



Committee on Social Services

~MINUTES~

Tuesday, February 26, 2019

10:00 AM

Committee Chair: Kitley Covill

Committee Room, 148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor, White Plains, NY 10601

www.westchesterlegislators.com

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Chair Kitley Covill called the meeting to order at 10:12 AM.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Kitley Covill	Chair	Present	
Nancy Barr	D6 Legislator	Present	
MaryJane Shimsky	D12 Legislator (Majority Whip)	Present	
David J. Tubiolo	D14 Legislator	Remote	
Alfreda Williams	D8 Legislator (Vice Chair)	Absent	

Kevin McGuire - Commissioner of Social Services, John Befus, DSS, Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden - Executive Director of the Youth Bureau David Ryan - Chief of Police Pound Ridge, Alison Boak - Founder of IOFA (International Organization for Adolescents) Robi Schlaff - Office for Women, Natalie Chara My Sister's Place

MINUTES APPROVAL

1. Tuesday, January 22, 2019 at 11:00 AM

On motion of Legislator Shimsky, seconded by Legislator Barr the minutes were approved 3 -0.

2. Wednesday, January 23, 2019 at 1:04 PM

On motion of Legislator Shimsky, seconded by Legislator Barr the minutes were approved 3 -0.

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Discussion on Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence

Chair Covill opened the meeting and invited the guests to the table. Alie Boak began the discussion with a brief overview of how the Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce began. It started in 2009 with Chief of Police, Dave Ryan in the Town of Pound Ridge, there was a case of labor trafficking that was found to include sexual exploitation, the case was very complex and the trafficker will receive life in prison. The task-force was started after a meeting with the Chief Ryan, Alie Boak and My Sister's Place was the organization providing Social Services to the victims, and the question was asked about what they will do because they do not want Human Trafficking in Westchester County. The goal of the task force is to

conduct proactive investigations of Human Trafficking crimes within Westchester, coordinate those investigations with Local State and Federal law enforcement and service providers. Identify victims of all types of trafficking.

Natalie Chara, Director of the Human Trafficking Program at My Sister's Place

Chair Covill asked if there are estimates for Westchester County?

Ms. Boak responded that there are no estimates anywhere. Data collection is one of the biggest problems because it's a hidden and underground crimes. And every state has a different definition of what trafficking is and it makes it difficult to define and track. What the task-force does and sees is how their outreach and training efforts increase which enables them to see how the numbers are increasing in Westchester County. As of 2018 WC has identified the second most number of trafficking victims outside of NYC. It may be because the great efforts of Social Services because they have a policy that any child that comes into their system gets screened for trafficking.

Chief Ryan spoke to the challenges of Law enforcement. He makes an effort to train the new recruits about Human Trafficking. There needs to be more training because it's out there, there have been 6 cases in Pound Ridge alone. Although it's a challenge there are complex cases which require a lot of man hours. There can be 11, 12, 13 interviews with the victims just to get a little bit of information. There's foreign trafficking and domestic trafficking. There is no single source of database on trafficking but it does not exist which is a major challenge.

Chair Covill then asked the Department of Social Services (DSS) to address the committee and share whatever information they can that is not confidential.

John Befus, Deputy Commissioner of DSS, the work DSS did with Safe Harbor which is a state legislator to treat trafficked youth as victims and not offenders. In 2012 DSS began as a member of the task-force and started a program to train to develop a plan to identify victims of human trafficking. After Safe Harbor began it was discovered that it is much more difficult to reach the victims.

Chair Covill asked if DSS has contracts with providers.

Mr. Befus responded yes, there biggest partner is Children's Village, the program was very specific, in addition to training up the case management team and worked with them on a model that involves a lot of psycho educational work, alternative therapy, art and cooking therapy etc. they tie into their motivational work.

Chair Covill asked if there victims are housed at Children's Village.

Mr. Befus responded that the cases are put in preventative cases but there are also times when they are housed at Children's.

My Sister's Place is the only agency that has a Federal grant and they keep the numbers of cases and the statistics.

Commissioner Kevin McGuire, addressed the Committee. One of his biggest question to missing children aside from the individuals who return home for a weekend and decide not to come back, those individuals were easy to track because they could simply call the families and arrange to pick them up. There was another core set of individuals who were outright missing for a significant amount of time raised a big question. From his own experience he expected that something bad had gone on and they were just missing that they were involved in something and in way over their heads. A private investigator was hired and within the first weekend he recovered a couple of teenagers. It was discovered through working with DSS and local police that the teenagers were being trafficked. But it takes a lot of man power to investigate these cases. The first investigator recovered about 150 children since 2013. The second investigator was hired because the caseload grew and he has been working with DSs for about 2 years and has recovered approximately 25 kids.

Natalie Chara, My Sister's Place addressed the committee and explained that they provide case management services for adults who have been victims of trafficking and they work with individuals who have been labor trafficked. But there is a huge issue with adult trafficking particularly labor trafficking, domestic servitude like nannies or au pair. Many of those victims come to MSP through word of mouth from a friend who received services.

Chair Covill asked for clarification of case management

Ms. Chara responded that they work intensely with the client and what their needs are, food shortages, child rearing, college applications etc. what the individual needs are vary. MSP gets their funding from Office of Women and a Federal grant from the Office of Victims of Crimes and OTDA and TIVA

Chair Covill asked how many victims does MSP serves in a year?

Ms. Chara, right now there are 60-70 active cases.

Robin Schlaff, Office of Women has done training to identify trafficking to identify trafficking victims. Two issues that need to be explored more are the criminal justice response in the judicial system there were no cases and no collaboration and they wanted to have a trafficking court. And the other is the resources available to victims after they leave the sex trade. The basic resources such as food, housing, education, the things they need to live and survive.

Chair Covill invited the US Attorney's Office, Kate Martin; deputy Chief in White Plains addressed the committee and stated in Federal criminal cases there is more sex trafficking than labor trafficking. The U.S. Attorney's Offices works closely with MSP, this relationship has been very beneficial because it is often very difficult to get the victims to have to testify all over again and MSP is extremely helpful is supporting the victims through the entire prosecuting process. And then support systems they offer helps the victim.

Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden, Executive Director of the Youth Bureau explained that last year all Youth Bureau Directors were trained on Little Red, through the Office of Children Family Services which a very short video aimed at young children and it speaks to the dangers of sex trafficking. Much of the work on youth bureaus is to encourage teens to engage in safe relationships and provide them with the tools to identify sex trafficking so they can avoid getting into situations where they can be sex trafficked.

Chair Covill acknowledged all of the information that was provided by all of the guests and asked what more can be done.

Chief Ryan answered and stated that every Legislators represents a District, they can encourage their Local Police Departments to direct someone to attend the Human Trafficking Task-Force meeting. They meet once every 3 months with the next meeting taking place on Friday, March 1st.

Mr. Befus mentioned that DSS proposed to expand the Safe Harbor Unit with the implementation of Raise the Age.

II. OTHER BUSINESS

Unfinished Business and any other agenda items to come before the Committee.

III. RECEIVE & FILE

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Legislator Shimsky seconded by Legislator Barr the Committee adjourned at 11:24 AM.



Committee on Social Services

~MINUTES~

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

11:00 AM

1
DRAFT

Committee Chair: Kitley Covill

Committee Room, 148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor, White Plains, NY 10601

www.westchesterlegislators.com

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Chair Kitley Covill called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Kitley Covill	Chair	Present	
Nancy Barr	D6 Legislator	Present	
MaryJane Shimsky	D12 Legislator (Majority Whip)	Present	
David J. Tubiolo	D14 Legislator	Present	
Alfreda Williams	D8 Legislator (Vice Chair)	Present	
Benjamin Boykin	D5 Legislator (Chairman)	Present	

Idie Benjamin - CCCW, Kathy Halas - CCCW, Diane Atkins - CE, Kevin McGuire - DSS, John Befus - DSS

MINUTES APPROVAL

- Monday, January 14, 2019 at 10:05 AM

On motion of Legislator Shimsky, seconded by Legislator Barr the minutes were approved 4 - 0.

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- (ID # 11489) Communication - LEGISLATORS MAHER, CLEMENTS, SHIMSKY, BARR, BORGIA, COVILL, BOYKIN AND A. WILLIAMS: LoHud Article - "Day care nightmare: Scarsdale parents' tale of a son losing a fingertip":**

Forwarding a LoHud article entitled, "Day care nightmare: Scarsdale parents' tale of s son losing a fingertip, reveals violations".

Chair Covill opened the meting and gave a brief overview of the incident that took places at The Learning center in Dobbs Ferry. She explained to the members the purpose of the meeting is to explore what are the current regulations and what suggestions can be made for parents. Chair Covill asked Kathy Halas, Child Care Council of Westchester (CCCW) to start the discussion.

Ms. Halas introduced herself the Committee and explained that State regulations require for that situation to have been handled in a different way then the way it was handled. There is information available that can help parents make better decision on choosing a day care facility but many parents go in FaceBook, or recommendations from friends. It does not arm the parents with the information they need. When parents call the CCCW, apart from meeting the families individual need, the CCCW also informs the families to check the Office

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of Children and Family Services (OCFS) website to know the history of the facility and how to use the website. Parents often make their choice based on the location and then price, quality and safety are often last.

CCCW has always hope that the State of NY would fully implement a quality rating improvement system for day care centers which has been up and running in other States for years. Currently, there is a framework called Quality Stars NY it was developed in 2008 but has never been funded.

Chair Covill asked if the CCCW as an independent entity have the ability to rate day care centers.

Ms. Halas responded that she has been waiting for 10 years for Quality Stars NY to be fully implemented since she was part of the planning team, it takes money and people to carry it out and the CC does not have the means to do that.

In the past CCCW has been instructed to take facilities off their referral list if there was a CPS investigation.

Chair Covill asked if that still happens? Ms. Halas responded, no because it changed the only time they are now instructed by OCFS is if the facility's license is suspended or revoked.

Commissioner Kevin McGuire, Social Services address the Committee and stated there is a perception that if a day care center is privately run, the facility is new and has a great marketing campaign the place is good and that is not always the case. Mr. McGuire agrees with Ms. Halas, that an unbiased measurement of quality and safety, done by a non-governmental agency so a good direction to go in.

Chair Covill asked if the County has the ability to empower CCCW to start a rating system?

John Nonna, County Attorney responded and stated there may be a expressed or implied pre-emption.

Mr. McGuire added the issue is mainly funding.

Mr. Nonna ask Mr. McGuire if the day care centers get any funding through Social Services and Mr. McGuire responded they get they licensed from NYS, OCFS and subsidies for child care through the Department of Social Services (DSS).

Mr. Nonna expressed to the committee that an angle the County can take is to make the approval of the subsidy contingent upon the quality of the day care center but it infringes on the rights of the parents.

Legislator Boykin asked is the CCCW has an idea of what is going on with most of the if a parent asks for CCCW's opinion on a specific facility can you provide it?

Ms. Halas responded that they have to be clear that CCCW is offering parents referrals and not recommendations. They would neither confirm or deny that information but they would encourage the parent to check out the regulatory history of the facility. CCCW tells parents what they should look for in a facility and what to look for in the OCFS website and they also encourage parents to visit the facilities.

Chair called Ida Benjamin, Director of Professional Development at the CCCW. Ms. Halas asked her if the classroom where the child was hurt was closed. Ms. Benjamin responded they are not sure if the classroom was closed but she was made aware that the school was closed for 3 or 4 days after the incident and when they were allowed to re-open they could only use the classroom where they had enough teachers.

Chair Covill asked County Attorney Nonna to look into how far pre-empting would go for a County Law. She also believes the County should be able to mandate the day care centers post where parents can look for violations in a visible location.

Mr. Nonna, agreed to look into it.

Mr. Nonna asked if the County could lobby OCFS to mandate how to look up violations.

John Befus, Deputy Commissioner stated it is possible because OCFS has a lot of leeway in how they regulate.

Kathy Halas added it is a state requirement to post violation on the parents bulletin board but most people miss it.

Chair Covill asked for clarification on that matter.

Ms. Benjamin responded and stated whenever a facility is sited for a violation there is an additional letter included that is to be posted on the parent bulletin board and programs receive violations for not posting those violation letters.

Legislator Maher asked if any of the franchise programs accept subsidies?

Ms. Halas responded yes, although she is not aware franchise policy there is one franchise that has several locations in the county but many of their locations are not in areas where people who require subsidies live but she is not aware of them denying people with subsidies.

Commissioner McGuire added he has not heard of any day care centers or chains that do not accept subsidies. There is also the issue of public relations and marketing with this case. There are many family day cares and non-profit day cares that have a negative perception because they take child care subsidies parents have the impression that the quality isn't as great, which is untrue. They just aren't putting their money into marketing.

Ms. Halas mentioned some things the CCCW are going to start doing differently going forward. Although CCCW encourages families to choose quality child care not everyone knows what that means so CCCW will release ads via social media to be more specific to the information they give families. The ads will juxtapose what is typically seen in the field which is poor quality care vs what parents are supposed to see or look for in child care. Through OFCS, CCCW is responsible to monitor regulatory compliance of small family providers and registered after school programs and the inspections are only required to be completed annually but CCCW is going to start to identify programs that are in chronic regulatory frequency and visit those locations more frequently. There are also a number of non-profit organizations in not the best locations or buildings. As the County is looking into developments project it would be interesting to look into relocation prospects for some of the not-for profits.

Legislator Maher asked Ms. Halas to keep the Legislators abreast on that.

Chair Covill asked how many of the licensed day care centers does the CCCW interact with?

Ms. Halas responded they are in touch with all of the registered after school and all of the registered family providers.

Chair Covill asked approximately how many parents call the CCCW for referrals?

Ms. Halas responded the number has gone down to about 2,000 parents per year and it used to be 4,000. There are 34,000 registered child care slots in throughout the County.

Legislator Shinsky suggested that the CCCW send the Board and the CE information that they can be able to reach constituents via e-blast.

Chair Covill thanked the guests for attending the meeting.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

II. OTHER BUSINESS

Unfinished Business and any other agenda items to come before the Committee.

III. RECEIVE & FILE

1. **(ID # 11457) Communication – HON. DAMON R. MAHER: Daily Freeman Article - "Ulster County's New Family Court called 'a model' that others could follow":**

Forwarding a *Daily Freeman* article entitled, "Ulster County's new Family Court called 'a model' that others in NY could follow."

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

2. **(ID # 11458) Communication – HON. DAMON R. MAHER: NY Equity Coalition Report - NYS's Education System Suspension Crisis:**

Forwarding a report from The New York Equity Coalition and the Press Release from The Education Trust - New York on the NYS's education system suspension crisis.

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

3. **(ID # 11470) Communication – HON. DAMON R. MAHER: Dailyfreeman.com Article - "Ulster County's new Restorative Justice Center":**

Forwarding a *Dailyfreeman.com* article entitled, "Ulster County's new Restorative Justice Center aims to steer youths away from crime."

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

4. **(ID # 11471) Communication – LEGISLATORS MAHER AND A. WILLIAMS: Pew Charitable Trust Report - "Prison Health Care Costs and Quality":**

Forwarding a Report from *Pew Charitable Trust* entitled, "Prison Health Care Costs and Quality - How and why states strive for high performing systems."

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

5. **(ID # 11472) Communication – HON. DAMON R. MAHER: Various articles on Advancing Equitable Early Childhood Systems in Local Communities:**

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Forwarding various articles on Advancing Equitable Early Childhood Systems in Local Communities.

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

6. (ID # 11480) Communication – HON. MARYJANE SHIMSKY: Correspondence regarding Reporting and Preventing Hate Incidents:

Forwarding correspondence from Ardsley Mayor Kaboolian regarding a Proposal on Policy and Procedures for Reporting and Preventing Hate Incidents.

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

7. (ID # 11482) Communication – HON. MARYJANE SHIMSKY: NYTimes Article - "The Kernel of Human (or Rodent) Kindness":

Forwarding a *New York Times* article entitled, "The Kernel of Human (or Rodent) Kindness."

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

8. (ID # 11485) Communication – HON. MARYJANE SHIMSKY: Law360.com Article - "Legal Aid Funder Faces Existential Crisis Under Trump":

Forwarding a *Law360.com* article entitled, ""Legal Aid Funder Faces Existential Crisis Under Trump."

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

9. (ID # 11491) Communication – LEGISLATORS MAHER AND BARR: New York Times Article - "How a Crackdown on MS-13 Caught Up Innocent HS Students":

Forwarding a *New York Times* article entitled, "How a Crackdown on MS-13 Caught Up Innocent High School Students"

With a motion by Legislator Tubiolo and seconded by Legislator Shimsky the item below was received & filed with a vote of 4 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Jan 22, 2019 11:00 AM (MINUTES APPROVAL)

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Legislator Tubiolo seconded by Legislator Barr the Committee adjourned at 12:04 PM.

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Jan 22, 2019 11:00 AM (MINUTES APPROVAL)



Committee on Social Services

~MINUTES~

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

1:04 PM

DRAFT

Committee Chair: Kitley Covill

Committee Room, 148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor, White Plains, NY 10601

www.westchesterlegislators.com

CALL TO ORDER

Joint with Legislation, Budget & Appropriations, and Labor & Housing

With a quorum present, Chair Kitley Covill called the meeting to order at 1:09 PM.

Table with 4 columns: Attendee Name, Title, Status, Arrived. Rows include Kitley Covill (Chair), Nancy Barr (D6 Legislator), MaryJane Shimsky (D12 Legislator), David J. Tubiolo (D14 Legislator), and Alfreda Williams (D8 Legislator).

Linda Trentacosta - County Attorney, Jen Puja - WPCLB, Rich McSpedon - IBEW 3, Maria Kercado - 1199 SEIU Tasha Young - My Sister's Place, CarLa Horton - Hope's Door, Sarah Leberstein - Make the Road New York, Marcella Kocolatos - A Better Balance

MINUTES APPROVAL

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. (ID # 11245) Resolution - LEGISLATORS BORGIA, PARKER, A. WILLIAMS, SHIMSKY, BARR, COVILL, CLEMENTS, CUNZIO, MAHER AND BOYKIN: PH - Safe Leave:

A RESOLUTION to set a Public Hearing on a "Local Law amending the Laws of Westchester County to add a new Chapter 586 which will provide safe time leave for victims of domestic violence." [Public Hearing set for _____, 2018 at _____ .m.].

Item #1 and #2 were discussed jointly.

Ms. Trentacoste began the discussion of the proposed Local Law Safe Leave by stating that this was originally part of the Sick Leave Local Law but the Committees, the Law Department and the advocates felt that this issue goes above and beyond what the Sick Leave legislation addressed as well as what the victims may need. The intention of the law is to provide job and wage security for people when they are at the most difficult moments of their lives. It was discussed that victims of domestic violence find themselves in fragile situations of uncertainty with fear for themselves and the safety of their families. During these times victims sometimes need to relocate or attend criminal and court proceedings. Ms. Young noted that currently there no laws which would protect victims from losing their jobs.

Chair Covill discussed that the VAWA- Violence Against Women Act has expired and they were looking into finding more information and how would it affect the legislation. They

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mentioned that they would address this topic at a later date. Legislator Borgia asked, what happens now if a victim is dealing with a domestic violence situation. Tasha Young explained that as stated there is no legal protection and her organization was looking to partner with local governments. She noted that most victims have repeated absences, and very rarely inform the employer of what is actually going on in their lives for fear of losing their job. There was a discussion concerning the current language which has not addressed documentation for employers and is silent on whether it covers part time employees and the size of the business.

A discussion was held as to whether to mimic the language of the Sick Leave and will the 40 hours be enough. Legislator Burrows and Chair Covill noted that a court proceeding requires time off above and beyond what is allotted in the Sick Leave legislation.

Legislator Borgia asked about what documentation would be necessary to show employers?

The members discussed possible options. Marcella Kocolatos from A Better Balance discussed possible language additions to address the documentation required for employers.

Legislator Tubiolo asked if they could get statistics on how many people receive services. It was mentioned that a request has been submitted to the Office of Women, and Chair Covill will reach out to the Department of Social Services. Tanya Young from My Sister's Place asked when revising the language could the committee consider including Labor Trafficking and Human Trafficking.

The members discussed enforcement.

Chair Covill stated she spoke to Jim Masiano and the Department of Consumer Affairs agreed to hold the hearings but she did not know who will take the complaints.

Jenn Puja from AFL-CIO spoke on the how her coalition was very involved in the Sick Leave Legislation and that they are very in favor of Safe Leave Legislation. She said with this Legislation in place it will help those who have not come forward. She discussed the coalition works with My Sister's Place and Hope's Door, and this is a good resource for Labor to have.

Legislator Borgia asked how the time off is covered by some Collective Bargaining Agreements. Maria Kercado from 1199 discussed that some agreements have specifically addressed how to handle this issue. Legal situations do not supersede the agreement. She mentioned that some agreements do specifically speak to Sick Leave.

There was a short discussion on including human trafficking in the legislation.

RESULT: PENDING

2. (ID # 11246) Local Law – LEGISLATORS BORGIA, PARKER, A. WILLIAMS, SHIMSKY, BARR, COVILL, CLEMENTS, CUNZIO, MAHER AND BOYKIN- Safe Leave:

A LOCAL LAW amending the Laws of Westchester County to add a new Chapter 586 which will provide safe time leave for victims of domestic violence.

Item #1 and #2 were discussed jointly, please see item #1 for discussion.

RESULT: PENDING

II. OTHER BUSINESS

Unfinished Business and any other agenda items to come before the Committee.

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Jan 23, 2019 1:04 PM (MINUTES APPROVAL)

III. RECEIVE & FILE

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Legislator Shimsky seconded by Legislator A. Williams the Committee adjourned at 2:06 PM.

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