



Committee on Social Services

~MINUTES~

Tuesday, October 8, 2019

12:00 PM

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 12:12 PM.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Kitley Covill	Chair	Present	
Nancy Barr	D6 Legislator	Present	
MaryJane Shimsky	D12 Legislator (Majority Whip)	Absent	
David J. Tubiolo	D14 Legislator	Absent	
Alfreda Williams	D8 Legislator (Vice Chair)	Absent	
Benjamin Boykin	D5 Legislator (Chairman)	Present	
Catherine Borgia	D9 Legislator	Present	

Others In Attendance: DSS: Kevin McGuire, John Befus VETS: Ron Tocci BOL: Malcolm Clark, Dayana Gomez, Caleb Hersh, Erika Pierce, Mary Jackson

MINUTES APPROVAL

1. Tuesday, September 10, 2019 at 10:00 AM

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

2. Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 10:00 AM

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

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Discussion on with DSS and Veterans Department about veteran benefits.

Guests: Kevin McGuire, Commissioner of DSS and Ron Tocci, Director of Veterans

Chair Covill opened the meeting by introducing the guests. She began the discussion on Veterans benefits and speaking about the letter sent out. Mr. Tocci spoke about the early turnout and response to the letter. He spoke about 20 letters by mail and more inquiries by phone. Most of these letters were about more benefits. Most of the people who received the letter were already in the system and getting benefits. Most of the inquiries dealt with people getting additional benefits. Mr. Tocci noted there was a cross-check between Veterans and DSS. One improvement that Mr. Tocci noted was outreach to those who might be homeless or falling under the radar.

Chair Covill said that she felt there were veterans who might not know about other benefits that were offered to them that might not have been asked. Mr. Tocci said that due to Chair Covill's letter, there has been a new emphasis on picking out veterans to let them know there might be different needs dependent on what they deal with. Mr. McGuire said it's an iterative process, meaning there needs to be a consistent follow up. Mr. McGuire noted there was an uptick in veterans reaching out. Chair Covill asked Mr. Tocci to send the numbers to staff on the number of phone calls and letters received. Mr. Tocci noted there were about 50,000 vets in Westchester of which 24,000 are in the system and about 10,000 who are not in the system. Mr. Tocci said they have a list of every veteran who owns a home, the list is updated frequently. Chair Covill asked about the process involved in identifying what additional benefits are offered by the county or might be offered by the VA. Legislator Barr inquired about the road show and how many they do in a year, how they advertise, where they go in a way to help promote. Mr. Tocci said they work with the colleges to identify vets returning by partnering with local colleges like WCC, Concordia, Mercy, Monroe, Pace, they do this every month. There is also an informational fair where they invite vendors, mail invitations and to come to the County Center. Mr. Tocci said the fair would be a good event to host yearly to raise the awareness of the Veterans department.

Leg. Boykin asked about contacting local municipalities to improve outreach by having links on local municipalities on their website.

II. OTHER BUSINESS

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

III. RECEIVE & FILE

1. **(ID # 12091) Communication – HON. DAMON R. MAHER: NYTimes Article – "A Better Address to Change a Child's Future":**

Forwarding a *New York Times* article entitled, "A Better Address to Change a Child's Future."

With a motion by Legislator Boykin and seconded by Legislator Barr the item below was received & filed with a vote of 3 to 0.

RESULT:	RECEIVED AND FILED
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2. **(ID # 12111) Communication – West Co FAH Program-Quarterly Report 2Q 2019:**

Forwarding the Westchester County Fair and Affordable Housing Quarterly Report for the period April 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019.

With a motion by Legislator Boykin and seconded by Legislator Barr the item below was received & filed with a vote of 3 to 0.

RESULT:	RECEIVED AND FILED
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3. **(ID # 12113) Communication – HON. DAMON R. MAHER: New Yorker Article – "The Radical Transformations of a Battered Women's Shelter":**

Forwarding an article from *The New Yorker Magazine* entitled, "The Radical Transformations of a Battered Women's Shelter."

With a motion by Legislator Boykin and seconded by Legislator Barr the item below was received & filed with a vote of 3 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

4. **(ID # 12122) Communication – HON. DAMON R. MAHER: TheAppeal.com Article - "The Public Safety Myth":**

Forwarding an article from *The Appeal.com* entitled, "The Public Safety Myth."

With a motion by Legislator Boykin and seconded by Legislator Barr the item below was received & filed with a vote of 3 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

5. **(ID # 12125) Communication – HON. BENJAMIN BOYKIN: Correspondence/ShelterForce Article - "In Defense of the 'Poor Door'":**

Forwarding correspondence from Hon. Damon R. Maher with an attached article from *ShelterForce* entitled, "In Defense of the 'Poor Door'."

With a motion by Legislator Boykin and seconded by Legislator Barr the item below was received & filed with a vote of 3 to 0.

RESULT: RECEIVED AND FILED

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Legislator Boykin seconded by Legislator Barr the Committee adjourned at 12:40 PM.