MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Haste, Chairman  
Mike Pries, Vice Chairman  
George P. Hartwick, III, Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Laura E. Evans, Esq., Chief Clerk; Marie E. Rebuck, Controller; Joseph A. Curcillo, III, Esq., Solicitor; Gary Serhan, Deputy Controller; Fred Lighty, Esq., Human Services Director’s Office; Steve Libhart, Director of EMA; Amy Harinath, Commissioners’ Office; Dan Eisenhauer, Director of MH/ID; Randi Yeager, Human Services Director’s Office; Brooke Miller, Community & Economic Development; Joe Schwalm, Commissioners’ Office; Dan Rothschild, Commissioners’ Office; Joel Rimby, Solicitor’s Office; Charles Udit, Human Services Director’s Office; Robert Burns, Director of AAA; Peter Vriens, Director of Children & Youth/Human Services; Dave Schreiber, Human Resources; Kay Lengle, Human Resources; Gerald Feaser, Director of Registration/Elections; Leila Brown, Solicitor’s Office; Mavis Nimoh, Director of Drug & Alcohol; Randy Baratucci, Director of Purchasing; Faye Fisher, Director of Human Resources; J. Scott Burford, Deputy Chief Clerk; Julie Mackey, Commissioners’ Office; Melody Osborn, Commissioners’ Office and Richie-Ann Martz, Commissioners’ Office

GUESTS PRESENT

Jeff Frantz

MINUTES
CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Haste, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Everyone observed a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There are several sets of Meeting Minutes that will be considered at next week’s Legislative Meeting.

ELECTION BOARD MEETING

A complete set of Election Board Meeting Minutes are on file in the Commissioners’ Office.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS HELD BETWEEN MEETINGS

There were no Executive Sessions held between meetings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS/GUESTS

A. J. Scott Burford, Peter Vriens, Mavis Nimoh, Randie Yeager and Dan Eisenhauer

1. Presentation of 2013/2014 Human Services Block Grant Plan (***A Vote is Requested 6/12/13***)

Mr. Burford presented the 2013/2014 Human Services Block Grant Plan. He will highlight a couple of things and then each director will go through their particular department. The Plan covers seven funding streams. There are not a lot of budget changes when comparing the 2012/13 plan to the 2013/14 plan. The budget for 2013/14 was based on flat funding and historical expenses from 2012/2013. The total amount is $24,852,260. The eligible funds for the Committee and Commissioners to consider reallocating are $5.8 million. The process started by way of a Resolution and then members were appointed to an Advisory Committee. Two public hearings were
held where comments were received from the providers and public. Fifty-nine stakeholders were involved in the process and their comments were taken into consideration. What we heard was that employment is a high need. More detail on this issue will be provided by the directors as they describe their individual plans. The block grant provides for partnerships and gives the County the flexibility to spend the money where it will be in the best interest of the citizens.

The plan objective is to meet the needs of our community, in recognition that funding is becoming more limited. Priority will be given to the creation of a funding formula which will allow the County to more effectively distribute funds and measure outcomes. Goals include: developing a funding formula, develop a one-stop shop model, provide more access to the customers, increase and expand family, client and community engagement and promote families as equal partners.

Mr. Vriens indicated that the services included in the Block Grant compliment the County’s chosen benchmarks within the Needs-Based Plan and budget, as well as the goals of the Child Welfare Demonstration Project in which Dauphin County will be participating. These goals include a continued reduction of youth in out-of-home placement, especially in congregate care, and enhancing placement stability, decreasing lengths of stay in placement, and reducing the rates of re-entry.

Tracking has been identified as a priority through the County Improvement Plan, based upon the outcomes from Children & Youth’s Quality Services Review. The County is monitoring, on a 30-day basis, placement stability, placement as re-entry, and length of stay information to make informed decisions. The number of youth in out-of-home placement is a data point that is reviewed on a weekly basis. The County has proposed a number of strategies to assess these outcome measures and the variables contributing to them and is dedicated to using data to inform decisions surrounding practice. Teaming and engagement have been identified as the remaining priorities and the allocations that follow are reflective of these priorities as well.

There are five primary areas of service included in the block grant and each of these areas focuses on continued efforts to safely reduce the number of children and families engaged in the formal child welfare system. Such outcomes are accomplished through strengthening community-based programs and partnerships and ensuring youth and families are empowered, have a voice and are considered partners in decision-making. Children and Youth Services have reduced the number of youth in out-of-home placement by 43%. The number of youth in congregate has been reduced by 60% during the same time period. This has been accomplished while the number of referrals received by the Agency has increased by 54%.

Dauphin County is one of five counties participating in the Child Welfare Demonstration Project. This initiative focuses on three areas: expanded family engagement, the implementation of the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST) and Child Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS) assessment tools and the implementation of additional evidenced-based programs to address needs identified through improved assessments.
Children & Youth is committing to an additional 30% reduction in congregate care over the next five years.

Dauphin County Children & Youth Services is also a pilot county in the Permanency Practices initiative which, like the Demonstration Project, focuses on the safe reduction of children in out-of-home placement. We have implemented all of the components of this initiative – Family Group Conferencing, Family Finding, Family Development Credentialing and three month permanency reviews.

In 2012, there were 624 referrals that resulted in 465 family group conferences. Family Group Conferencing has contributed to a 43% decrease in Children & Youth placements and a 45% decrease in JPO placements.

Family Group Conferencing is a professional development course and credentialing program for front line workers to learn the skills associated with strengths-based practice in working with families.

Housing – Dauphin County is dedicated to safely maintaining children in their own homes and communities and doing so in a manner that is sustainable and prevents re-entry into the system. The County is experiencing an increased number of families at risk for homelessness.

The Transitions Program is a new initiative. It provides transitional housing options for families. It assists families in building informal support networks while they build competencies in the areas contributing to their housing struggles.

Multi-Systemic Therapy – This evidenced-based intervention targets high risk juveniles exhibiting criminal and/or anti-social behaviors that often co-occur with mental health issues, substance use as well as family, school and peer struggles.

Alternatives to Truancy – Dauphin County is dedicated to maintaining child welfare staff in the local school districts to help address high truancy rates and student disengagement.

High Fidelity Wraparound – The wraparound process is designed to improve the lives of children and their families struggling with complex behavioral health needs.

Promising Practice – KEEP Program is to equip foster and kinship parents with effective tools to address their children’s behavioral and emotional challenges and to train them on the implementation of those tools and strategies.

Mr. Haste indicated that it was mentioned that 465 family group conferences were held in 2012. He asked how many were held the year before.

Mr. Vriens stated that this was an all-time record for Children and Youth.
Mr. Hartwick discussed the need to have the right providers to address the concerns of the high risk individuals. The right model needs to be developed and the right provider. The placement rates need to be kept down and the need to prioritize the investment.

Ms. Nimoh discussed Drug & Alcohol and how it was moved from an acute care model to a chronic disease model. It looks at contracts, evidenced-based programs, cultural competency, recovery support services and client oriented services. We looked at what the data indicated. In the plan guidelines there are two funding streams in the block grant – Act 152 and BHSI. Over the last five years, Drug & Alcohol had about a 25% cut. It is now at $827,000. The focus was placed where they could serve more individuals. She discussed the drug situation and how things have changed over the years. Last year 220 individuals were treated. With the changes, Drug & Alcohol can serve over 2,000 individuals.

Mr. Haste asked if the reason for serving more people is because of the block grant.

Ms. Nimoh stated yes, because of strategically realigning the services and transferring the services from base dollars into block grant dollars. What DPW asked the County to do is different this year than in prior years. DPW asked what the County’s commitment was and what our plan is for individuals in recovery. Drug & Alcohol made sure to put that in the budget. There was never enough money to get the data that was needed.

Mr. Haste stated that if you listen to the rhetoric on the hill, you get one story. He asked Ms. Nimoh is she was able to provide more services under the block grant.

Ms. Nimoh indicated yes that she was able to serve more people with that block grant money.

Mr. Haste asked if it will be more difficult to deal with co-dependents and co-occurring individuals.

Ms. Nimoh stated that it is always going to be challenging especially for co-occurring individuals. They will continue to provide funding services for individuals with co-occurring needs. That allows an individual with a dual diagnosis of mental health and substance abuse disorder to be treated. There are facilities that can best address the needs of those individuals.

Mr. Haste asked if under the block grant are you better able to provide services or less able.

Ms. Nimoh indicated that she will be better able to provide services.

Mr. Hartwick indicated that he understands that Drug & Alcohol has changed the way to deal with detox and treatment by offering a series of models that are less costly, but more efficient. He wanted to make sure that it is clear that the County is planning, contingency wise, that it does not run out of treatment money. This is a critical
component of that Drug & Alcohol does. He asked if there is a contingency plan in the block grant in case there are no more treatment dollars.

Ms. Nimoh stated that Drug & Alcohol does not have a needs-based budget. This year Drug & Alcohol ran out in April, but that didn’t mean that individuals needing treatment were denied.

Mr. Hartwick indicated that the County has a commitment to treatment first. It needs to make sure that people have access to treatment and that could not have been done without the flexibility of the block grant.

Mr. Burford stated 16.7% of the eligible funds have been transferred to meet the community needs and the cap is 20%. Program efficiency has allowed us to do so. There is a contingency in place that includes the 3% carry forward provision within the legislative guidelines.

Mr. Hartwick stated that the commitment remains to get people into treatment.

Mr. Haste stated that under the block grant we have a better means by which to ensure the treatment dollars. My fear is we would run out of funds sooner if it was not for the block grant.

Mr. Burford stated right on point. We saw efficiencies in one category that allowed us to move money over as the need arises. In 2012/2013, 28,000 consumers were served. In 2013/2014 we will see a proposed 31,538 consumers.

Mr. Hartwick stated that it is important to note that people are still on waiting lists. They are not receiving the level of access that is required. The MH world has been significantly compromised by the 10% cut.

Mr. Haste stated that is a result of the cut, not the block grant. It is better to have the flexibility in a year when there is a cut.

Mr. Hartwick stated that if we don’t have the flexibility and there is a cut there are going to be providers going out of business. If flexibility is eliminated and we have these cuts, the County will have to eliminate services. Last year he went on record that he was almost against the block grant because it was being coupled with the 10% cut. We need to say yes to additional funding, because it is required and yes to flexibility.

Mr. Haste mentioned that it was four or five years ago when they started asking for a block grant. It was when Sandy Moore was here, because we knew this day would be coming.

Ms. Yeager reported for the Human Services Development Fund or HSDF section of the Human Services Block Grant, a plan was submitted that focuses on basic needs, information and referral services. These services and program will cover food pantry
programs, meals on wheels, some shelter care and information and referral programs for those individuals age 18-59 years who do not meet the service criteria in other systems.

Mr. Hartwick asked how much funding was being allocated to these services.

Ms. Yeager indicated that funding is in the amount of $132,000, which has been drastically reduced over the past few years.

Mr. Eisenhauer reported on the MD/ID Services. Public forums were held on both the MH and ID services to get additional public input. As part of the planning process, they are trying to align the block grant plan with the HealthChoices funding stream, waiver fund services, ID and also through the homelessness assistance program. Data indicators for ID programs, there are seven areas that are being measured. There are some data measurements on the MH system. There is a strong emphasis on evaluation. The Homelessness Assistance Program promotes self-sufficiency and permanent housing. The plans outline broad priorities. The priority for ID is employment and life sharing. The ID system is heavy on residential services. It is an expensive way to support individuals. The focus in the MH program is on two areas – access to out-patient level of care and real time emergency room diversion. A part of those two priorities are related. About 40% of first time customers are being admitted to in-patient level of care. It is a slight increase. The Homelessness Assistance Program funds have been cut over the last five years. It is about $700,000. Homeless prevention is the primary activity. This money goes a long way.

Mr. Haste asked if Mr. Eisenhauer if he is able to serve the co-occurring clients better with the block grant.

Mr. Eisenhauer stated that there is no change in co-occurring. It is a challenge on how a person presents. Now co-occurring must get assistance from two different departments. The best way to provide services is on a clinician level. There is a proposal to do co-occurring treatment. If the HealthChoices program is approved that would be a start.

Mr. Hartwick thanked Mr. Eisenhauer for all the work that he has done, which has been difficult at times with all the cuts. They rethought the way services were provided. No amount of flexibility is going to fix these cuts. An additional resource request can be made for gaming funds, using the public safety aspect.

Mr. Pries thanked Commissioner Hartwick for his leadership during this process. It has been amazing. Mr. Hartwick is very passionate about human services. There are a lot of people that benefit from this block grant.

Mr. Hartwick indicated that he is grateful for the compliment, but it is because of a great staff.
Mr. Burford indicated that there has been a lot of work involved in developing the plan, and he thanked the team and stakeholders for their work. Mr. Burford is asking for a vote to move forward with the plan. He stated that a section on the County’s website has been designated for the Human Services Block Grant. This page will contain pertinent information along with the Annual Plan.

Mr. Hartwick stated that he wants to invite those that are critical. It would be great if the County had all the resources to help all the people. Government is the decision-maker. The County has been forced by the same people that are now criticizing us to make these difficult decisions. The County would rather invest in education, prevention and the needs of the people before they are engaged in the system. He is ashamed that the Government leaders have not seen to prioritizing those that are in need of the most services. This is not welfare funds. A lot of people know someone who is in need of drug and alcohol services and MH/ID services. These are not handouts. They are for people that have faced challenges. Without these services more prisons would be built. The block grant provides the ability to be innovative with the limited resources that are provided. If the State would like to take over the delivery of human services, the taxpayers would benefit.

Mr. Haste stated that he echoes Commissioner Hartwick’s comments. Commissioners Haste and Hartwick have had a number of discussions since they are both involved in CCAP. The stupid rhetoric that is going on, he is disappointed in the County’s Senator. He is ashamed of the Senator. This is an individual who has chosen to follow party leadership and the misinformation from lobbyists who are self-serving as opposed to listening to his County. It is not as if they are divided on this issue. This is an issue that we have been discussing for the past four or five years. If the State is going to continue to underfund their obligation they need to give the County the flexibility to do what it needs to do to meet its priorities. It is unfortunate for the Senator to go along with other bureaucrats rather than taking the advice from folks that deal with this every day. The County has in place a group of providers, citizens sitting on an advisory board and for the Senator to decide to listen to bureaucrats and lobbyists over people that know this is very disappointing. It is a County versus a State issue. It is a bureaucrat versus a career servant issue. It is providing priorities as the County people see fit. It is more critical when the State has chosen not to meet their funding obligations. For them to underfund and then take away the flexibility is disheartening. He was hopeful that the Senator would rise above politics but he hasn’t. Commissioner Hartwick is on top of this issue and serves on CCAP’s human services board. The County is blessed for years by all the folks that have brought information forward. If the State can do it better then they can take it all. The State needs to give counties the opportunity to make the decisions on where funds are needed.

Mr. Pries stated that the County has made the best of what it has and that is because of the great work of all parties involved.

Mr. Hartwick stated that this is not a partisan issue. That is how Harrisburg and Washington operates. It is not a democrat versus republican issue. This is an issue
about services and efficiencies and the ability to make decisions on where the services are provided. This is a chance to take ownership of a methodology. These are things that the County needs to be doing with limited resources. The staff are the ones that get the work done.

Mr. Haste mentioned that Bob Burns is here in support. He is part of human services.

Mr. Hartwick stated that Bob has no revenue streams in the block grant, but Aging services is an integral part of all human services.

It was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. Pries that the Board approved the 2013/2014 Block Grant Plan as presented.

Question: Mr. Haste – Aye; Mr. Pries – Aye and Mr. Hartwick – Aye; motion carried.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Ms. Lengle stated that there was one change to Salary Board Item #5. It should be three positions. There were no questions on the Salary Board and Personnel Packets.

Mr. Pries asked if we are staying on top of eliminating vacancies that are on the books.

Ms. Lengle indicated that she is.

PURCHASE ORDERS

Mr. Baratucci reported on a requisition that he received after the Packet was printed. It is for the Register of Wills Office. It is for a project that she is working on with IT. There are a few budget adjustments that will need to be made. Mr. Haste and Laura are familiar with the project. There were no questions on the Packet.

The Purchase Order Packet will be considered at next week’s Legislative Meeting.

TRAINING PACKET

It was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. Pries that the Board approve Item #1 on the Training Packet.

Question: Mr. Haste – Aye; Mr. Pries – Aye and Mr. Hartwick – Aye; motion carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There was none.
SOLICITOR’S REPORT – JOSEPH A. CURCILLO, ESQ.

Mr. Curcillo reported that all items listed on the Solicitor’s Report, with some minor exceptions, will be ready for consideration at next week’s Legislative Meeting.

CHIEF CLERK’S REPORT – LAURA E. EVANS, ESQ.

Ms. Evans reported on the following:

- Dauphin County will host its annual Music and Wine Festival this weekend at Fort Hunter Park from 3 p.m. – 9 p.m. The festival will highlight national and local recording artists, as well as the region’s wineries. A weekend pass is $25 in advance and $30 at the gate.

- Also the County’s Area Agency on Aging, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, is offering qualified senior residents, vouchers worth $20, to purchase state-grown fruits and vegetables at local farmers markets. The next distribution will be June 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Zion Assembly of Harrisburg on 5th Street, Harrisburg. The first distribution at the Northern Dauphin Human Services Center drew 575 people, which was the biggest turnout to date.

COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS

Mr. Haste thanked his two colleagues for assisting with the cookout for the volunteers at Wildwood Park.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Mr. Pries and seconded by Mr. Hartwick that the Board adjourn.

Transcribed by: Richie-Ann Martz