

**Health & Human Services Committee**  
**September 24, 2019**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Committee Chair John Peck, Legislators Allen Drake, James Nabywaniec, Jeremiah Maxon, Robert Ferris, and Board Chair Scott Gray

**Others Present:** Legislators Robert Cantwell, III, William Johnson, Michael Montigelli, and Daniel McBride, County Administrator Robert Hagemann, Deputy Administrator Sarah Baldwin, Conf Asst. For Fiscal Affairs and Information Technology Director Gregory Hudson, Department of Social Services Commissioner Teresa Gaffney, Public Health Director Ginger Hall, Confidential Secretary Jill Jones

Chairman Peck called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and offered privilege of the floor, however no one present wished to address the Committee.

Chairman Peck introduced a resolution Appointing Member to the Office for the Aging Advisory Council and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Nabywaniec seconded by Legislator Maxon and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Peck introduced a resolution Amending the 2019 County Budget Relative to Public Health Department Accounts and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Ferris and seconded by Legislator Drake. Public Health Director Hall advised that the number of vaccines purchased in 2019 is based on the first five months of 2018, annualized and marked up a little bit. However we have had an unusual summer and there was a salmonella outbreak, hepatitis A outbreak, a crypto cluster, and pertussis so additional vaccines were purchased for those with the virus as well as anyone who was potentially exposed. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

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DSS Commissioner Theresa Gaffney advised that DSS was recently notified that they did not receive grant funding for the Solutions To End Homelessness Program (STEHP) they have had for the last 10 years, she said the program itself (HEARTH) [Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing] is run by Urban Mission. The federal funds are through Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the grant cycles are every five years to begin on October 1<sup>st</sup> so there will not be another opportunity to apply for five years, and they had less than 30 days to close the program and notify everyone. She explained that 40% of the total grant funds available from HUD come off the top for New York City, and in the past the counties of Rockland and Suffolk have received separate funds directly from HUD; however those two

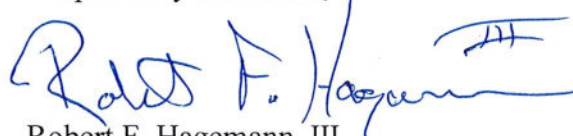
counties are now part of the overall allocation for all counties that is distributed by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). When inquiring about why Jefferson County did not receive the grant, she was told it was because the County asked for more than the maximum per County that is available (\$300,000). She then checked and rechecked the RFP and there was a total lack of clarity as to the maximum ask amount. She said they have been able to roll over grant funds from year to year, and typically they have received \$309,000 per year and use it all; last year was the only time Jefferson County rolled over funds.

She said this program which is a prevention and rapid rehousing program - prevention for those who were at risk of homelessness - was used for rental assistance, utilities, security deposits, rental arrears, utility arrears, and then rapid rehousing for those individuals that were homeless to get them into permanent housing more quickly. Annually, the program serves 800-1000 households in the County and the individuals it assists are not people who would normally be qualified for assistance through Social Services. It served as a safety net for the population that would be at risk of homelessness and at risk of coming into their Department if they did become homeless: it was a stop gap measure for this population. As a direct result of losing this funding she said DSS expects to see their caseload increase.

Administrator Hagemann advised that because of the impact losing this program has on the community and directly to homelessness and the Urban Mission, it behooves us to take this up the chain through Jefferson County's New York State representatives and we should also reach out to the Commissioner of OTDA and demand some attention in this regard. He said it is too critical a program that serves 800+ individuals for the County to lose and we should go to the mat for it. Chairman Gray said it leaves the people it served in danger of falling through the cracks, and the ramifications are huge as it will only create larger problems. Commissioner Gaffney added that case management was also part of this grant, Urban Mission had staff that were working for a certain amount of time on an ongoing basis to help stabilize these program participants. Mr. Hagemann stated that it is informational for legislators at this time as an outreach needs to be made to other affected agencies, as well as to State representatives for assistance, but there are no guarantees. Legislator Montigelli pointed out that the new OTDA Commissioner is a former County Executive who should be familiar with these kinds of programs and how losing them will affect a community.

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator Maxon seconded by Legislator Nabywaniec and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert F. Hagemann, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent "H" at the end.

Robert F. Hagemann, III  
Clerk of the Board