

**Health & Human Services Committee**  
**May 28, 2024**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Committee Chair Anthony Doldo, Legislators Robert Cantwell,, John Peck, Christopher Boulio, Frances Calarco, Board Chair William Johnson

**Others Present:** Legislators Philip Reed, James Nabywaniec, Patrick Jareo, and Robert Ferris, County Administrator Robert Hagemann, Deputy Administrator Dylan Soper, County Attorney David Paulsen, Conf. Asst. For Fiscal Affairs Ashley Durham, Office for the Aging Director Bethany Munn, Community Services Director Tim Ruetten, Public Health Director Steve Jennings, DSS Commissioner Karen Marcum, Veterans Service Agency Director Dave Pavey, Director of Aviation Grant Sussey, Fire & Emergency Management Director Joe Plummer, Highway Superintendent Jim Lawrence, Human Resources Director Val Nugent, Planning Director Michael Bourcy, Purchasing Agent Michael Bagley, Confidential Secretary Jill Jones

Chairman Doldo called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Committee approved the minutes of the April meeting without objection or correction. Chairman Doldo offered Privilege of the Floor, however no one present wished to speak.

Public Health Director Steve Jennings updated the Committee concerning nurse recruitment and retention at Public Health advising that the actions taken by the Board for recruitment and retention of nurses seem to have done the job. Because of those adjustments, hiring of all nurses needed for the foreseeable future has been accomplished, especially in the areas of prevent and home healthcare, and advertising for vacant positions has stopped. He thanked County Administration and the Board for their steadfast support in helping Public Health through this crisis.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Amending the 2024 County Budget to Allocate Additional State Aid for Comprehensive Substance Use Disorder Treatment for Correctional Facilities and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Calarco seconded by Legislator Peck and there being no discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Authorizing Agreements for Provision of Related Services in Connection with the Program for Preschool Children with Disabilities for the Period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Grant seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Authorizing Agreement with NYS Department of Education Approved Agencies for the Provision of Special Education Services for Preschool

Children with Disabilities for the Period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Boulio seconded by Legislator Calarco and there being no discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Authorizing Agreements for Bi-County Mobile Crisis Program Development and Implementation and Amending the 2024 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Peck seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Calling for New York State to Enact Necessary Reforms for Determining the Capacity of a Defendant to Stand Trial and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Peck and seconded by Legislator Boulio. Legislator Peck appreciated staff crafting this resolution as this is a New York State policy issue, and he hoped sharing this with other counties may help it gain momentum at the State level and positive change can be made for the patients and the County. In response to questions Administrator Hagemann advised that the original resolution was from NYSAC, but it was changed to be more applicable to Jefferson County and our needs. He said it is the hope that other counties are doing the same thing as they have all been adversely affected by this program. There being no further discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Authorizing Agreement with Miracles by the Acre CSA for the Provision of Fresh Produce to Underserved Older Adults Living in Food Deserts and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Calarco seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Authorizing Agreement for Use of Facility for Professional Services to the Medical Examiner's Office and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Peck seconded by Legislator Calarco and there being no discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement in Connection with the New York State Public Health Corps 2.0 Fellowship Program and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Peck seconded by Legislator Grant and there being no discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

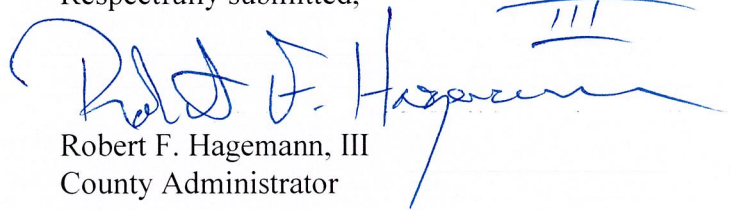
Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Amending the 2024 County Budget Relative to Use of an Automated System AI-powered Virtual Assistant and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Peck and seconded by Legislator Grant.

DSS Commissioner Marcum advised that Tip Co will be in attendance at the June Board Session to make a presentation to the Board on this matter. She said there are three other counties implementing the system Oswego, Clinton and Greene; DSS is working with NYS IT

and legal services, OTDA and County IT. They will start with SNAP and the eligibility verification assistant (EVA) will assist the eligibility workers, not take their jobs. DSS will be starting with 3 EVAs, and there are three different components; first is EVA phone that can be programmed to answer simple questions, (and may eventually work into where the AI can read case information an answer case specific questions, but they are not there yet). The second component is EVA rights and responsibilities and acknowledgment where EVA can read each SNAP applicant their rights and responsibilities (required) and receive the clients acknowledgment. The third component is EVA companion and it is a chat bot on each of the eligibility workers and supervisors desk top that puts the answers to all local, state and federal policies and procedures at their fingertips. Commissioner Marcum said the State is monitoring the timeliness of SNAP applications and Jefferson County is currently not meeting the required timeliness. She said if we can use AI to assist in those other tasks, the eligibility workers can do what they were hired to do. Commissioner Marcum answered questions of legislators related to the implementation and operation of the program. Following discussion the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator Cantwell seconded by Legislator Boulio and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Robert F. Hagemann, III". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and "H". To the right of the signature, there are three vertical lines, possibly representing a date or a mark.

Robert F. Hagemann, III  
County Administrator