

**Regular Meeting #09-14
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
April 7, 2009**

9:00 a.m. Meeting with Aundrea Cordle, John Pekar

The Board of Commissioners met with Human Resources Director Aundrea Cordle and Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) Director John Pekar to discuss health insurance issues. Commissioners present were Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger. Also present were Beth Seifart, Cindy Hillberry, Jason Dolin and Scott Zody.

Ms. Cordle explained that Mr. Pekar is interested in joining the same health insurance consortium that Fairfield County currently participates in through Franklin County, and as a first step, they wanted to discuss the situation with the Commissioners, as their approval would be required, then proceed with approaching Franklin County for their approval.

Mr. Pekar stated that MRDD had joined the South Central Consortium, which consisted mainly of school districts, approximately 5 years ago. In the past year, the consortium changed its by-law so that there will now be a negative impact on the rates MRDD pays for health insurance. Mr. Pekar explained that MRDD had had a few bad claims filed in a brief time period, and now has a negative balance with respect to its experience. Most other members of the consortium currently have positive balances, and wants to charge members with negative balances a surcharge to pay off those balances.

Commissioner Myers asked if MRDD was experiencing an increase in the number of claims, and Mr. Pekar stated the actual number of claims has decreased, but because there were a few claims that were high cost, it takes time to work them off. Mr. Pekar added that the family rate for a MRDD employee is now \$2200 per month, and the single rate is \$855 per month. Employees must pay 20-25% of that, depending upon their date of hire. Commissioner Myers asked how many employees MRDD has, and Mr. Pekar stated it is approximately 100.

Mr. Pekar stated the county family rate is approximately \$1,000 per month less than what MRDD pays, and would be a substantial savings to both the agency and the employees. Mr. Pekar estimated it would cost the agency approximately \$300,000 to pay off their negative balance and leave the consortium.

In addition, Mr. Pekar stated the agency is entering into negotiations with its union this year and the senior staff will be forgoing pay raises next year and will be trying to convince the union to do the same. Transferring to a cheaper insurance would help that effort.

Commissioner Shupe stated that the surcharge seems to contradict the reasoning behind the formation of the consortium. Commissioner Myers asked why MRDD did not join the county initially when it entered into the Franklin County benefits program, and Mr. Pekar stated that at the time, MRDD was in the first year of a three-year contract with the consortium, and things were going well, so they did not want to break the contract.

Commissioner Myers asked if Franklin County MRDD was a member of the county pool, and Ms. Cordle stated that she believes they are. Commissioner Kiger stated that he could not remember the exact reason MRDD did not initially join, but said he remembered they did not join the county.

Mr. Pekar stated that he hopes his agency joining would not have a negative impact on the county's current rates, and is willing to pay any cost difference if there is, depending on how significant the cost would be. Ms. Cordle stated that Fairfield County has

approximately 600 current members participating, and would not anticipate MRDD having a large impact.

Commissioner Shupe asked when the consortium renewal date is, and Mr. Pekar stated it is January 1, 2010. Commissioner Myers asked if MRDD needed to provide notice to the consortium, and Mr. Pekar stated that he already has told the consortium that he is looking for other options.

Commissioner Shupe asked if any of the schools pay surcharges, and Mr. Pekar stated that believes there are some that do. Ms. Seifart stated that the consortium requires each member to maintain a 3-month reserve to pay claims or a surcharge is levied.

Commissioner Myers asked what the minimum hourly work week is for MRDD employees to receive health care benefits, and Mr. Pekar stated it is 30, but that is to accommodate one employee. All other employees are 35-40 hour per week.

Ms. Cordle asked why some employees pay 20% share and some pay 25%, and Mr. Pekar stated the break point is when the employees were hired – those hired before 2004 pay less.

Commissioner Myers asked if an actuarial study would be required and who would pay for it, and Ms. Cordle stated that she would need to check with Franklin County on that. Commissioner Myers asked if MRDD had looked for its own insurance, and Mr. Pekar stated the United Health Care had offered them a policy with good prices for the first year, but no guarantee on rates after the first year, and he is reluctant to go the route.

Commissioner Myers asked if there was any history or concern with respect to injuries to MRDD employees, and Mr. Pekar stated that any workplace injuries would be covered through Workers' Compensation, but they have been aggressively working on reducing those, with great success. The Board stated they would consider the request and follow up with Mr. Pekar.

Executive Session

On the motion of Jon Myers and second of Mike Kiger, the Board of Commissioners voted to enter into Executive Session at 9:50 a.m. for the purpose of personnel matters. Commissioners present were Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger. Also present was Jason Dolin.

Roll call vote on the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe

On the motion of Mike Kiger and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn from Executive Session at 9:58 a.m.

Roll call vote on the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Mike Kiger, Jon Myers and Judith Shupe

No official actions were taken.

10:00 a.m. Commissioners' Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, April 7, 2009 beginning at 10:00 a.m., with the following Commissioners present: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe. Also present were Michelle George, Mary Beth Lane, Ritta Setiz, Jason Dolin and Scott Zody.

Announcements

Mr. Zody announced there were two potential add-on resolutions pending the outcome of discussions during the Commissioners Review Session and meeting with Job & Family Services Director Michael Orlando.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of minutes of Tuesday March 31, 2009

On motion of Mike Kiger and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the minutes for Tuesday, March 31, 2009.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Mike Kiger, Jon Myers and Judith Shupe.

Approval of a Proclamation of Recognition – Parents who Host Month

On motion of Jon Myers and second of Mike Kiger the Board of Commissioners voted to approve a Proclamation of Recognition for Parents who Host Month, see resolution 09-04.07.a

Commissioner Shupe stated that the proclamation had been requested through the Prevention Works Task Force and she would be presenting the proclamation at the task force's next meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe

Approval of Grant Awards – Older Adult Services Levy

On motion of Mike Kiger and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve grant awards through the Older Adult Services Levy, see resolution 09-04.07.b

Commissioner Kiger noted that one grant request to provide funds for pet food for seniors was not approved, as the county dog shelter has agreed to help provide dog food to MOW.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Mike Kiger, Jon Myers and Judith Shupe

Approval of Request for payment and status of funds report – FY2008 CSBG/OHTF – Drawdown #181

On motion of Jon Myers and second of Mike Kiger, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve a Request for payment and status of funds report – FY2008 CSBG/OHTF – Drawdown #181, see resolution 09-04.07.c

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe

Approval of Authorization of the PRC Plan – Fairfield County Job & Family Services

On the motion of Mike Kiger and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Authorization of the PRC Plan – Fairfield County Job & Family Services, see resolution 09-04.07.d

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Mike Kiger, Jon Myers and Judith Shupe

Approval of Engineers resolutions

On motion of Jon Myers and second of Mike Kiger, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve resolutions for the County Engineer as follows:

- 09-04.07.e Approval of Revised Prima Facie Speed Limit for Sheridan Drive, Pleasant Township - Engineer
- 09-04.07.f Approval of Revised Prima Facie Speed Limit for Sheridan Drive, Pleasant Township - Engineer
- 09-04.07.g Approval of advertising for the 2009 Resurfacing Project for Fairfield County roads - Engineer
- 09-04.07.h Approval of advertising for the Fairfield County 2009 Pavement Marking Project - Engineer
- 09-04.07.i Approval of Agreement between Fairfield County and Hockaden & Associates, Inc, to provide construction inspection and material testing - Engineer
- 09-04.07.j Approval of Agreement between Fairfield County and Jones-Stuckey Ltd., for the HOC-05, FAI-CR57-9.83 Crumley Road over Hunter's Run Bridge Replacement Project

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe

Approval of Renaming County TIEF Funds

On the motion of Mike Kiger and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve renaming of county TIEF funds, see resolution 09-04.07.k

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Mike Kiger, Jon Myers and Judith Shupe

Approval of Financial Resolutions

On motion of Jon Myers and the second of Mike Kiger, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve financial resolutions as follows:

- 09-04.07.l Approval of Payment of a voucher without an appropriate carry-over purchase order – Job & Family Services
- 09-04.07.m Approval of Payment of a voucher without and appropriate carry-over purchase order - Engineer
- 09-04.07.n Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated - Engineer
- 09-04.07.o Approval of Fund to Fund Transfer – Multi-County Juvenile Detention Center, 2nd Quarter
- 09-04.07.p Approval of Fund to Fund Transfer – General Fund – to Multi-County Juvenile Detention Center, 2nd Quarter
- 09-04.07.q Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated - Engineer
- 09-04.07.r Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – Utilities – Water District Fund

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe

Approval of Payment of Bills

On motion of Mike Kiger and the second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the authorization for payment of bills April 7, 2009, check date April 10, 2009, see resolution 09-04.07.s

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Mike Kiger, Jon Myers and Judith Shupe

Review Session

The Board of Commissioners met to review legal issues, correspondence, and pending and future action items. Commissioners present were Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger. Also present were Joe Giessler, Mary Beth Lane, Jason Dolin and Scott Zody.

Mr. Dolin reported that Roy Hart is reviewing the Prosecutor's lease on the Wilson Building and will report back any findings.

The Board discussed the proposal from Dr. Vajen relative to increasing his stipend for providing medical services to inmates at the county jail, and Commissioner Shupe directed Mr. Zody to expedite contact with Aundrea Cordle on any county liability issues.

Commissioner Shupe directed Mr. Zody to compile a list of agencies served by Meals on Wheels-Older Adult Services so the Commissioner might seek their input on future levy funding and how it is utilized. Commissioner Kiger stated that he would contact the Family, Adult and Children First Council as well.

Regarding a letter requesting assistance from a Violet Township citizen to establish a dog park, the Board directed Mr. Zody to contact the letter writer and ask more specific information on what he would like the Board to do. Commissioner Myers stated that it would appear that they are being asked to provide funding for the project. Commissioner Shupe stated that at this time, the county does not have any funding that could be put towards any new projects.

The Board asked Fiscal clerk Staci Knisley to join the meeting and discuss the Job & Family Services agency budget. Ms. Knisley stated that she wanted to ensure that the Board is aware that Director Michael Orlando is asking the Board to provide \$2.6 million from the county General Fund for the 2010 budget, and she was under the belief that only \$1.8 million was to be budgeted, as the \$362,000 supplement for Children Services and the \$500,000 extra funding for levy implementation that were provided in 2009 would go away.

Commissioner Shupe asked what the projections include, and Ms. Knisley stated that she is not sure, because the spreadsheets provided by JFS were very difficult to understand.

Commissioner Kiger asked if wage increases for 2009 were built into the budget, and Ms. Knisley stated that the 2009 budget included a 2.5% increase in the agency allocation, but it was not specific to salaries – that decision is left to the department heads to implement.

Commissioner Myers stated that he is concerned with the reorganization plan and that the Board not agree to any permanent or binding changes. Mr. Dolin stated that plans can change, and the Board is the ultimate authority on what is implemented.

Commissioner Shupe stated that the Board is obligated to fund the JFS operations. Commissioner Kiger stated that he did not necessarily agree, and expressed concern that the Board should learn more about the Federal funding that Licking County is receiving for their foster care programs – they are getting approximately \$4 million per year.

Mr. Dolin stated that it may be a question to pose to Mr. Orlando, and Commissioner Myers questioned if any of the levy funding would need to be used as match funding.

11:00 a.m. Meeting with Michael Orlando

The Board of Commissioner met at 11:00 a.m. with Job & Family Services Director Michael Orlando to discuss budget concerns. Commissioners present were Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger. Also present were Rich Bowlen, Mary Beth Lane, Joe Giessler, Ed Laramie, Staci Knisley, Laura Holton, Jason Dolin and Scott Zody.

Mr. Orlando stated that he and his staff are working with Judge Williams Office to try to resolve some of the increasing cost issues involved with court ordered foster care placement, and are exploring the option of the Federal IV-E funds that Licking County has been receiving. Commissioner Kiger asked what impact the IV-E funds could have to the JFS budget, and Mr. Orlando stated that Licking County has more children in foster care (300) than Fairfield County (approximately 100) and he has been utilizing Kinship funding here in Fairfield County, but the bottom line is that children must be placed in accordance with their needs.

Mr. Bowlen stated that as of today, there are 155 children in Fairfield County in foster care. Commissioner Kiger asked if the higher cost children, such as those in residential treatment or custody programs, would be covered by the IV-E funding, and Mr. Bowlen stated they would have to be evaluated for eligibility. This would include finances, who holds custody of the children and what placement settings are available. Mr. Bowlen added that both Licking and Ross County utilize IV-E funding, but either the court or JFS must have a case manager for the children.

Mr. Orlando stated that a structure must be put in place and also convince the Judge to use it. Mr. Orlando added that JFS might be able to supply a case worker to oversee those cases if the Judge will agree to utilize the IV-E program. Mr. Bowlen stated that Judge Williams has worked with him to reduce the number of children in foster placement from 200 down to the current 155, but they cannot justify further reducing that number.

Commissioner Kiger asked how the IV-E funding would help, and Mr. Orlando stated it would keep those children under care and the cost would not be borne by JFS. Mr. Orlando added that they have some other things going for them with the pending levy funding and the Judge's current willingness to help. Currently, foster parents only receive a stipend of \$15 per day, so they are not doing it for the money. The out-lying children, the ones with special needs or problems, are the ones driving the costs up. Mr. Bowlen stated that they have even had some foster parents voluntarily waive payment of their stipend to try to help out.

Mr. Bowlen stated one challenge is that they must document options, starting with the non-removal of the child by removing the problem parent from the home, then look to placement opportunities starting with other family members first. Mr. Orlando stated that he would prefer to jump away from placement as much as possible.

Commissioner Shupe asked Mr. Orlando to describe the aspects of the reorganization plan. Mr. Orlando stated that the plan includes a spreadsheet with worst-case scenario numbers and projected quarterly deficits. Mr. Orlando stated the information is based upon the information presently available, and cautioned that there could be additional state budget cuts or increased costs passed on, but he believes that the General Assembly is working to restore the TANF Title XX funding that Governor Strickland

proposed eliminating, which would provide \$367,000 for the county. All of those funds if restored would be earmarked for Child Protective Services (CPS).

Commissioner Myers stated it is similar to trying to hit a moving target, and Mr. Orlando agreed, stating that one changed factor could blow another hole in the budget. Mr. Orlando stated that he is planning to hold some of the levy funding back as a reserve that the Commissioners could utilize to “draw down” the amount of General Fund support.

Commissioner Shupe asked if the final plan calls for the reduction of 42 employees, and Mr. Orlando stated that is the number they are planning to eliminate. Commissioner Kiger asked if the plan could be implemented in phases, or do the lay-offs first prior to implementing everything. Mr. Orlando stated that nothing will change the number of children that need to be served, and Commissioner Shupe stated that would help but it would not eliminate the problem.

Commissioner Myers commented that with the current and pending state budget cuts by Governor Strickland, there is no telling what direction the JFS budget would take. Commissioner Kiger asked why the Board has to commit right now to the plan, and Commissioner Shupe stated that the Board needs to act now to balance the numbers. Commissioner Kiger stated that he disagrees with that premise. Ms. Holton stated that they cannot implement one phase of the plan without the others.

Commissioner Kiger asked if some funding is not due until December, and Mr. Orlando explained that if the plan in whole is not adopted, some of the numbers will change, and the projected deficits are based on each quarter and might increase or decrease depending on what happens.

Ms. Holton stated that there are several costs involved – direct, shared and contract, and all could be affected. Mr. Orlando added that the state ODJFS is cracking down as well and they will not allow Fairfield County to operate in what they would perceive as a deficit situation. All of the pieces are necessary to arrive at the same solution, or else ODJFS could say we are overdrawn and shut down our payments.

Mr. Orlando stated that until they get to January when the levy funding begins, they will be in a very tight funding situation. He has made arrangements for a state ODJFS fiscal analyst to come down every two weeks to work with him to ensure they are on track.

Commissioner Kiger noted that Mr. Orlando’s plan expects a General Fund allocation of \$2.6 million for 2010, which is \$800,000 more than is currently anticipated – what happens if those funds need to be cut? Mr. Orlando stated that if he needs to, he would resort to a reduced work week for his staff. In addition, he would look to expand the Voluntary Savings Program already implemented or implement involuntary furloughs. Mr. Orlando encouraged the Board to have Mr. Zody attend his monthly budget meetings to help monitor the JFS budget and keep the Board in the loop.

Mr. Orlando stated that he would not plan to restore any positions unless the Commissioners sign off on it, based upon Mr. Zody’s review and attending the budget meetings. Mr. Orlando stated that Governor Strickland is making choices, and that he would not agree with the Governor’s priorities, but that is not his choice.

Commissioner Myers asked about the General Fund dollar amounts for JFS, and Ms. Knisley stated that the original budget under the Memorandum of Agreement they signed with the Board was for \$1.8 million, but he is now asking for \$2.6 million. Mr. Orlando stated that he is asking for that amount because of the state budget cuts, adding that 10 years ago he was only receiving \$2.3 million in General Fund assistance. Mr. Zody noted that 10 years ago, the bulk of JFS General Fund support was going to Child Support Enforcement, and today the vast majority is supporting CPS. Mr. Orlando stated that he would protect his General Fund allocation, and recognizes that had the CPS/APS levy not passed, his situation would be much worse.

Commissioner Myers asked if the bottom line was that JFS would need an additional \$800,000, and Mr. Orlando stated that he would need to see where they are at for next year to be certain. One change he proposes to make is to place all the child foster care into a single fund that will be dedicated solely to foster care placement costs. Commissioner Shupe asked if this would affect any drawdown of state or Federal funds, and Mr. Orlando stated it would not, as it would still be a JFS fund, but he did not want any questions relative to transparency. Mr. Orlando stated that, even if the full \$2.6 million is provided and JFS starts seeing a restoration of funds or improved fiscal balance, it would mean less impact to the General Fund.

Commissioner Myers asked what is needed to get through 2009, and Mr. Orlando stated that he estimates that he will need \$96,000 the 2nd quarter, \$134,000 for the third quarter, and \$388,000 for the 4th quarter.

Commissioner Myers asked if the Auditor would certify additional revenue to the General Fund, and Mr. Laramée stated that he has not seen the plan, so cannot comment on that, but it is doubtful additional revenue would be certified. Mr. Orlando stated that the plan assumes levy funding would be available in the first quarter of 2010, and Mr. Laramée stated that would be budgeted.

Commissioner Kiger stated that he is very concerned with the rush to approve the plan, and compared it to the rush to approve the President's stimulus plan earlier in the year – after voting for it, several in Congress now wish they had had more time to review it and change it or vote against it. Commissioner Kiger stated that he does not feel he knows enough about the plan to support it.

Mr. Orlando stated that he understands the concerns, but feels it is imperative to move forward. Commissioner Shupe stated that the Board has had the plan for a week to study and consider, and Commissioner Kiger stated that the plan they had before them was not the same plan that was presented in general last week. Mr. Orlando stated that he had not heard any questions or concerns from the Board since his meeting last week, and thought there were no major issues. Commissioner Myers stated that waiting might make the situation worse.

Approval of Fairfield County Job & Family Services Financial Analysis and Emergency Budget Reduction Plan

On the motion of Jon Myers and second of Judith Shupe, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Fairfield County Job & Family Services Financial Analysis and Emergency Budget Reduction Plan, see resolution 09-04.07.t

Commissioner Myers stated that the longer the Board waits the worse the situation will become. Commissioner Shupe stated that she has sent a personal note to Governor Strickland asking that he revisit the proposed budget cuts.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers and Judith Shupe
Voting no thereon: Mike Kiger

Review, cont.

The Board of Commissioner met at 11:50 a.m. to continue a discussion of pending action items. Commissioners present were Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger. Also present were Ed Laramée, Jason Dolin and Scott Zody.

Approval of Authorization to enter into a contract between the Fairfield County Commissioners and Wachtel & McAnally for architectural services for a new county Public Safety Facility

On the motion of Jon Myers and second of Mike Kiger, the Board of Commissioners voted to enter in a contract between the Fairfield County Commissioners and Wachtel & McAnally for architectural services for a new county Public Safety Facility, see resolution 09-04.07.u

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, on the motion of Jon Myers and the second of Mike Kiger, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 12:00 p.m.

Roll call vote on the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Mike Kiger and Judith Shupe

Mike Kiger
Commissioner

Jon D. Myers
Commissioner

Judith K. Shupe
Commissioner

Scott Zody, Clerk/Manager

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS' IS SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY APRIL 14, 2009 AT 10:00 A.M.