

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MARTINI, FRAZIER, BASILE, BROCKWAY, OLIVER
March 23, 2021 @ 1:00 pm**

This meeting was streamed on Facebook Live and recorded.

Please note the meeting attendance as follows:

Present in person at the Otsego County Office Building Board Chambers,
197 Main Street, Cooperstown, NY 13326:

Samantha Augur, Secretary to the Commissioner

Present remotely via video conference:

Representative Adrienne Martini, Chair

Representative Edwin Frazier

Representative Richard Brockway

Representative Jill Basile

Representative Clark Oliver

Commissioner Eve Bouboulis

Director Lisa Grampp

Director Mary Jane Waters

Director Janet Elliott

PT Principal Social Welfare Examiner Deborah Finger

Fiscal Supervisor Cheryl Sparks

PRESENTATION

Leatherstocking Funeral Directors Association members Ed Stanimer, and Gordon Terry presented a proposal for updating Resolution 85-2007 Burial Rates paid by Department of Social Services. In addition to non-monetary language suggestions; proposed increases included:

- Transfer of remains to funeral home - \$200.00 (to be the same as current Coroner transfer fees)
- Basic arrangements: \$975.00 (\$75.00 increase)
- Supervision of funeral service or memorial service: \$200.00 (\$20.00 increase)
- Use of facilities for funeral service or memorial service: \$300.00 (\$30.00 increase)

- Alternative vehicle to cemetery or crematory: \$200.00
- Cloth covered oval top casket only: paid on vouchered basis (estimated savings \$250 per casket over current required steel casket)
- Cremation container: \$100.00 (\$10.00 increase)
- Winter storage \$100.00 (10.00 increase)
- Honoraria to clergy: \$150.00 (\$100.00 increase)
- Oversized casket : paid on voucher basis
- Oversize vault: paid on voucher basis

Mr. Stanimer stated funeral homes should be providing their current General Price List (GPL) to the County and should not be getting paid full County fee if their charges are actually less for the general public. This should be done for good business practice to assure overcharging is not occurring.

An annual percentage increase was discussed. Madison County currently increases rates using the Consumer Price index (CPS), currently 1.1%. Herkimer County currently gives 3% annually. Mr. Stanimer suggested an annual scale for increases so another extended period without any price change doesn't occur again. Representative Martini stated it would be a good idea to tie it to the Consumer Price Index.

Mr. Stanimer also discussed local funeral homes would not be opposed to the idea of Otsego County having its own cemetery for indigent burials for those who do not already have a cemetery plot or can afford one. This cemetery is currently located by the Meadows Office complex.

These proposed changes will be presented to the Health and Ed Committee in April. Then a finalized resolution amendment will be presented for final approval vote at the following HSC meeting.

Mr. Stanimer and Mr. Terry left the meeting at 1:32pm.

RESOLUTION

Resolution to declare the month of April 2021 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Otsego County was presented. Representative Oliver motioned to approve. Representative Brockway seconded the motion. Total: 2,036; Ayes: 2,036; motion carried.

FISCAL

Approval to pay A. Treffeissen & Sons LLC \$17,630.08 for electrician work done on Agency Housing Project was requested. Representative Basile motioned to approve. Representative Oliver seconded the motion. Total: 2,036; Ayes: 2,036; motion carried.

PERSONNEL

Permission to fill the following vacant funded positions were presented with results as follows:

- Social Welfare Examiner #3 – Grade 8K - \$29,941 - \$35,286 [1069]
- Social Welfare Examiner # 7- Grade 8K - \$29,941 - \$35,286 [1069]
- Social Welfare Examiner #10 - Grade 8K - \$29,941 - \$35,286 [1069]
- Social Welfare Examiner #12 - Grade 8K - \$29,941 - \$35,286 [1069]
- Caseworker #2 – Grade 14X \$38,959 - \$46,114 [1431]
- Clerk #1 - Grade 5C \$26,332 - \$30,977 [929]

Representative Oliver motioned to approve all. Representative Basile seconded the motion. Total: 2,036; Ayes: 2,036; motion carried.

Request to unfreeze & unfund Account Clerk Typist #7 Grade 7A to create, fund, and fill Senior Account Clerk Typist #3 Grade 9D were presented for approval. Representative Basile motioned to approve. Representative Martini seconded the motion. Total: 2,036; Ayes: 2,036; motion carried.

OTHER

The 2019 Annual Report has been completed and sent to all Board Representatives.

Commissioner Bouboulis stated she appreciated Andrew Marietta's assistance with the Strategic Plan. There were technical difficulties preventing viewing one's entries. Commissioner Bouboulis recommended removing security as a goal from the plan unless the Board will be revisiting the Safety Committee which has not met consistently. There is security in place through RFP for up to 5 years with guards now at the Meadows and 242 Main St., Oneonta. Commissioner Bouboulis will send the plan out to the committee with this change.

Representative Clark Oliver exited the meeting at 1:55 pm

Staff update:

Child Welfare – 50% in office/ 50% working from home alternating weeks.

Child Support/Accounting – alternating A/B days in office vs working from home

IM – slowing working on access with laptops to have capability to work at home. No internet is available at the Meadows for training or Fair Hearings.

Budget Inn in Oneonta has new owners and we currently have agreement for 7 reserved beds that expires in June. We will re-approach other providers if needed. The warming station and Crossroads contracts hopefully will cover our needs.

The warming station is up and running in Oneonta and is averaging 1 -2 people each night. So far all evenings have been Code Blue temperature nights.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) –First there was ESGCV1 funding and now there is ESGCV2. The State has deemed ESG funds appropriate to use on Code Blue. The department is working on a plan for this. There is also now Emergency Rental Assistance Program that is planned to be accessible by the public, with the assistance of agencies, through a portal directly to the State. We are learning about this and will update the committee in April. All programs will be helpful in assisting Otsego County residents that have pending evictions, back rent or seek affordable housing.

Commissioner Bouboulis scheduled child welfare training for the committee April 12th at 9:00 am and will email all a link.

Representative Basile motioned to adjourn. Representative Brockway seconded the motion. Total: 2,036; Ayes: 1,688, absent 348-Oliver; motion carried.