Committee about the Grow Local, Buy Local Initiative. Mr. Ledoux said the grant covers Jefferson and Lewis counties and his job is to be the bridge between nutrition and agriculture. He said dairy is the economic engine that drives the economy in the north country but there is

alternative/different agriculture that has taken root here and is starting to grow as the demand for local foods continues to grow. He coordinates getting the consumer with the producer by obtaining markets for farmers to sell their products, doing training for farmers to be more profitable and develop their brand. They are also encouraging farmers to accept Food Stamp and SNAP dollars because there are \$29 million in benefits extended between the two counties and only about \$9,000 is spent at farmers markets; he added that participation of seniors who receive these benefits is 98% as they know how to use them to put meals together, the disconnect is the younger generation. They are also working on organizing more farmers markets in the more rural areas for better access, and programs for farm to restaurant, and farm to school institutions. Ms. Moore added that they are working on trying to get healthy foods in every access point which includes convenience and small stores that rural people use as access for a lot of their food.

In response to questions Mr. Ledoux said that Peg Murray handles the business side of the program and she helps farmers develop business plans. Legislator Peck asked questions concerning the development of a commercial kitchen for farmers to test and develop recipes as the only one currently available is in Geneva and suggested there is a great opportunity through the Hospitality & Tourism Program at JCC to partner with Cooperative Extension in that venture. Mr. Ledoux stated that they are in the process of getting the old JCC kitchen at Madison Barracks approved as a 20 seat kitchen for the manufacture of those products, but all the testing would still be required to be done in Geneva, once a farmer is certified as a 20 seat producer they can manufacture in the Madison Barracks kitchen. Legislator Peck further questioned food hub development. Ms. Moore said they are looking at developing food hubs for minimal processing but one of the stumbling blocks especially for the farm to school program is meat processing. She said they continue to work on that so that more growers products can get into the local food systems. Acting Chairman Docteur thanked Cooperative Extension personnel for the very informative presentation and thanked them for the useful services that they provide to County residents.

Acting Chairman Docteur introduced a resolution authorizing agreement for registered dietician services relative to Office for the Aging Meal Program and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Astafan seconded by Legislator Peck and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Acting Chairman Docteur introduced a resolution authorizing agreement for the provision of language interpreter services in connection with Office for the Aging and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Montigelli and seconded by Legislator Astafan. In response to questions Mr. Fazio advised that he has not needed or used this program and it does not cost anything to enter into a contract, but is mandated by the State to have available. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Acting Chairman Docteur introduced a resolution authorizing agreement for the Community Services Board and amending the 2013 County Budget in relation thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Doldo seconded

by Legislator Astafan and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

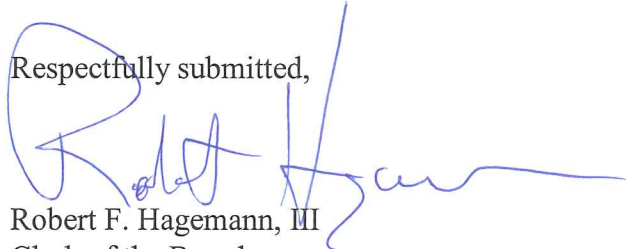
Acting Chairman Docteur introduced a resolution appointing and re-appointing members to Jefferson County Health Services Advisory Board and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Peck seconded by Legislator Montigelli and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Acting Chairman Docteur introduced a resolution appointing and re-appointing members to Jefferson County Public Health Service Professional Advisory Committee and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Doldo seconded by Legislator Peck and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Legislator Peck noted that an article recently in the Post Standard concerning the mental health aspects of the SAFE Act and how there is a potential for confidentiality issues in the doctor/patient relationship. Community Services Director Roger Ambrose said at a meeting of Community Services Directors in Albany recently the that included Counsel and presentations from the Office of Mental Health, who is setting up the procedures where they will be accepting reports from professional and sending them on to the Division of Criminal Justice Services. He said the professionals themselves are concerned about confidentiality being an issue with someone who is reported. However, he explained that the system is set up to have the professional report someone to the Office of Mental Health website, next it will be reviewed by the local Community Services department personnel who make sure the reporting professional credentials are legitimate and they are treating the patient then make a decision whether to pass the individual's information on to DCJS (Division of Criminal Justice Services) to check for the license to carry a firearm. He advised that any clinical information that is reported to OMH is not forwarded to DCJS; the only information forwarded to DCJS is name, address and social security number of the individual. He added that they are doing everything they can to limit clinical information accessed unnecessarily. Mr. Ambrose said given what the exercise is trying to achieve, they are being reasonable to consider trying to forward information for someone that is a risk. He further advised that HIPAA laws would protect any information from being FOILable at any time. Mr. Ambrose said it is possible and probable that this law will get challenged in court and there are currently professionals who are refusing to make reports.

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator Astafan seconded by Legislator Doldo and unanimously carried by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert F. Hagemann, III
Clerk of the Board