

September 16, 2021

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
COMMITTEE
REPORT NO. 9

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT.
CHAIR BASKIN PRESENT AS EX-OFFICIO MEMBER.

1. RESOLVED, the following items are hereby received, filed and printed:

- a. COMM. 16E-4 (2021)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE: “Re-Appointment to the Mental Hygiene Community Services Board”
(Chair’s Ruling)

August 2, 2021

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin St, 4th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Honorable Members,

Pursuant to the powers vested in me by Section 1303 of the Erie County Charter, I hereby re-appoint the following person to the Erie County Mental Hygiene Community Services Board for a term ending December 31, 2022.

Re-appointment:

Charles Syms
145 Cedar Road
Buffalo, NY 14215

Should you have any questions regarding this re-appointment please feel free to contact my office at (716)858-8500.

Sincerely Yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz
Erie County Executive

- b. COMM. 16E-5 (2021)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE: “Appointments to the Mental Hygiene Community Services Board”
(Chair’s Ruling)

July 27, 2021

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Honorable Members,

Pursuant to the power vested in me by Article 14, Section 1303 of the Erie County Charter, I hereby appoint the following to the Erie County Mental Hygiene Community Services Board, for a term ending December 31, 2023.

Appointees:

Sharon Cavanaugh
33 Newman Place
Buffalo, NY 14210

Stephanie Orlando
3108 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14214

If you have any questions about this or any other matter, please feel free to contact my office at 858-8500.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

- c. COMM. 16E-9 (2021)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE: “Appointment to the Board of Health”
(Chair’s Ruling)

August 17, 2021

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin St., 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

Dear Honorable Members:

I, Mark C. Poloncarz, Erie County Executive, pursuant to Erie County Charter Section 503, do hereby appoint the following individual to the Board of Health, for a term expiring December 31, 2027.

Appointment:

Michael D. Merrill, MD, MS, MS, MBA
97 Chateau Terrace
Amherst, NY 14226

Should you have any questions regarding this appointment or any other matter, please feel free to contact my office at (716)858-8500.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

- d. COMM. 16E-41 (2021)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE: “Appointment to the Youth Services Board”
(Chair’s Ruling)

September 1, 2021

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin St. – 4th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Honorable Members:

Please be advised that, pursuant to Section 1204 of the Erie County Charter, I do hereby appoint the following individual to the Erie County Youth Services Board to a term ending July 1, 2023.

Appointee:

Josh Daniels
184 Northington Drive
East Amherst, NY 14051

Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (716) 858-8500.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

2. RESOLVED, the following items are hereby received and filed:
- a. COMM. 9E-21 (2021)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE: “Authorization to Contract for COVID-19 Community Outreach Services”
(Chair’s Ruling)
 - b. COMM. 15E-3 (2021)
COMPTROLLER: “Letter to Personnel Commissioner Regarding Health Information Disclosure”
(Chair’s Ruling)
 - c. COMM. 15D-3 (2021)
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH: “Updated Nursing Home Outbreak Information - 06/2021”
(Chair’s Ruling)
 - d. COMM. 15D-5 (2021)
DEPARTMENT OF LAW: “Local Emergency Order Extensions”
(Chair’s Ruling)
 - e. COMM. 16D-2 (2021)
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH: “Updated Nursing Home Outbreak Information - 07/2021”
(Chair’s Ruling)
 - f. COMM. 16D-4 (2021)
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER - AUDIT: “Commencement of Audit of Social Services for Period 01/01/2020 - 06/30/2021”
(Chair’s Ruling)
 - g. COMM. 16D-5 (2021)
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER - AUDIT: “Commencement of Audit of Senior Services for Period 04/01/2020 - 06/30/2021”
(Chair’s Ruling)

- h. COMM. 16D-8 (2021)
COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES: “Child Protective Caseloads for 06/2021”
(Chair’s Ruling)
- i. COMM. 16D-9 (2021)
COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES: “Child Protective Caseloads for 07/2021”
(Chair’s Ruling)
- j. COMM. 16D-13 (2021)
DEPARTMENT OF LAW: “Local Emergency Order Extensions”
(Chair’s Ruling)

3. COMM. 16E-40 (2021)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Mental Health is responsible for the delivery of a comprehensive range of mental and behavioral health services for the residents of Erie County; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) has informed the Erie County Department of Mental Health of an annual increase to its State Aid beginning in fiscal year 2021 to help the agency offer Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS); and

WHEREAS, in order to quickly implement these behavioral health services, the Erie County Department of Mental Health requests authorization to enter into a contract with Envision Wellness WNY for the provision of the targeted behavioral health services; and

WHEREAS, approximately \$95,000 (annualized) in NYS OMH funding is being appropriated to Envision Wellness WNY beginning in September 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that in order to implement behavioral health services to help families struggling with severe and persistent mental illness connect to assistance, the Department of Mental Health is authorized to enter into an agency contract with Envision Wellness WNY effective on or around September 7, 2021; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive is hereby authorized to accept the NYS OMH funding and enter into a contract with Envision Wellness WNY for a period commencing September 7, 2021; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Director of Budget and Management is hereby authorized to process the following budgetary adjustment:

2021 BUDGET – Mental Health, Business Area 124
Cost Center 1241020, Fund 110

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>
406830 State Aid - OMH	\$107,745
<u>Expense</u>	<u>Increase</u>
517605 Envision Wellness OMH	\$107,745

and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be furnished to the Office of the County Executive, the Department of Mental Health, the Office of the Comptroller, and the Division of Budget and Management.
(6-0)

4. COMM. 16E-43 (2021)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

WHEREAS, in March 2020 County Executive Poloncarz empaneled his first COVID related task force entitled “Erie County Emergency Childcare Task Force”; and

WHEREAS, the Erie County Emergency Childcare Task Force has a diverse membership which includes center based and in-home providers for all age groups of children, as well as representatives from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and childcare advocacy organizations like the Childcare Resource Network, the WNY Women’s Foundation, and others; and

WHEREAS, the task force has met nearly every week since the onset of the pandemic, exploring the top issues currently facing the childcare ecosystem, including COVID-19 safety protocols, mental health issues among children and staff, increased support for school-aged children during virtual learning, and more; and

WHEREAS, the historically low wages of childcare workers, 95% of whom are women and 50% of whom are minority, and the unprecedented difficultly childcare providers are facing in their efforts to recruit a qualified and dedicated workforce in the midst of the pandemic, thereby negatively effecting the quality of childcare they are able to provide, remain among the top issues raised by the dozens of providers and advocates who participate on the Emergency Childcare Task Force; and

WHEREAS, the market rate for childcare subsidies paid by Department of Social Service Districts across NYS is set by OCFS; and

WHEREAS, the market rate set by OCFS typically represents just 69% of the cost of care as determined by OCFS every three years in a given region of NYS; and

WHEREAS, the typical cost of care determined by OCFS includes many inaccuracies because it is based on a flawed model of data collection and cost estimates from childcare providers; and

WHEREAS, the misalignment between the actual cost of care for local childcare providers and the market rate paid by OCFS in a specific region of NYS contributes to the woefully low wages paid in the childcare industry; and

WHEREAS, the misalignment between the actual cost of care for local childcare providers and the market rate paid by OCFS was among the top issues raised by hundreds of providers and advocates during the public hearing OCFS convened on May 20, 2021 when they sought public comment on the NYS Childcare Development Fund; and

WHEREAS, increasing the market rate to more closely align with the cost of care was among the top recommendations made by then Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul, OCFS Commissioner Sheila Poole, and NYS Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon when they issued the final report of the Child Care Availability Task Force in June, 2021; and

WHEREAS, because of the visible nature of these issues, they have garnered the attention of local members of the NYS Delegation in both the Assembly and Senate, as well as the Cornell University School of Industrial Labor Relations Buffalo Co-Lab, who released a childcare study in 2006 entitled, "Buffalo Child Care Means Business," which documented the benefits to children, families, and employers when quality childcare is broadly available; and

WHEREAS, Cornell University has pledged \$25,000 to revisit their research from 2006 and conduct a new study analyzing the true cost of care for childcare providers in Erie County in both center-based and in-home modalities for all different ages of children; and

WHEREAS, Cornell University has requested a matching grant of \$25,000 from Erie County to cover the remaining costs of the study; and

WHEREAS, it is in Erie County's interest to learn the delta between the market rate paid by Erie County DSS (as set by OCFS) and the actual cost of care in our region in order ensure childcare facilities can remain open, attract qualified workers, and maintain the adequate number of slots needed to support the WNY workforce; and

WHEREAS, the results of such a study are necessary to implement several goals and strategies for both Children and Working Families as established by Live Well Erie.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature authorizes use of \$25,000 from fund center 120, account number 516020 for the purpose of partially funding the Cornell University Buffalo Co-Lab Cost of Child Care study; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Erie County DSS is authorized to enter into a contract with Cornell University Buffalo Co-Lab in an amount not to exceed \$25,000; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution go to Governor Kathy Hochul, NYS OCFS Commissioner Sheila Poole, NYS DOL Commissioner Roberta Reardon, all members of the WNY State Delegation, the Cornell University Buffalo Co-Lab, the Childcare Resource Network, the WNY Child Care Action Team, and the WNY Women's Foundation.
(6-0)

LISA M. CHIMERA
CHAIR