

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Health & Human Services**

The regular meeting of the Health & Human Services Committee was held in the Legislative Conference Room, Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 8:30 AM.

Present: Mr. Bill Standinger	Chair of the Committee
Ms. Jo Ellen Rose	Legislator
Mr. Andrew Aronstam	Legislator
Mr. Ray Bunce	Legislator
Ms. Sarah Begeal	Director of Community Services
Mr. Chris Korba	Director of Administrative Services (MH)
Ms. Liz Myers	Commissioner of Social Services
Ms. Mickelle Andrews	Director of Administrative Services (DSS)
Ms. Heather Vroman	Public Health Director
Mr. Denis McCann	Director of Administrative Services (PH)
Guests: Mr. Jackson Bailey	County Administrator
Ms. Cathy Haskell	Legislative Clerk
Mr. Peter DeWind	County Attorney {Arrived 8:45 AM}

**MENTAL HYGIENE**

1. Financial

- Mr. Chris Korba reported that the 2026 budget is tracking well except for the Criminal Psychiatric line. There is currently one person in court-ordered criminal psychiatric care since last May. The last invoice said the date of release was expected to be 4/27/26, although there is the potential for this to be extended. \$198,000 has been budgeted for this service in 2026.

2. Old Business

- Criminal Psych – Ms. Sarah Begeal noted that there were two 730 exams ordered. One person refused to see the provider and the second person's exam was inconclusive and will need a 2<sup>nd</sup> evaluation done. There are currently only two doctors and a third will be needed. Ms. Begeal will look into possibly contracting with surrounding counties for a third doctor to use when necessary.

3. New Business

- Mental Health Awareness Month – Billboards are up around the county high lighting the mobile crisis unit.
- Local Service Plan – Staff is working on updating the needs of the community.
- LOST Team through the Suicide Prevention Coalition would like to give a presentation to the Legislature and Department Heads giving a brief overview of heir program. They would like to plan a lunch & learn that would be no longer than an hour. Legislators were interested in moving this forward.

4. Personnel
  - Louise Henley, LMSW resigned – last day 5/15/26
  - Kirsten VanSlyke, LMSW starting on 5/18/26
  - Emily Parsons, MSW Intern graduating – last day is 5/7/26
5. Resolutions - Legislators approved resolution to move forward
  - Authorization to Apply for Grant (Partnership with TCPH)
6. Proclamations
  - None

### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

1. Financial
  - Mr. Denis McCann reported that the first two months of Revenue generally go back to the previous year's budget. The Fee-for-Service Revenues for 2026 continue to do well.
2. Old Business
  - None
3. New Business – Agency Report for April:
  - NYSDOH officially declared that influenza is no longer prevalent for the 24/25 influenza season. Tick-borne illnesses continue to increase with five hospitalizations. There has also been an increased number of sexually transmitted diseases. Will do outreach with targeted education with the public and providers.
  - The new Speech-Language Pathologist has started seeing children. With the continued provider shortage and more children needing services overall, the number of children awaiting services has not changed and the number of children awaiting evaluations has increased.
  - The new Lactation Education Program is officially up and running. This is the only program for non-WIC mothers in the community.
  - Planning for a new strategic plan is underway and will require feedback from County leaders and partners. Leaders/partners will receive an email on this as we move through development. The Plan will also follow guidelines, as PH is working towards national Accreditation.
4. Personnel
  - None
5. Resolutions- Legislators approved resolutions to move forward
  - Amend Budget and Appropriate Funds (CFNYS)
  - Authorization to Apply for Grant (Radon)
  - Authorization to Contract with School District for Preschool Special Education Services and Multidisciplinary Evaluations

Community members can contact TC Public Health to be tested for Radon
6. Proclamations
  - American Stroke Month
  - Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

1. Financial
  - Ms. Mickelle Andrews reported that operational programs are tracking normal. Foster Care tracking over budget.
2. Old Business
  - Skimming Update – Commissioner Myers noted that 20 SNAP clients had their benefits of almost \$8,000 stolen. Public Assistance clients lost \$682 in benefits. Through the work of our SNAP and Fraud units, we prevented skimming in the amount of \$62,000. State Police are still investigating.
3. New Business
  - Caseloads – See Caseload Summary  
During April, Cash Assistance decreased 3 cases, with Family Assistance decreasing 3 cases and Safety Net remaining flat.  
MA-Only decreased 21 cases  
MA-SSI cases remained flat  
Total Individuals on Medicaid decreased 37 to 3,307  
SNAP increased 18 cases  
Day Care increased 1 case
  - Stone Building – ED&P will be requesting a quote from an engineering firm to determine if the building can be rehabbed. DSS & ED&P will split the cost of the quote. Gary Hammond has also been involved in the plans. If the building can be rehabbed, tentative plans are to move the CAC there with some space for Foster Care visitations. Big picture includes possibly housing Family & Children's Agency.
  - Tioga Career Center report is attached. Job placements in 2025 were 181 out of 640 applicants, which is a 28% success rate.
  - Notice of Claim – Commissioner Myers is working with County Attorney DeWind. Money will come out of the insurance fund as the legal budget has already been expended on a personnel matter.
4. Personnel Changes
  - Nancy Leonard, Seasonal OS 1, last day was 4/3/26
  - Hannah Ferguson was hired as Caseworker effective 4/20/26
  - Rebekah Richter was hired as Caseworker effective 4/20/26
5. Resolutions - Legislators approved resolutions to move forward
  - Extend Youth Board Member Term – Youth Bureau
  - Appropriation of Safe Harbor Funds and Amend 2026 Budget
  - Authorize Contract with Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga Counties
  - Authorize Contract with Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga Counties (Spencer & Newark Valley school districts project)
  - Authorize Contract with Together for Youth
6. Proclamations
  - Foster Care Awareness Month (repeat)

Legislator Rose shared that Racker Center recently had an appreciation meeting on 4/28. The Ithaca Recognition Community organization honored Owego Gymnastics.

Legislator Standinger asked for a motion to approve the April 7, 2026 minutes as written. Motion made by Legislator Bunce, seconded by Legislator Aronstam. Motion Carried

**ADJOURNED:**

Health & Human Services Committee adjourned at 8:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Gail V. Perdue*

Executive Secretary, Social Services