



Human Services, Human Rights & Equity

BOL Meeting Minutes - Final

Committee Chair: Catherine Parker

800 Michaelian Office Bldg.
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
White Plains, NY 10601
www.westchesterlegislators.com

Monday, September 12, 2022

9:30 AM

Committee Room

CALL TO ORDER

Joint with Budget and Appropriations and Health committees.

This meeting was held pursuant to Chapter 1 of the New York State Laws of 2022 and Executive Order 11, as extended, which authorize any public body to meet and take such action authorized by law without permitting in public-in-person access to meetings and authorize such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed. To access the meeting, please visit: <https://westchestercountyny.legistar.com>.

With a quorum present, Chair Catherine Parker called the meeting to order at 10:43 a.m.

Present: Committee Chair Parker, Legislator Barr, Legislator Cunzio, Legislator Maher, Legislator Pierce, Legislator Williams Johnson and Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels

Absent: Legislator Johnson

Remote: Legislator Borgia

MINUTES APPROVAL

July 18th, 2022 10:00 AM Minutes

On motion of Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels, seconded by Legislator Maher, the minutes were approved. The motion carried unanimously.

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

[ACT-2022-111](#) ACT-WCHCC-SAAVE Program-Bilingual Services

Guest: Office for Women: Robi Schlaff, Director

Director Robi Schlaff discussed the SAAVE Program mentioning that it is not only bi-lingual but a multi-lingual program. The funds will assist victims needing help by expanding multilingual services for advocates who are assisting the victims of sexual assault.

Legislator Cunzio pointed out, that on page on page 14 of the legislators' packet, which lists the fact and costs breakdown, the on-call staff hourly rates were listed as \$8 and \$12 an hour. She wanted to know if that was a rate up to par with living wage requirements, or if it were an additional rate. Director Schlaff said she would get back to her on it.

On motion of Legislator Pierce, seconded by Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels, the above item was signed by committee sent to Board of Legislators. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Committee Chair Parker, Legislator Cunzio, Legislator Maher, Legislator Pierce, Legislator Williams Johnson and Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels

Absent: Legislator Johnson

[ACT-2022-112](#) ACT-WCHCC-FACT Program-Forensic Medical Care

Guest: Office for Women: Robi Schlaff, Director; Budget Dept.: Larry Soule, Director

In discussing the FACT Program Director Robi Schlaff said it started at Westchester Medical Center in 2014. Director Schlaff explained, they had been contacted by the DA's office who said they didn't have good forensic evidence for prosecution of rape cases. Two years were spent looking at area hospitals in terms of rape victims entering the ER and wanting to have a rape kit done. It was found that the system currently in place, was not working. The rate of actual completion of rape kits was less than 25%. Westchester Medical Center was able to take it on and collaborated with the county's Emergency Services Department to improve the system and its outcomes. There was a letter sent out encouraging all people who experienced sex crimes to go to the medical center. The increase in patients created a need for an increase in sexual assault advocates. This is what the SAAVE program is. Advocates assist with a wide range of issues as it relates to new and old cases. They are also 24/7 and answer high-risk calls.

Legislator Williams-Johnson said she noticed in the cover letter that the adult clientele has increased by over 40%. She asked if there was a specific reason. Director Schlaff said the increase in law enforcement training has resulted in getting more calls, since the police officers are responding to the scene. Legislator Williams-Johnson and Director Schlaff agreed this is a good thing, and Director Schlaff emphasized that this helps connect victims with services faster.

Legislator Williams-Johnson also asked what happens when a client leaves the medical center. Director Schlaff answered, the client is connected to resources immediately. Advocates provide resources to the extent that the victim wants or doesn't want them; every case is different.

Legislator Pierce asked if some of the work in the SAAVE program is done by volunteers. She also asked how many volunteers are in the SAAVE program. Director Schlaff answered that she believes there was about 40 but can get back to her with an accurate count.

Legislator Piece also asked if the volunteers are matching needs or if more are needed. Director Schlaff says right now the program at the Westchester Medical Center is working well and has received some additional funds from NYS that she believes will be used for staffing. She believes they want to hire more full time staff to have people on the payroll instead of relying upon volunteers.

On motion of Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels, seconded by Legislator Williams Johnson, the above item was signed by committee sent to Board of Legislators. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Committee Chair Parker, Legislator Barr, Legislator Borgia, Legislator Cunzio, Legislator Maher, Legislator Pierce, Legislator Williams Johnson and Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels

Absent: Legislator Johnson

II. OTHER BUSINESS

III. RECEIVE & FILE

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Legislator Barr, seconded by Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels, the Committee adjourned at 11:03 AM. by the following vote:

Aye: Committee Chair Parker, Legislator Barr, Legislator Borgia, Legislator Cunzio, Legislator Maher, Legislator Pierce, Legislator Williams Johnson and Committee Vice-Chair Woodson-Samuels

Absent: Legislator Johnson