

MINUTES

JANUARY 19, 2011

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren met in Budget Session in its offices in the Wayne Dumont, Jr. Administration Building, Belvidere, New Jersey on January 5, 2011 at 7:05 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Director Chamberlain and upon roll call, the following members were present: Freeholder Everett Chamberlain, Freeholder Richard Gardner and Freeholder Jason Sarnoski. Also attending were Fiscal Analyst Dan Olshefski and County Administrator Steve Marvin. CFO Charles Houck's presence was required at a different meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director Chamberlain.

Director Chamberlain read the following statement: **"ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING OF JANUARY 19, 2011 WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT BY FORWARDING A SCHEDULE OF REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO THE WARREN COUNTY CLERK, THE STAR-LEDGER, AND DAILY RECORD AND BY POSTING A COPY THEREOF ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AT THIS MEETING. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE MEETING SHOULD SUBMIT ANY REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE."**

Representatives from the Department of Human Services were in attendance to explain personnel requests. Human Services encompasses the following divisions: Adjuster, Administration, Aging & Disability Services, Senior Citizen Nutrition and Temporary Assistance and Social Services (TASS). Department Director Karen Kubert, accompanied by Fiscal Officer Kim Francisco, opened by saying they were very happy to have the opportunity to present these additional staffing requests to the Board.

After reviewing specific numbers in the budget, Mr. Francisco explained that the County gets reimbursed \$95 per month per case from the State. Over the years, our caseload has grown and with that, revenue has increased. We need more caseworkers to handle the workload. While it appears as if we are asking for more money, it pays for itself on the revenue side. The department has a good history of meeting and exceeding revenue goals.

They requested an extra \$1,000 for the Adjuster which will come out of the Administration budget. Mr. Chamberlain recognized the fantastic job the Investigator has done going back through the years reconciling charge-backs for State mental institutions.

Deputy Director Shawn Buskirk came forward to talk about the Division of Administration budget which is decreasing three percent in OE due to some minor adjustment to line items and a reflection of 2010 actual expenses. There is a vehicle replacement capital request of \$258,881 to purchase five paratransit vehicles for the countywide transportation service. These would be County owned vehicles. Mr. Chamberlain asked how many we own. Mr. Francisco said about 30; some were purchased with State grant money from New Jersey Transit. Mr. Chamberlain had questions about some numbers on a schedule the Board had been given. Mr. Francisco acknowledged the figures being referenced were high. He

wasn't quite sure where they had come from and apologized. Mr. Sarnoski said if the figures are overstated, it should be cleaned up.

MINUTES

JANUARY 19, 2011

Regarding personnel, a promotion was being requested for the division's Principal Clerk Typist. This individual's responsibilities have increased over the past five years and the duties are more in line with the title of Principal Clerk.

Next it was TASS Director Lorraine Scheibener's turn. She spoke in some detail of the division's budgetary history and how it has really been containing its OE since 2007. In Capital, she said, this is the third year they have been waiting for the State to replace computers for the Division of Family Development (DFD) Unit. There is still a need for eight desktops and two laptops and along with all this equipment comes a need for two servers and data exchange transfer capability. All of this adds up to \$28,457. Between 45 and 50 percent of that will be reimbursed by the State so the actual cost to the County would be \$14,000 or so.

In terms of staffing, the State is expected to provide TASS with \$154,000 in new money to help reduce Medicaid backlog. This is enough to fund both personnel requests including fringe. Mr. Marvin asked about the source of funds and length of commitment. The source is Medicaid and the funding is promised for two years, but is anticipated to be ongoing. The \$154,000 is for the first year and will be quite a bit more the following year. Ms. Scheibener wants to add a full-time entry level position in the fraud unit and promote the sole existing staffer in the unit from HSS 3 (Human Services Specialist) to HSS 4.

At Mr. Chamberlain's request, Ms. Scheibener explained fraud investigation procedures in detail. The division has reestablished a relationship with the Prosecutor. More manpower is needed to get out to the municipal courts to follow through on recovering fraudulently obtained assistance. Mr. Gardner said he thought it was absolutely essential to pursue this. Mr. Chamberlain said word spreads quickly. If Warren County is known as an easy target in terms of obtaining assistance, these pursuits can reverse the trend. He wanted a report at the end of the year on the fraud unit. Mr. Sarnoski agreed it was important and this was a reasonable way to attack the issue.

Aging & Disability Services Director Susan Lennon was next up. She was requesting an \$80,000 increase; something she said she does not do lightly. We can help so many more people stay in their homes with an additional Care Manager. We have a list of 46 people waiting for services that will enable them to stay in their homes. Care Managers see to a variety of things from making sure the individuals qualify for certain services, help them obtain the services and ensure delivery of services. She requested adding one full-time Care Manager position through Manpower (maintaining more control and avoiding long-term benefit obligations) and creating one part-time County Care Manager position for an existing employee. Acknowledging the division's shortage of office space, Ms. Lennon said the senior nutrition sites are underutilized and Case Managers could set up satellite offices in these locations.

A Capital request for work stations is required for Adult Protective Services. Records pertaining to individuals at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation must be kept locked and secure and the division has no such suitable work station. Financial meetings are conducted every month to evaluate the efficiency of the programs. Mr. Olshefski said this is a hard

working group with a very well thought out plan.

Mr. Chamberlain opened the meeting to Public Comment. Louis Cartabona said he's been hearing a lot of back-patting this evening, but thought there was a failure to understand that all this money that has been printed is increasing the debt of every American. He thought stimulus dollars were deflating the value of all money and causing instability in our economy. He predicted that the anticipated State and Federal revenue justifying the expansion of these departments would dry up in the future.

MINUTES**JANUARY 19, 2011**

Mr. Chamberlain said the Board has had a policy for a number of years that if this money ends, either the program goes away or there is a reprioritization and a different program is downsized. That is one of the biggest problems we face; grant programs come to us from higher levels of government and pretty soon, the local residents have to pick up the costs. We are constantly looking at these grant programs and have to prioritize as necessary.

Mr. Gardner said our personnel are very seasoned regarding what happens on the State and Federal levels. At some point in the future, we may find ourselves at a crossroads where we may not be able to continue these programs and that's going to really be tough, but for now, if we have an opportunity to recover funding, we're going to do that.

Ms. Kubert said we can think of this as a pay-as-you-go program. My staff is very creative in planning programs and conscious of maximizing the grant dollars. We know that the money can go away at any time. We control it as much as we can; you tell us to go, we'll go.

Mr. Sarnoski said Human Services is an extremely challenging department to run, especially now with so many in need. These division heads are doing a very good job of balancing the delivery of services while keeping a close watch on the dollars. He said the programs are working and applauds that.

Bill Wichert of The Express-Times asked for a summary of the new positions requested and Mr. Francisco provided it.

Mr. Marvin asked for a projection of casino revenue receipts in support of transportation. Mr. Francisco said we haven't heard yet for 2012; we lost \$19,000 for 2011. Ms. Kubert said a \$50,000 grant was obtained to offset losses. Mr. Sarnoski asked if any transportation services will be restored with the new bussing vendor. Ms. Kubert said there are not plans to do so any time soon. The Freeholders have received letters of complaint, but transportation is not something that they have to do; it's something that they like to do for the benefit of the public. Ms. Kubert didn't expect out of area medical trips to come back. Most of the complaints heard by her department were in regard to Saturday grocery shopping.

Society has come to expect these kinds of services from government, but we're going to have to return to a concept of family and friends relying on each other. Mr. Sarnoski said he thought people needed to be aware of the challenges we're facing. We're maintaining some services that are very difficult to maintain.

Mr. Marvin thought the Board may want to consider adding an additional Budget Meeting to the schedule. There is only one remaining noticed Budget Session at which Buildings & Grounds and the Technical School will be discussed. Mr. Olsheski said he could have updated budget sheets including the incoming data from the Tax Administrator available for the January 26th Regular Session. We do still need to discuss the Library and Open Space budgets plus a final wrap-up. The Board was inclined to add one more Budget Session, but had yet to decide on the date and time.

On motion by Mr. Gardner, seconded by Mr. Sarnoski, and there being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.
Recorded Vote: Mr. Sarnoski yes, Mr. Gardner yes, Mr. Chamberlain yes

MINUTES
ATTESTED TO:

JANUARY 19, 2011

Steve Marvin, Clerk of the Board