

**COUNTY OF OSWEGO
COMMUNITY HEALTH AND POVERTY REDUCTION TASK FORCE**

**April 22, 2015
County of Oswego Office Building, Oswego, NY
4th Floor Conference Room “E”**

Members in Attendance

Leg. Roy Reehil, Chair
Leg. Marie Schadt, Vice Chair
Leg. Jacob Mulcahey via- conference call
Leg. Daniel LeClair
John Shelmidine, Board President of the Center for Instruction, Technology & Innovation (CiTi) and Sandy Creek Central Schools
Anita Murphy, Superintendent APW CSD
Lisa Roman, Counselor, Oswego City CSD

Advisors in Attendance

Kevin Gardner, Chairman of the Legislature
Leg. Shane Broadwell
Gregg Heffner, Commissioner of Social Services
Brian Chetney, Exec. Dir. Oswego Youth Bureau
Jiancheng Huang, Director of Public Health
Charles Buki, President of CZB (via conf. call)
Christopher Todd, District Superintendent, CiTi
Karen Goetz, Shineman Foundation
Jeffrey Grimshaw, Executive Director
Office of Business and Community Relations,
Oswego State University of New York

Guests: Shineman Foundation board members Kathy Fenlon and Tom Schneider, Richard Mitchell, County Attorney, Betsy Sherman-Saunders, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature.

Excused: Stewart Amell

1. Welcome new Advisors

Roy introduced the new advisors.

2. Minutes

No changes were made to the March 25, 2015, minutes.

3. Reporting on Tasks assigned last meeting

Chairman of the Committee Reehil explained that acquisition of data and information from NY State, the Department of Social Services and the school districts is still being researched.

An intern job description has been completed and Legislator Mulcahey will deliver it to SUNY Oswego.

County Attorney Richard Mitchell explained that he is still waiting to hear from OTDA about a confidentiality agreement.

Discussion

- Department of Social Services Commissioner Greg Heffner presented information regarding individuals receiving free or reduced lunches from the ages 5 to 18 years old. 8,500 students out of 21,000 students in the County are receiving benefits. Some of these children are from families of the “working poor” while others are totally dependent on public assistance.

- Legislator Mulcahey proposed focusing on preparing students to read at the 3rd grade level by the time they are in the 3rd grade. Legislator Broadwell suggested working with the schools in between meetings regarding the 3rd grade reading level concept.
- Mr. Grimshaw suggested reviewing the data first and then using the data to set the direction as opposed to coming up with an issue and finding the data to match the issue. He added that the committee needs to know why there is a problem prior to fixing the problem
- Commissioner Heffner explained that there needs to be some concurrent planning; both long term and short term. He added that there are some people that can be moved off public assistance and into self-sufficient jobs. Commissioner Heffner explained that there are grants that can help get these people off public assistance.
- Committee Chair Reehil asked the committee members to develop “wish lists” regarding steps that could be taken, projects that can be worked on or best practices that can be implemented. He added that some programs are already in place and that these need to be part of the equation, including the One-Stop Center.
- Mr. Grimshaw added that the committee needs to understand the underlying issues.
- Commissioner Heffner suggested that the task force develop a mission and a focus.
- Chris Todd recommended that the Task Force members consider meeting without all the advisors in order to remain focused.
- The upcoming Focus Groups were discussed and the size was recommended to not get too large. The goals of the Focus Groups are to gather information and to begin creating a dialogue within the community regarding poverty and steps that can be taken to reduce it. The result of the Focus Groups will be a summary that identifies the important themes or findings that come out of the discussions.
- Legislator Broadwell would like to see a press release sent out.
- Committee Chair Reehil reiterated that it’s important for Task Force members and advisors to develop “wish lists” -- ideas that can be discussed and prioritized into action items.
- The next meeting is scheduled for May 27, at noon in the County Office Building.

4. Adjournment