

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD VIA AUDIO WEBINAR  
PURSUANT TO TEMPORARY EMERGENCY ORDERS**

**Chairwoman Sayegh, Legislators Addonizio & Albano**

**Thursday**

**August 13, 2020**

The meeting was called to order via audio webinar at 6:41 P.M. by Chairwoman Sayegh who lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Committee Members Addonizio, Albano, and Chairwoman Sayegh were present.

**Item #3 – Approval of Minutes – June 16, 2020**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Item #4 – Discussion/COVID-19 Response/Office for Senior Resources Director Michael Cunningham**

Office for Senior Resources (OSR) Director Michael Cunningham stated things changed abruptly due to the pandemic, but home delivered meals never stopped. He stated there are 120-150 home delivered meals per day. He stated the safety and health of our seniors has been a major consideration because of their vulnerability. He stated the home delivered meals have been a huge success and a valuable service to the senior of Putnam County. He stated there was an Executive Order by the State to relax the eligibility requirements for this program. He stated OSR is proud of their home delivered meals program because it is unique as it does not contract out the cooking of the meals. He stated the interaction with the drivers delivering the meals is the only contact that some seniors have in day. He told anecdotes of seniors who appreciate the home delivered meals and the connection with the drivers. He noted that loneliness is bad for your health and this has been a difficult period of time. He stated in order to ensure safety, they do minimize face to face contact. He stated they also have “grab and go” meals for seniors who are able to get out of the house. He stated they are providing at least 100 meals per day via the “grab and go” program. He stated OSR has been trying to replace the programs that needed to stop during the pandemic, with others that are almost as good. He stated they have started remote activities, with approximately 43 per week. He stated these programs have been a huge success. He stated these may continue even after the pandemic restrictions are over. He stated wellness calls on seniors have been important, especially with the isolation and loneliness being a problem. He stated they have partnered with the United Way to have food banks for seniors. He stated they have given out approximately 3,000 bags of food to the seniors. He stated OSR also receives produce from Tilly Foster Farm. He stated legal services have been restarted, with precautions in place, as well as medical transportation. He stated OSR is working on a fall prevention outdoor program for September. He stated OSR has also been distributing farmers market coupons to seniors. He stated some important programs have been paused including the unmet needs program partly because seniors have been reluctant to have home health aides come into their homes. He stated OSR has provided animatronic pets to seniors dealing with dementia or Alzheimer’s. He stated OSR has been giving out masks and hand sanitizers. He stated

eventually the Executive Order which relaxed eligibility requirements for home delivered meals will expire and some seniors will no longer be eligible. He stated that is being recognized as a problem across the State. He stated they are trying to figure how they will reopen the senior centers.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated that was a very thorough overview and she appreciates all the hard work that Director Cunningham and OSR do. She stated she knows how happy the seniors are with what the OSR provides.

Director Cunningham stated the OSR staff has been great and have stepped up to deal with the changes.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned how Tropical Storm Isaias affected services.

Director Cunningham stated the severity was not expected. He stated there was no power on Wednesday, but most services resumed on Thursday. He stated they did do wellness check calls on Wednesday.

Chairwoman Sayegh that is great. She stated OSR provides valuable services to the community.

Legislator Addonizio thanked Director Cunningham for his report. She stated many seniors have contacted her in need of the home delivered meals. She stated she cannot thank OSR enough for what they provide.

Director Cunningham stated the Legislators have been some of the best outreach partners.

Legislator Albano thanked Director Cunningham for his efforts.

Chairwoman Sayegh thanked Director Cunningham for his report tonight. She requested he thank his staff for their hard work.

#### **Item #5 – Other Business**

##### **a. Approval/Budgetary Amendment 20A045/Fingerprints for Individuals Assigned to the Child Advocacy Center – Required for Accreditation**

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to waive the rules and accept the Other Business, Budgetary Amendment 20A045; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated this is for \$1,068. She stated Social Services Commissioner Michael Piazza provided more information for this requirement, including that the Child Advocacy Center requires employees who will be around children be fingerprinted. She stated fingerprinting and background checks are essential.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to move Budgetary Amendment 20A045 to the Audit & Administration Committee meeting; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

**Item #6 – Adjournment**

There being no further business at 7:18 P.M. Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to adjourn;  
Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.