

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
March 25, 2008

Committee Members

In Attendance: Lois Bronz, Chair, William Burton, Judy Myers, Vito Pinto, Jose Alvarado, Bernice Spreckman, Tom Abinanti.

In Attendance: CEO: Bill Randolph DSS: Diane Atkins, Robin Kanter BOL: Olivia Rhodes, Rick Pezzullo, Larry Goldstein & Melanie Montalto; Visitors: Nicole Neroulis, Journal news, Regina Riely.

Items Discussed: Child Protective Services

Minutes

Chairwoman Bronz called the meeting to order at 3:14 p.m.

Robin Kanter, Director of Child Protective Services, and First Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Social Services Diane Atkins gave an overview on how the Child Welfare system operates in Westchester. The discussion included State and Federal mandates.

Ms. Kanter and Deputy Commissioner Atkins stated that the increase in CPS reports is due to the new policy of the Yonkers Public Schools with regard to truancy. Teachers are required to report a child to CPS if they are absent a certain number of times. Diane Atkins stated that several judges require that the CPS workers report their school attendance to the court daily, and a special school for truant students may be developed. She also stated that Yonkers has added a judge in family court due to how active their calendar is.

Ms. Atkins stated that if a child is removed from a home the Department does its best to place the child with a family member and does what they can to rehabilitate the family so they can be reunited as soon as possible. In the many cases where the child is able to remain in the home with the parents the Department will have family services put in to place.

Moved by Legislator Burton and seconded by Legislator Pinto the minutes of the March 18, 2008 Community Services meeting were approved 5-0.

Moved by Legislator Burton and seconded by Legislator Pinto the Committee on Community Services adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

A complete audio recording of the meeting is available for review upon request.