

Minutes

Human Services Committee

June 16, 2021, 5:00 pm

Virtual via zoom and Livestreamed on Facebook

Gerace Office Building, Mayville, NY

Members Present: Pavlock, Whitney, Lawton, Rankin, Whitford

Others: Tampio, Ames, Dennison, Chagnon, Carlson, Spanos, Abdella

Chairman Pavlock called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

Approval of Minutes (5/19/21)

MOVED by Legislator Whitford, SECONDED by Legislator Whitney

Unanimously Carried

Privilege of the Floor

Clerk Tampio: There is no one here and we have not received any communications.

Proposed Resolution – Confirm Appointment – Community Services Board

Chairman Pavlock: Are there any questions?

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Confirm Appointments – Chautauqua Opportunities Board of Directors

Chairman Pavlock: Any questions or comments? It's nice to have people fill those positions. All in favor?

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Lease Agreement with Warwick Plaza, LLC for Office Space for the Chautauqua County Veterans Service Agency

Chairman Pavlock: Mr. Carlson, is there anything that you want to talk to us regarding this lease agreement?

Mr. Carlson: Is it going to be something addressed and asked question later or should I just generally present the meat of the resolution?

Chairman Pavlock: If you would just run us through a general synopsis of the move and your office space and if any of us have any questions, we can ask you after that.

Mr. Carlson: Currently we are co-located at 610 West Third Street location with Office for the Aging. Office for the Aging is going to be moving to their new location at the Chautauqua Center in about a month and a half which necessitated us to move on because the payment here would be around \$1,800 a month with just the three of us here. Our portion would be too much of an increase to stay here. We were able to find office space that required no build out whatsoever. It worked perfectly for us. Three officers, a file room, and a waiting area on Fairmont Avenue with a Jamestown address but in West Ellicott. The original price was \$1,200 and that was all inclusive lease. They cover everything, all we're paying for is the rent and obviously if we had any I.T. needs or whatever that's different but as far as there was no extra taxes or any other things but because it's the Veterans Service Agency, the owner was willing to drop \$150.00 a month off of that to bring us to \$1,050 which would be the full \$750.00 a month cheaper than if we were going to stay here. The best part of this move is, this Veterans Service Agency has always been attached somewhere else and this would give us kind of a home of our own where we would be kind of masters of our own fate and able to stay in one place for a longer period of time. That's all I really have in particular unless there are specific questions.

Legislator Whitford: How about the parking arrangements? Is it as *(inaudible)* to what you had on 3rd Street? Parking availability for Veterans?

Mr. Carlson: Yes, it's actually better so the plaza that we're in, we're actually on the second level behind so it's *(inaudible)* here but it's like floor level entry. *(cross talk)*. As far as accessibility, when we had Office for the Aging, the clinic and also the Veterans Services Agency in the same building, Veterans would often have to walk quite a ways. This right here, there's really going to be no such thing as a bad parking spot where we're at. We never see more than two or three clients at a time so just the traffic will be a lot less.

Legislator Rankin: What's happening with the medical clinic for the VA?

Mr. Carlson: So the VA clinic, they have already moved and they are at the Hazeltine location. Originally we were trying to co-locate with them and they have verbally accepted that they wanted to do that as well. But it's not the VA that actually owns the clinic, it's a contractor, a vendor that the VA uses to provide health care for community based outpatient clinics. After several attempts to actually negotiate with them, sit down with them, get something formal on paper, we just couldn't anywhere to a point where they didn't respond so once we *(inaudible)* crunch time, we had to look elsewhere.

Legislator Rankin: Before when you were co-located with the medical clinic, was that an advantage? Is this going to be a disadvantage that you are not together or you don't think that it's going to affect the services? Just curious as to what you think.

Mr. Carlson: It would obviously be an advantage if we could be in the exact same location because the Veterans, there is one place that they can go. But we have been co-located with them for a while now and it would be more advantageous to be there but it's just not a possibility. But it's not any sort of dramatic negative effect.

Legislator Whitford: Correct me if I'm wrong but your unit is certainly an entry point to get through to the medical service, is that correct? I mean their eligibility, etc. Isn't that what you do, you scan them for eligibility for benefits.

Mr. Carlson: Our bread and butter would be compensation disability claims and also pension claims which is for war (*inaudible*) Veterans and surviving spouses. That is direct monetary offset but yes, screening and helping Veterans enroll in the VA clinic is one of the primary things we do and that's why we thought it a little bit baffling that we just could not get them to – other than to verbally respond, yes, we would like you to be co-located with us, they just simply wouldn't respond.

Legislator Whitford: That's too bad.

Chairman Pavlock: Just looking at the numbers, what is your rent currently that you are paying now? It's around that \$1,050 mark if I'm not mistaken, right?

Mr. Carlson: No, so there was a couple of things and I don't want to add too much confusion to this so right here where we are at right now, we're paying a little over \$700 a month. Originally pre-COVID, we were looking at moving to a different facility because collectively Office for the Aging and Veterans Services Agency had outgrown this one and we also had some issues with the HVAC system, waiting room, bathrooms, there was a multitude of issues here. So we had originally proposed to raise our budget to \$1,050 a month because we were at 150% of what we were paying now to match what Office for the Aging was doing but then when COVID hit, those plans were initially cancelled and then so the budget reduced back down to where we are at right now. Then we decided to go in different directions, Office for the Aging and Veterans Services Agency, so that was my target point was what we had previously planned so we went from a \$1,050 a month to \$700 a month during COVID as far as for planning purposes and then when we knew (*inaudible*).. We tried to find something comparable for about \$700 a month but there is no such place that existed. This was by far the best place we could find that required no build out and it had a landlord who was flexible and was willing to take \$150 a month off the price.

Legislator Whitford: And it was all inclusive, right?

Mr. Carlson: All inclusive. The only things we're paying for are (*inaudible*) stuff.

Chairman Pavlock: No, it sounds good and I appreciate the work that you have done in looking for that location and finding it and finding it for that price because it's a good price for what you're renting, it really is. So thank you for the work you put in, in finding that place.

Mr. Carlson: We looked at few other places, even places that were more expensive. When we walked in, we found three completely finished nice offices for the three individuals, a common waiting area and then kind of a windowless room that – I mean, if we would have tried to build something out, unless we had unlimited resources, we couldn't have found anything that fit us as well as this did.

Chairman Pavlock: Great. Any other questions? All those in favor?

Unanimously Carried

Other

Chairman Pavlock: Does anyone have anything under "other"?

Legislator Rankin: MOVE to adjourn.

Legislator Whitney: SECOND.

Unanimously Carried (5:13 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,
Kathy K. Tampo, Clerk/Olivia Ames, Deputy Clerk/Lori J. Foster, Sr. Stenographer