

DATE

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

MINUTES

A meeting of the Human Services Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on September 2, 2014.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Monica Martinez, Chairperson
Leg. Kate M. Browning, Vice Chair
Leg. Lou D'Amaro
Leg. Kevin J. McCaffrey
Leg. Robert Trotta

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Presiding Officer Leg. DuWayne Gregory
George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Lora Gellerstein, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Diane Dono, Budget Review Office
Jill Moss, BRO
Massiel Fuentes, BRO
Tom Vaughn, County Executive's Office
John O'Neill, Commissioner/Department of Social Services
Lisa Pinkard, Aide to Leg. Martinez
William Shilling, Aide to Leg. Calarco
Nancy Olsen-Harbich, Program Director/Cornell Cooperative Extension
Tim Jahn, Human Ecology Specialist/CCE
Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer
Shawn Hirst, appointee/Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council
Sheila Ann Johnson, appointee/SC Youth Board Coordinating Council
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:05 PM

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

All right, good afternoon and welcome to today's Human Services Committee meeting. If we could all rise to recite the Pledge which will be led by Legislator D'Amaro.

SALUTATION

PRESENTATIONS

Thank you. Okay, to start off today's meeting, we do have a presentation from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. Today we have Tim Jahn, Human Ecology Specialist, as well as Nancy Olsen-Harbich, which is the Program Director. Welcome.

MR. JAHN:

Thank you.

MS. OLSEN-HARBICH:

There you go. Okay. So I don't have to hold anything. Thank you. Good afternoon and thank you all so much for having us today. It's sort of apropos that we're going to be talking about digital technology because we're just learning how to use the mikes here.

As I was introduced before, I'm Nancy Olsen-Harbich. I'm the Program Director for Family Health and Wellness for Cornell Cooperative Extension here in Suffolk County. And this is my colleague Tim Jahn, who is a Human Ecology Specialist in the Family Health and Wellness Program at Cornell Cooperative Extension.

I believe all of you received these red packets. Everybody's got their red packets? Okay. I just wanted to give you a little brief overview of Cornell Cooperative Extension and the work that we do, because I know some of you are newer Legislators; some of you heard this quite a bit. Our mission at Cornell Cooperative Extension is to use research-based information from the totality of the Land Grant University System across the United States, to work with Cornell University, which is our Land Grant here in New York, to bring research-based information down to the people of the County. Here in Suffolk County we have over a hundred staff members at Cornell Cooperative Extension. And we cover a wide variety of educational programs based on the research that we receive.

As our mission says, we work to strength families in communities, to protect and enhance the environment, to foster economic development and to promote sustainable agriculture. Many of you are probably more familiar with our agricultural and horticultural programs than anything else. And I always tell people that we know as much about growing good tomatoes as -- I'm sorry -- we know as much about growing good children as we do growing good tomatoes at Cooperative Extension; that the same kind of research is used to find out what are the methods, what are the advisements, what are the guidance that we can offer families in helping them raise really productive and well-educated and responsible children.

So let me just walk you through a little bit on the right-hand side of your packets so that you can get a sense of what we're really focused on in the Family Health and Wellness Program, part of Cornell Cooperative Extension.

If you open up the brochure that says Family Health and Wellness Program, you can see that we work in the areas of food and nutrition, obesity and chronic disease prevention and family wellbeing. We're taking all we know from good science about the best ways to help people grow to be healthy, productive citizens and helping the citizens of Suffolk County apply that information to their lives.

This past year we've had an exciting initiative in which we're using the internet. We are -- if you look at this little card here, we are -- have established a blog that's available on the internet that

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covers a wide range of topics for people who are living in families and looking for information on lots of topics in childcare and development, topics in health and healthy eating, topics in managing diseases like diabetes. We're getting lots and lots of hits on that website. We encourage you all as Legislators to share it with your constituents. If you have constituents who are interested in these topics, and we think they are, please ask them to tap into our website.

The next handout in there is a booklet that contains the programs that we're offering this year out in the community. You can see there is over a hundred programs -- not -- maybe not a hundred, but probably about 50 programs in here, again, on the topics such as building strong families, eating well and spending less, *Help, my kid is a teenager*, how to read the hidden messages in food labels; the kinds of information that we feel is useful to Suffolk County citizens as they are leading their lives and really enhances their ability to make good decisions about what they do in their family's homes and in raising their children.

I won't bore you with everything else that's in here because you can read it, but I did want to point out that the very last thing in here is a flier for a conference that we're sponsoring this fall, *What Makes Families Strong*. We have a commitment to not only working with residents of Suffolk County, but also to supporting the people who help them raise their children: Their children's teachers and childcare providers, public librarians, social workers, nurses, pediatricians. And so every year we try to -- every year we try to do a professional conference that focuses on sharing with professionals some good tools, resources and curriculums that they can use in their work with families. And we already have registration for this. That's coming up in October.

Our topic for today is really looking at how screens in the lives of families, both the screens that kids carry around in their pockets and the screens that they spend many, many hours watching every day; and their parents who bring their screens to the dinner table and bring their screens to the beach. I've just come off a week-long stay-cation where I spent a lot of time at Cupsogue State Park on the ocean. And I -- my husband says, you know, *you never read a book, you're just watching people*. Because I so enjoy watching children at the beach because they're away from screens and they're playing. And they're playing in the sands sometimes with almost nothing, paper cups and sticks. And I had the opportunity to watch a group of four-year-olds doing some sand castles. I really enjoyed that. For hours and hours they were just concentrating on doing stories around this castle and building it with next-to-nothing, really using their creativity. I also had the opportunity to watch a dad and his, maybe, nine-year-old daughter at the shoreline. And he was talking on his cellphone. And she was sort of splashing around. And a wave came in and he dropped his cellphone in the water. And he was upset. And his daughter grinned and she said, "daddy, now you can swim with me."

So we are not only concerned about the effect that these screens and time spent on screens and technology are having on children, we are very concerned about the effects they are having on family life, that parents can be so involved with their technology, they're not as available to play in the ocean with their kids.

So without further ado, I introduce you to Tim Jahn.

MR. JAHN:

This is the mike? Okay, very good.

Just a little bit of my background, I was trained as an English teacher actually, but I've always had an interest in media education. And when I started doing some media education through Cooperative Extension when I first started my career back in 1974, the issue was taming the tube, television. You know, and it has evolved from television to video games to music videos; and now, of course, the entire social media universe that's out there. The concern is both in terms of what parents and teachers, parents and educators can do, how they understand it, but also what's the effects on young people.

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So I want to give you just a little kind of snippet of some of the things that I talk about either in training professionals or doing some parent education.

First thing is, what is media? And media is simply any kind of communication. That includes words, sounds and images. And, of course, what's important about this is that media nowadays is image heavy; much more so than it was -- what we call old media, when it was more word heavy, more literature.

Couple definitions: Mass media is any kind of form of communication that reaches large amounts of people in a short amount of time. Old media is all that media that -- for somebody like me, I hate calling it old, or they call it traditional or legacy media, meaning it's getting to be obsolete, but that includes some of the things that I grew up with, all sorts of print media; that includes radio and broadcast, television and recorded music.

New media now, though, refers to -- basically some people refer to it as digital media. It's all the new media, a lot of social media. The difference, it's on demand, it's interactive. And the user is also the creator in lots of new media. Okay. And it's usually through some sort of a web-enabled mobile device. For a lot of people, that's the way they receive media nowadays. It doesn't mean that some -- on new media you can get some old media. You can -- for example, I have the Newsday app so I can read Newsday on my Smart Phone, my iPhone.

This is an interesting -- we use this in our training. And I'll just show you a little bit about that training. But anyway this is created by somebody -- mass media timeline. So his -- his thesis was that if you compress all of human history into one calendar year, this would be the history of mass media. So from the first of the year to the day after Christmas, there's nothing. There's no mass media. And then on December 27th you have the printing press and then December 28th -- so you have a lot of what we call print media. The last day of the year, December 31st at nine o'clock in the morning, that would be radio and film; at three o'clock in the afternoon it would be television; at 10:50 at night, we're getting close to midnight here, you would have CDs, VCRs; at 11:35, almost at the end of this year, you have the internet and the World Wide Web. And then one minute 'til whatever, because we don't know what's happening next, you have all of what has been occurring in terms of mobile devices, digital technology, social media, all those sorts of things; have really only happened in the -- essentially the last minute of the calendar year.

And the reason why I like using this sometimes to show people is that it's just shows the rate of this new media; the speed of it has been so accelerated that we really don't even know how to handle it. We don't know how to understand it yet. There's not even enough research to keep up with the technology that's been happening and its effects on people, our relationships and everything else.

So why do we worry about media screen time, whatever you might call it? Essentially I talk about four different kinds of worries. One is content, time, how it's affecting development and its effect on relationships.

So content concerns have always been there. And these are actually content concerns that were, you know, pulp magazines, comic books, certainly television, music videos, video games. You know, some of these concerns are violence in media; adult themes and behaviors; the language; the courses of language, the disrespect in language; drug and alcohol use; and other kinds of unhealthy behavior like smoking and unprotected sex; kind of a culture of nastiness; this idea of this crude humor; disturbing news images. And we've seen that even in the past week what's been happening around the world with some really disturbing upsetting news images for adults. So you can imagine if young kids, you know, young -- adults or children see some of these images. And then there's always been a concern about marketing and commercialism, especially towards children, especially food marketing is a big concern.

What does the research tell us about some of this? Well, one -- you know, in terms of aggressive

behavior, there is some evidence to show that, especially boys, especially at the start of the middle school years, if they're exposed to a lot of media violence, it results in aggressive behavior. Screen time, exposure screen time, having a television or a computer monitor in your room, your bedroom, interferes with sleep; correlated with attention problems. One of the big concerns in our organization, because of our nutrition problem and diabetes education program, we're concerned about the effects of screen time and sedentary activity on overweight and obesity; its effect on learning and reading. There's a pretty well substantiated research study that correlates the TV in the bedroom with at least one drop in grades when you correlate all the factors. So just having a television or a computer monitor in your bedroom as a school-age kid lowers your grades. And then now more recently, we're looking at patterns of family communication. There's some evidence that show that sometimes it improves. One of the things that they tell some parents to do with their teenagers is text, because that actually improves communication. But there is also some evidence to show that the more screens you have in a house, the more mobile devices and other sorts of technology you have, the less the family actually does face-to-face communication.

So other effects, George Gerbner at the Annenberg School, now deceased but he created -- he studied aggression and violence in media for a longtime. And he came up with this concept called the "mean world syndrome", that the more you watch stuff, you believe the world to be a more dangerous and hostile place than it actually is because of the levels of violence. Hyper-consumerism, a culture of disrespect, and more recently as some people who've studied media and do media education talk about this idea with young people especially more, fast, easy, fun. In other words if it's not more, fast, easy or fun, it's not worthwhile. And so that's -- a lot of the media they look at, this is the kind of stuff they're looking at rather than perhaps the more serious issues.

This chart I just found, this is from last year. It's actually the end of 2013. It's from the Nielsen Studies. America spends 11 hours a day with electronic media. The same -- kids do that, too. Teenagers, ages 12 to 17, also spend 11 hours a day. It's just that what they're spending it on is very different than what the adults -- American adults spend it on. You see that adults spend more time with TV than kids actually would, but the kids would spend more time on video games and more time on the Smart Phone and on social media sites than an adult -- an American adult might do. Eleven hours a day? You say how can they do that 11 hours a day? Well, the reason they do this is because sometimes these are on simultaneously these screens. So the person's watching a TV program, but they're also, you know, they got the laptop or their Smart Phone and they're checking their e-mail and doing other kinds of things as well.

I wanted to share this with you because you might wonder why I'm called the Human Ecology Specialist, is because we're affiliated with the Ecology, Human Ecology up at Cornell University. The Family Health and Wellness Program falls under Ecology, Human Ecology at Cornell. And they call it Ecology, Human Ecology because of Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, which basically says that the person in the middle, you can put a child there, you can put you in there, is affected by these multiple systems; the micro system being the most immediate like, for example, the family. There's some new theories, I just want to show you, that now are placing between the microsystem, which is the family and the neighborhood and the school, between that they're placing a techno subsystem. And what they're suggesting is that it might be, through this model, that in fact the -- all this technology is mediating, is translating all the relationships that kids are having with each other, with their relative families, with their immediate families, with their neighborhoods, with their teachers. And we don't know what that means for development.

We're also concerned about -- this in your packet, in the back there's this cartoon, which just appeared today, Bizarro Comics, it's in the newspapers around the country today. And we're concerned about what is technology, what are screens, what are they doing to relationships? And so here is the father putting a kid to bed and says, "okay, you're all hooked up to bedtimestory.com. If you need anything, I've got drinkawater.com and I had a bad dream.com bookmarked." And it may be heading towards something like that.

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On the internet, a lot of things -- I do a number of programs, *Parenting in Cyberspace*, I just scheduled one today at the Port Jeff Library on *Staying Safe in Cyberspace for kids -- for tweens and their parents*. And these are some of the concerns always -- because the Legislature, you know, has addressed cyberbullying in the past, passed legislation around cyberbullying. So has New York State. There are other internet risks. They'll probably be some new ones coming up because it just seems just as we get a handle on something like cyberbullying and sexting, something else appears. But one of the things I try to do is make parents aware. And when I'm also addressing youth that they need to treat the internet as they would face-to-face relationships. So you don't talk to strangers. All the things we used to tell kids in their neighborhoods applies to the internet neighborhood.

So here are some -- just some things that have been concerns. One of the things is that Instagram has become really popular and a lot of young people are instagraming behaviors that are actually illegal. So they're -- you know, they're underage and they're instagraming themselves drinking. And some of them are getting in trouble as a result not only with their parents but sometimes with law enforcement doing some of that; likewise drug use, tagging something, spray painting something, gang involvement. So there's a lot of concerned parents, adults have about what's on the internet and what are the risks to kids especially. Ninety-three percent of teens are on line; two thirds of them are on line all the time. Some of them are on line for, you know, four or five hours, social media during the course of a day.

What's interesting is that whenever they do these studies, it's always about a third of the teens reports, they don't know -- a third of them say they don't know some of the people that they're in contact with; that they friended, that they've, you know, that they've accepted into their social network. They don't know them. A lot of them they know because they know them in school and they know them from the neighborhood. But there's a number of them they don't know at all. And you can see this keeps growing. This keeps changing. This is actually a couple years old. And some of these websites are gone and have been replaced by new ones. But these are the most popular. And you may be on them as well. You know, just to show you the number of users, the one that's so surprising is YouTube, they have -- every month they have one billion new users that go onto YouTube to look at something. And Instagram is the fastest growing among young people. And Pinterest is the fastest growing social medium among women.

So there are four tools I just want to talk briefly about. One is for the families, what can families do regarding media, screens, technology, digital technology? And the first is media literacy, helping them understand about media. And I have this handout. I just made a copy, this handout for the slide. It's actually in your packet. I like this one. I've used this one for many years because it has on one side media literacy for the adults; and the other side what it means if you're trying to teach children about media literacy. And you'll find that on the left-hand side of your packet.

Number two, is I encourage even though they're not very adequate, you know, there's a lot of criticism of the rating systems, I encourage families and parents to use the rating systems. There are rating systems for television programs including broadcast and cable; there are motion picture ratings. The entertainment software, which is the video games, ESRB has ratings for all the video games. And it's actually distressing to me to see a parent in a store buying a video game rated M for a child who's actually you can tell they're 10 or 11 years of age. And it's just -- to me it's just not appropriate. And then the recording industry also has -- has rating systems. It's hard. Actually if you're a parent using a rating system, you're sort of swimming upstream here because a lot of parents don't recognize the PG 13, the R ratings or even some of the television ratings, you know, TV 14. And they let other children watch so there's peer pressure to watch -- expose the content that's really not appropriate.

Number three, parent, parental controls. I think parents have responsibility to set some rules about time and place. They should have rules about youth. And if their use is not appropriate, there should be consequences.

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And one thing that I like a lot is as kids get technology, as they get a laptop, an iPad, a Smart Phone, I like the idea of the parents sitting down and having an agreement either a cellphone contract or an inter-use contract that they would do with the kids and have the discussion take place. And there's a lot of these online that you can get and adapt to your family situation.

And then last thing is that some parents really need to use technological controls. I just used -- quick example, my son, when he first got his phone in high school, he kept texting during the day. So my wife went onto Verizon and discontinued -- he had no phone use during the time when he was in high school, during those hours. Because they weren't supposed to be using the phones at all and was there just for an emergency and he was using it to text.

And the last one is in addition to parental controls, there's parental guidance; being parents as teachers, having a media diet, trying to think about alternatives to watching screens all the time. Co-viewing is very important especially with younger children, younger school-age children, watching with kids to help them understand. What the adult sees and what the child sees is not the same. Ask a lot of questions. I mentioned encouraging alternative activities, spending time as a family together. And the biggest thing, which is true for just about anything, is to keep the lines of communication open to talk all the time. And especially for parents and other caregivers to be talking about their concerns. Okay.

So some of the programs that I do for parents and youth, and I can do them in your districts as well, *making family media savvy and safe, parenting in cyberspace, what adults need to know about cyberbullying*. *Mind Over Media* is a program I've done for youth audiences where we look at how media's constructed. *Internet safety*. I don't have too much call for this anyway, *Taming the Tube*. It seems not to be -- the television is still the biggest form of media in most homes, and especially with children. But everybody seems to be on the internet and social media and digital media.

And then we've done some professional training. In your packet on the left-hand side, there was a training we did last fall called *The Digital Dilemma*. And you can see some of the topics that we've covered in that. We've also had media training in -- for a number of years we had some funding from Verizon to do a literacy -- family literacy, Emergent Literacy Institute and talked about the role -- the proper role of screen media in families.

So I know it was a lot of content. That's why I gave you the slides, too, so you have them for reference. And, again, thank you for this time to share one of these programs that we do with you. And my contact information's here. And if you want to e-mail me, if you think that this would be something that you'd really like to see in a library in your district or you know a group or a group of parents in particular or kids that could use some of this kind of information, I'd be glad to do that for them.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Thank you. And I love Suffolk County Cornell Cooperative Extension. I started back in high school so I know it's a great program. I started with my veterinary -- pre-vet back 20 years ago, I guess. But I know the great stuff that you do. And I know we're also having Cornell coming into the Brentwood Library to teach our grandparents who are also becoming parents for the second time around. So I appreciate you coming out.

Do we have any questions from the Legislators? Okay.

MR. JAHN:

Thanks again. Thank you for your time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Thank you.

PUBLIC PORTION

All right, just to backtrack on the agenda, we're now going to go into the Public Portion. We do have one card, Cynthia Amato. Hi, Cynthia.

MS. AMATO:

Now it's on. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Cynthia Amato, formerly Cynthia Monthie. Some of you may know me as Cynthia Monthie. I work with EOC. I'm the Director of Youth and Adolescents Services with EOC but I also sit as the Chair of the Teen Pregnancy Advisory Board with Dr. Spencer, Legislator Spencer. And I just wanted to speak on behalf of the Board and just thank you for reviewing our new resolution, our revisions to our resolution and to take a look at those objectives that we do have. And just so you know that we are committed to that -- those objectives to carry them out in the coming year. And we are working very closely with Dr. Spencer to do those things. So, if you do have any questions regarding those changes to the resolution, you can certainly let me know and we'll be willing to explain them to you as we go along.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Thank you.

MS. AMATO:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Anybody else in the public who would like to come forward? No? Okay. We're going to continue with the agenda and Tabled Resolutions.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS.

Resolution 1504, **declaring December 19th as "Richard Rees" Specht Day of Kindness in Suffolk County (Leg. Muratore)** Motion to approve.

LEG. BROWNING:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Second by Legislator Browning. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

1708, To appoint member of Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council Representing Legislative District No. 3 (Jason Neal). (Co. Exec.) Motion to approve.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. Jason is not here. He was supposed to be here. I don't know where the confusion was but I would appreciate it if we could just go ahead and approve him. Would anyone object to that?

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Not at all. So second by Legislator Browning. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

Resolution **1709, To appoint member of Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council Representing Legislative District No. 7 Shawn Hirst, (Co. Exec.)** Is Shawn here? There she is. Motion to approve.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Second by Legislator McCaffrey. All motion? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

1728, To strengthen the Teen Pregnancy Advisory Board. (Leg. Spencer) Motion to approve; second by Legislator Browning. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

And **Resolution 1744, To appoint member of Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council Representing Legislative District No. 15 Sheila Ann Johnson. (Co. Exec.)** Are you here? She's here. Motion to approve.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Second by Legislator McCaffrey. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

That concludes our meeting. Oh, sorry. Just quickly, we do have the Commissioner of DSS here today with us. Commissioner, is there anything that you would like to share with us right now in terms of the Department? And I know that Legislator Browning had a couple of questions for you.

COMMISSIONER O'NEILL:

Sure.

LEG. BROWNING:

I believe -- I know you weren't able to come to the last meeting when the Welfare to Work Commission was here, and -- you know, I know they gave a presentation and I thought we should give you an opportunity to respond. I don't know if you want to do it today or pick another day to do that.

COMMISSIONER O'NEILL:

I can be brief about that. And I can follow up in more detail in the form of a memo. But first let me just say that I'm a big believer in education. I'm a big believer that we can solve a lot of issues that we have today in the world through education. But as far as universal pre-K goes, it's not a DSS specific issue. Universal pre-K is supposed to be for all children, not just children on temporary assistance. And a few of the items in the report, specifically there was a reference to childcare, those folks that are receiving childcare, if they lose their subsidy due to them finding a job, there is an extension of a year. They don't just lose it immediately. The rationale for that is that we want to give -- to help that individual sustain their job. This way they don't end up back on temporary assistance.

And then just around universal pre-K, again, that's an issue best addressed by New York State. In the last week or two they've actually come out and provided some funding for some local districts here on Long Island. And obviously the lion's share of the money from the State did go to New York City for their UPK program. So I think it's -- DSS is not the expert when it comes to universal pre-K. So I just want to put that out there. But, again, we were happy to meet with the -- with the Work Commission. And we participated on a -- you know, quite a number of hours on the report.

LEG. BROWNING:

One more question, because I know that they did bring up an issue with a mother who was receiving child care assistance and then had to pay back some money. I know we don't want to go into the details and the personal information on that individual, but can you make any comment on that?

COMMISSIONER O'NEILL:

Yeah. There's a -- there's a payment involved that's usually due to Social Services Regulations. There's a variety of reasons what it could be. But, you know, doesn't -- it could be a fraud issue; it could be an income issue, so to speak and, therefore, they would have a contributing percentage, a small percentage that they had would have to pay. That's normal in any kind of subsidized daycare arrangement depending on their income.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. So basically she was getting paid more than what she should have been.

COMMISSIONER O'NEILL:

Correct. And in that specific instance if -- using that as an example, by Social Services Regulations, the client would be -- would have to pay that money back if she received more in subsidy than she was entitled to.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Thank you. Anything else that you'd like to share with us today?

COMMISSIONER O'NEILL:

Sure. I just -- on Friday we had the Standup for the Homeless Event. We served about 850 persons, which is almost double than we have in the past. So in one way it's bittersweet. We had hoped that we wouldn't have to have any program like that, but we were able to serve all those that came. You know, some of the highlights were that we, you know, gave backpacks to children filled with, you know, necessary essentials: Pens, pencils, you know, rulers, whatever the case may be, so that they could start the -- off the school year right. As I mentioned, I'm a big advocate for education. So anything we can do to make a child's life better, easier when they go back to school for the year, we're willing to do that.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Thank you. Yes, I did go. And it was a very successful event. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER O'NEILL:

You're welcome. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON MARTINEZ:

Any other questions? Okay this meeting's adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 2:38 PM
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