PRESENT: Legislators John Lehman, Thomas Osborne, Randy LaChausse, County Manager Ryan Piche, OFA Director Kelly Hecker, Public Health representative Joe Austin, Director of Community Services Patricia Fralick, DSS Commissioner Jenny Jones, County Attorney Joan McNichol.

The meeting was called at 8:30 a.m.

Legislator LaChausse made a motion to approve the 10/17/18 committee meeting minutes, seconded by Legislator Lehman and carried.

Public Health – Representative Joe Austin

Joe reported that the docket pertaining to Public Health are two renewal contracts with Venesky’s, who are consultants that help maximize state reimbursement and work with several county departments; Rabies program renewal which is a three year contract and reimbursed 100% by the state; Ft. Drum Regional Health Planning Organization MOU for 2019’s Community Health Assessment at no cost to handle a survey for us and then we can use the data to create a program; Director of Public Health position; and Fiscal Manager position.

Joe said that there is still time to get your flu shot. They have received a high number of referrals for their pre-school intervention program and because there are just not enough therapists available so there is a wait list. There was discussion about the reimbursement rates and the increase that was started in July 2017 which will not affect the budget for 2019 but will need to be addressed next year for the 2020 budget.

The following docket were approved: (Public Health and Community Services docket were not read as there was only one Legislative Committee member present)

1-Authorize renewal Agreement with TLS for the purpose of supporting the TLS Gateway Project with their case management and supportive housing services to vulnerable adults and families in Lewis County for a term of 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in an amount not to exceed $23,000.

2-Authorize renewal Agreements with the Law Department for: Child Support Enforcement Proceedings - $55,121; Collections and Recoveries - $58,507; Child Abuse/Neglect Services - $184,493.

3-Approve Agreement with Division of Graduate and Education SUNY Potsdam to provide training projects for the Department of Social Service employees which include Spring Leadership Institute (10 participants), Fall Leadership Institute (10 participants), and Professional Development Workshops (30 participants). Term is 1/1 – 12/31/2019 with SUNY Potsdam to invoice in three (3) installment payments as follows: March, 2019 - $2,160 (50%); June, 2019 - $1,080 (25%); and October, 2019 - $1,080 (25%) for a total of $4,320.

4-Approve Agreement with Resolution Center of Jefferson and Lewis Counties, Inc. for the purpose of providing mediators to facilitate the process of DSS administering child welfare services for youth and families in Lewis County. Term is 1/1 – 12/31/2019 not to exceed $250
for each Family Team Meeting and $25.00 for each meeting scheduled that the family fails to arrive without a prior cancellation. The approximate local share is 15% for open cases, 55% federal share and 30% state share.

5-Authorize an Agreement with Victim Assistance Center of Jefferson County to provide crisis intervention, shelter admission, emotional support, advocacy, information and referrals for women and their dependent children from Lewis County who are in crisis and in need of emergency safe housing. Term is 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of $112.22 per person per night. The local share is 25% to 100% depending on the eligibility of the client; federal share is 50% and the state share is 25%.

6-Authorize an Agreement with Volunteer Transportation Center to manage and supervise non-emergency DSS client transportation volunteer drivers with their own vehicles at a cost dependent upon client eligibility, State share is 50% and Federal share is 50%. Term is 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of the Federal IRS rate (currently $.54.5 cents/mile) and dispatch/administrative cost of $6.00/unit (one-way trip).

7-Authorize an Agreement with The William George Agency for Children’s Services, Inc. for the provision of foster care services. Term is 1/1 – 12/31/2019 not to exceed the maximum State Aid Rate established by the NYS OCFS. There is no local share cost until the costs exceed the foster care block grant and then the local share is 37.5% for residential/foster care and is based on the eligibility of the client. The State share is approximately 35% and Federal share is approximately 50%.

8-Appropriate additional SNAP funds into the Social Services accounts in the amounts of $25,000 State and $25,000 Federal.

9-Appropriating funds for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act for: Dislocated Worker Program - $31,300.77 and Adult Program - $58,102.21.

10-Authorizing renewal Agreement with the following meal sites from 1/1 – 12/31/2019: United Church of Copenhagen - $140/month; Croghan Housing Development Fund Co. - $0/month; Harris Courts - $100/month; and Maple Ridge Center - $1,200/month.

11-Authorizing renewal Agreement with Plan-It Staffing for fiscal management services for consumer directed in-home services from 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of $18/hour.

12-Authorizing renewal Agreement with LifeNet Services from 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of $15/month per unit.

13-Authorizing renewal Agreement with Transitional Living Services for office space lease from 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of $550/month. Discussion followed regarding having OFA possibly move into the vacated space by Cooperative Extension in the DSS building after the JCC Education Center is completed. County Manager Ryan Piche estimated that it would cost $5,000 to move them and to purchase some newer furniture. Legislator Lehman made a motion in support of OFA moving in the DSS building once Cooperative Extension has vacated the space, seconded by Legislator Osborne. Motion carried.

14-Authorizing renewal Agreement with Campany, Young & McArdle PLLC for legal services from 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of $120/hour.
15-Authorizing renewal Agreement with Croghan Adult Care Facility LLC for social adult day services from 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of $9/hour.

16-Authorizing renewal Agreements with US Care Systems, Inc. for Caregiver Services and Expanded In-Home Services from 1/1 – 12/31/2019 in the amount of $23.39/hour.

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**DSS Commissioner Jenny Jones**

Jenny reported that Solutions is a new computer program that will work parallel to the 50 year old Welfare Management system and allow much better efficiency. DSS is a user testing site then will become a pilot site along with 3 other counties. She then reported SNAP data for our county which has the highest senior population, 18.2% compared to the NYS average of 15.8%, using this program outside of New York City. HEAP program opened up last Tuesday and they are receiving over 60 calls per day per worker with many applications being submitted. DSS has processed 63 households for expedited benefits on 11/13/2018 alone. DSS paid out 942 vouchers totaling $635,253.84 in HEAP payment on 11/16/2018.

Jenny highlighted several IT changes that are or will be happening soon: Solutions, PHRED, new computers using SNAP bonus money, new phones, and reverse calls/texting software. The OCFS trainee reimbursement will be changing for 2019 because the State is now requiring that the training be held at a State facility in Albany to provide a more robust training for employees, which requires longer drive times and the state is covering all meal expenses but DSS must be the intermediary, pay the reimbursement and then back bill OCFS. DSS had a fall lunch sponsored by the Supervisors that everyone enjoyed.

Jenny concluded her report by briefly explain the Adult Protective Unit and how the ACCU Fund computer system is used to track clients’ money using the Rep. Payee process. There were 456 checks totaling $54,486.60 processed on the 5th of the month on behalf of approximately 60 clients.

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**DSS/OFA/PUBLIC HEALTH/COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**November 21, 2018**

**OFA Director Kelly Hecker**

Kelly reported that OFA had 276 early mail out applications for HEAP and have already completed 243. 275 Clients have received insurance counseling so far and 40 of those are new clients; the total last year was 234. HIICAP is not taking any new requests for appointments or comparisons. There is awaiting list which is being referred to NYSOFA for counselling as it is more than Kelly’s office can handle with the limited staff so they have had to cap it.

Kelly reported that US CARE is going through organizational changes which has caused some complaints of caregivers not showing up on time or at all. There is no local office so it makes it difficult for Kelly to pin point why this is happening. She has reached out to several high ranking officers of US CARE to try and get things back on track as well as letting clients know that they need to speak up if someone is not showing up. Pat Fralick pointed out that this is happening all over because so many organizations are pulling from the same pool of qualified
workers it makes it difficult to keep employees. There is an effort to try and get more non-college bound young adults to get into training programs to become qualified care givers.

Kelly reviewed charts on the Nutrition Program for 2018. They have already surpassed the amount of money spent in that program with less meals being prepared. County Manager Ryan Piche pointed out that in the last couple years the price per meal has increased and rather than cap the program at a certain number of meals they have tried to serve the same amount each year. Legislator Lehman voiced his support for continuing to provide the same number of meals and to help our senior citizens out as much as we can. In 2019 there will be further discussion as well as looking into other options to bring the costs of this program back down.

Kelly reviewed a chart on the EISEP Program for 2018 and everything seems on track for the year. She concluded her report by highlighting a few events/activities that are coming up: HIICAP Open Enrollment ends on December 7th; There is a free showing of “It’s A Wonderful Life” sponsored by Gouverneur Savings and Loan on December 11th starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Theater; and the Holiday meal will be served on December 20th at all dining sites. The OFA cookbook will arrive in about a week and then will go on sale for $12 a book.

DSS/OFA/PUBLIC HEALTH/COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
November 21, 2018

Director of Community Services Patricia Fralick

Pat reported that if OFA does decide to move out of the Lowville Commons it would be greatly appreciated if the county would give TLS notice sooner rather than later so the space doesn’t sit vacant for very long. They are the organization that took over the Mental Health Services from the county and as a county we should want them to be able to make ends meet.

Pat continued by reporting that Mountain View Prevention Services has been deficient in compliance with the State Audit again and although Pat has been trying to help them correct thing and change processes it has been over three years with little to no improvement. She pointed out that the $250,000 in State Aid that goes to MVPS can be given to another agency to preform similar services. She has been mindful, thoughtful and strategic and is hoping that if a change does occur it will be one that everyone can live with. She also agreed that the school districts need to be a part of this conversation as well to make sure they are getting the services they need at that level.

There are concerns that with all the drug issues in the county those individuals are not getting the referrals needed to get the right kind of help. Pat urged Legislators that if they receive phone calls from anyone concerning MVPS to direct them to her so she can respond to their concerns personally.

The meeting concluded at 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Deputy Clerk of the Board