

Draft

Health and Human Services Committee

Minutes

February 4, 2013

The Health and Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, February 4, 2013, @ 6:30p.m. in the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Sally DeFauw called the meeting to order. Members present were Mr. Emerson, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Metzger, Mr. Tyson, and Mr. Whelan. Ms. Tammy Anderson and Ms. Amanda Christensen were also present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Emerson, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from January 7, 2013.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman DeFauw said that she was omitting item #5 on the agenda this evening since Ms. Green had to cancel.

It was moved by Mr. Tyson, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

VETERAN'S ASSISTANCE COMMISSION UPDATE

Ms. Tammy Anderson, the Veteran's Assistance Commission Superintendent, gave a brief introduction and update for the committee. She stated that she is the new Superintendent and just started at the beginning of January 2013. She said that she lived and grew up in Hampshire, IL and then she joined the Air Force. She served in the Air Force for eight years during Desert Storm. When she left she had been hurt during her tour of duty. She went to see a Veteran's representative and she learned that she was not told everything that she should have been, like insurance/health care. She became more involved with the Veteran's and she realized that she wanted to do this job and she did not want a veteran to go through the same kind of thing that she went through. When she was hired here in DeKalb County, she recalls one of the things the Mr. Holderman asked her at the time was, what her goal was. She told him that she wanted to be the best service officer in the State of Illinois. We are certified nationally so that we can help anyone in any state, she said.

She had explained to Gary Hanson, County Administrator, before that the numbers that her office reports each year are just the numbers for that year. People in the other offices, they use quantitative numbers, they start from the beginning, they are not the true numbers. Her office tries to keep the numbers as true as possible. For example, the other offices will count in the people that have died, people who moved out of their county, etc.

They have just obtained access to the V.A. about ten months ago. They can now tell where people's claims are. Unfortunately, claims can take anywhere from 2 months up to 18 months. What we do differently here, in this county compared to any other counties, is that, we send in fully developed claims, she explained. That is the quickest and easiest way of doing this.

They processed 113 applications for VA disability, and 45 applications for VA pension. They recently hired a new Veteran employee who is extremely knowledgeable of the education benefits available to Veterans, and has already processed 26 applications for VA education benefits. She said that she can report that beneficial services provided over 1900 Veterans and /or Veteran families who have sought information from their office.

The time frame to file a claim from start to finish takes approximately 12 to 18 months. Of the 158 claims they filed last year, just 41 have been adjudicated. These 41 claims have brought retroactive compensation of \$673,265.00 and continuing monthly payments of \$68,221.00 to DeKalb County Veterans.

They have paid 951 claims for direct financial assistance totaling \$143,896.74 via vouchers to vendors. This included payments for shelter, medication, emergency medical treatment, food and transportation.

They are seeing a lot of Vietnam Veteran's because of the Agent Orange health problems. Regarding Camp Lejeune, California, any veterans, spouses, or children, who lived there from 1955 – 1985 and who develop cancer can seek health benefits because there was really bad contaminated water while they lived there during that time period.

She also mentioned that she is concerned that Viet Nam Vets are approaching retirement age. She said that many of them who retire from their jobs will have too much time on their hands and may begin to have flashbacks and may start to remember what happened to them during the war.

Ms. Supple, DeKalb County Coordinator, asked Ms. Anderson about the recent announcement by Wal Mart that they will be hiring 100,000 Veterans soon, did she know when that would be happening and how do we make contact with them.

Ms. Anderson said that she believes this will start over Memorial Day weekend. They do get a lot of contacts from companies because there are incentives in hiring Veterans, like a tax break. They will send over emails to her and will let her know when it will begin.

The committee thanked Ms. Anderson her very detailed report.

INTRODUCTION AND UPDATE FROM THE REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Ms. Amanda Christensen, the new Regional Superintendent of Schools, introduced herself to the committee and gave a brief update on her department. The committee explained to Ms. Christensen that in September 2012 they were informed by Derek Avery that her office was looking at another step that truants would need to take before they actually got into the court system. At that time Mr. Avery explained that he would be working with the Probation Department about it and that the Juvenile Justice Council would also be discussing it in the near future.

Ms. Christensen said that this issue has not been discussed by the Juvenile Justice Council just yet as they are still discussing their bylaws. They will be meeting monthly.

Mr. Jeff Smith, who oversees the four truancy officers in her office, said that they have 250 students who have been serviced so far this year, since July, 2012. This does not include all students that have exited their program though.

They have recertified 234 bus drivers and certified 30 new bus drivers. The bus drivers must have a refresher within a year of being recertified.

Jeff Smith also does the G.E.D. registration at their office. As of now 100 people have been registered for G.E.D. Testing since July. Also, 120 people have asked for copies of their transcripts. As of January 2014 testing will be more rigorous. If you have already taken parts of the test and have not taken all of them, you have to do it by the end of 2013 or all of your previous scores are gone and it will be a fresh start. The other big change in 2014 is that the test will be online and you must go to an approved testing site. The approved testing site for us at Kishwaukee College and they have started the application process.

The committee thanked Ms. Christensen on her report.

Before adjourning Chairman DeFauw informed the committee that Ms. Donna Moulton and Ms. Kim Green will be attending our March 2013 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Whelan, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectively submitted,

Sally DeFauw, Chairman

Mary C. Supple, Secretary

G:Health & Human Services Committee/Minutes for 02042013.