

Health & Human Services Committee Minutes

June 30, 2026

Members Present: Committee Chair Anthony Doldo, Legislators Robert Cantwell, Tina Bartlett-Bearup, Karen Freeman, Christopher Boulio, Frances Calarco, Corey Grant, Board Chair William Johnson

Others Present: Legislators Michael Montigelli, Daniel McBride, Patrick Jareo, Robert Ferris, Steel Potter, County Administrator Ryan Piche, Deputy Administrator Dylan Soper, County Attorney John Sabik, Conf. Asst. for Fiscal Affairs Kristy O'Shaughnessy, Office for the Aging Director Bethany Munn, Community Services Director Tim Ruetten, Public Health Director Steve Jennings, Social Services Deputy Commissioner Nicholle Lacey, Social Services Director of Income Maintenance Tana Pestor, Veterans Service Agency Dave Pavey, JCC President Dr. Daniel Dupee, JCC Vice President for Administration and Finance Sid Pond, Interim Public Defender Laurel McCarthy, Sheriff Pete Barnett, Undersheriff Kris Spencer, Sheriff Lt. Patrick Larkins, Sheriff Lt. Rob Newtown, Confidential Secretary Jaimie Lee, Confidential Secretary Jill Jones

Chairman Doldo called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Committee approved the minutes of the May meeting without objection or correction. Chairman Doldo offered Privilege of the Floor.

Philip Moses, 31236 County Route 179, Chaumont, NY, and Director of the Brookside Cemetery Association provided the Board with price sheets for services at Brookside Cemetery as well as the North Watertown Cemetery. He expressed concern that the costs for burying an indigent person far outweigh the reimbursement that he receives from DSS. Brookside wants to continue to serve the community with this service but they may not be able to because of the current rates. He understood certain rates are being raised, but asked that rates for cemeteries especially be reviewed and increased so they are closer to actual costs. In response to a question, he advised that they have done 73 indigent burials, including cremations, so far for 2026. Chairman Doldo said the resolution on the agenda regarding rates for indigent burials would be laid on the table so that it can be discussed further as it only adjusts rates for funeral homes and does not take into consideration the rates for cemeteries, which have not been adjusted in a number of years.

DSS Deputy Commissioner Nicholle Lacey and DSS Director of Income Maintenance Tana Pestor presented an overview of the One Big Beautiful Act/HR 1 signed by President Trump July 4, 2025. They mainly focused on its impact on DSS fiscal and program changes and how that impacts costs for Jefferson County, particularly in SNAP and Medicaid. They said Jefferson County currently has 7,617 individuals receiving Medicaid and pays \$20,567,036 for weekly shares of Medicaid costs; and has 13,118 individuals receiving SNAP and households received \$31,603,225 in SNAP for 2025.

Deputy Commissioner Lacey said the Act imposes strict eligibility rules and cuts that are effective January 1, 2027. Medicaid Impacts include increased work/income requirements, which include mandatory exemptions, and recertification frequency increases from every 12 months to renew coverage every 6 months. The local impact of these changes is increased risk of residents losing coverage, heightened administrative barriers due to 6-month renewals, and pressure on local health care providers due to an increase in uninsured residents. The SNAP Impacts include: effective October 1, 2026 the County's administrative share will increase from 50% to 75%, a cost increase of \$1,250,000 annually; effective October 1, 2027 there will be a 15% benefit cost-shift, with an estimated \$4,530,211 cost increase. Further impacts of the Act include stricter rules for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD), eliminated exemptions for homeless individuals, veterans, and former foster youth under 24, and increased work requirements. The local impact: in May 2026, 589 individuals were closed/penalized for non-compliance; in June 2026, an additional 224 individuals are expected to be affected. They said decreased SNAP participation threatens the local economy, as \$1 in SNAP generates \$1.54 in local economic activity. They said the most burdensome change is the Medicaid recertification requirements which will take up a considerable amount of time and effort for both employees and the recipients.

Deputy Commissioner Lacey and Director Pestor also provided an update on the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) the said open cases have nearly doubled, from 340 cases (as of October 2023) to 601 active cases currently. The FFY 26 allocation was originally \$5,734,876, revised upward to \$6,218,690 to cover program charges, and the FFY 27 allocation is increased to \$7,376,036. Due to increased funding, Jefferson County remains one of the few NYS counties without a waitlist for child care assistance.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Accepting Funding and Authorizing an Agreement in Connection with Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Freeman seconded by Legislator Bartlett-Bearup and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Accepting Stipend from the Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Grant seconded by Legislator Boullo and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Amending the 2026 County Budget Relative to Public Health Personnel Accounts and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Bartlett-Bearup seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Amending 2025/26 Comprehensive Planning Resource Allocation Agreement with the NYS Office of Children & Family Services, Authorizing Amended Contractual Youth Program Agreements and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made

by Legislator Bartlett-Bearup seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Doldo introduced a resolution Establishing Rates of Reimbursement to Funeral Homes and Services for Indigent Burials and entertained a motion to lay the resolution on the table. A motion was duly made by Legislator Freeman, seconded by Legislator Bartlett-Bearup and unanimously carried by the Committee.

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator Cantwell seconded by Legislator Bartlett-Bearup and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Piche". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ryan Piche
Clerk of the Board