

**STEBEN COUNTY NATURAL GAS TASK FORCE HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Monday, September 27, 2010**

**1:30 PM**

**Steuben County Office Building  
Legislative Committee Conference Room  
Bath, New York**

**MINUTES**

Committee: Kathryn A. Muller, Chair  
Robert Anderson, Ph.D.  
Judy Celelli  
Dawn Dowdle  
Jeff Eaton  
Marvin Rethmel  
Lisa Baker

Other: Amy Dlugos, Steering Committee Member  
Len McConnell

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Muller at 1:30 p.m.

**II. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS**

**III. GENERAL BUSINESS**

A. Statistics – Ms. Muller had asked Ms. Baker to present information and data on housing issues the Department of Social Services is currently facing in Steuben County.

Ms. Baker presented the committee with statistics to include the number of homeless and those presenting with evictions or other housing needs (ie rental assistance). There was an average of 128 people per month in 2009 that presented with a housing issue. From the time period of January to August 2010 there was a monthly average of 131 people per month. This reflects an average of 20 to 25 people per day presenting with emergencies. These numbers reflect just the numbers in the Temporary Assistance Units. There are additional individuals served by the BILT Unit as well.

Ms. Celelli stated that the Tri County Housing Council has a waiting list of over 700 families in Steuben County for Section 8 Rental Assistance. They closed the waiting list March 31, 2010. They can serve 537 families per month, but are only 93% occupied right now because the families that have vouchers that they can assist can't find units that are affordable.

Mr. Eaton stated that Arbor Development serves 150 to 175 people in group homes for housing related issues on any given day in Steuben County. This includes people who have mental health as well as substance abuse issues. The waiting lists are getting larger because the Section 8 vouchers are closed which causes people who complete their programs to stay longer. Appropriate housing is an issue as well. They are also finding that Pennsylvania residents are flowing to New York for housing. Prices are increasing and affordable housing is harder to find.

Mr. Eaton stated that Arbor Development is submitting two proposals for the creation of two income based housing units. One would be located in Horseheads and the other in Gang Mills. They have site controlled a piece of land in Horseheads to do a 64 unit affordable housing/worker housing development that they are working on for submission in February. They are close to a site control on a piece of land in Gang Mills that they are looking at a 36 unit project that they will submit as part of a tax credit project for funding by the Division of Housing and Community Renewal. That market is drying up as well. This last funding round that was submitted in February that was just announced a few weeks ago, they

only funded 29 tax credit applications and years past they were funding high 30's and 40's. This would be income-based housing and based on up to 90% of income depending on the project.

B. General Discussion – Mrs. Dlugos stated that both she and Mr. Rethmel are seeing and hearing locally about the expansion of trailer parks. Mrs. Dlugos just learned today about a new trailer park that is being proposed to house only gas field employees. They have discussed how to encourage the industry to provide housing and at the same time make sure it is safe and not a detriment to the community that they are in. That would take some of the pressure off the housing that we have available.

Mr. Rethmel has been approached by a firm out of Rochester to put mobile homes in Addison because there are no zoning laws. They are going to target all the municipalities that have no zoning. Discussion followed on zoning laws and building codes. The Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations Law was distributed to the committee for review.

Ms. Muller asked if we knew what the demand was going to be for the industry. Mrs. Dlugos stated it is difficult to get specific numbers. She stated we can look at Wyoming and Oklahoma and try to see what they have. We are unsure of the housing that will be needed and where the industry is heading in New York. We are already seeing the employees using our housing and hotels. Mrs. Dlugos stated that the drillers aren't going to be looking for deluxe accommodations, they would be taking up more of our substandard or dormitory type housing. These sites would need to have water and sewer existing. Mr. Eaton said that in some areas such as Bradford County they are bringing in movable trailer units that hook together. They stay right on the site. Then when they are done at that sight they load up the units and take them to the next site.

Ms. Muller asked for clarification regarding the moratorium in effect. Mrs. Dlugos stated the moratorium is in effect until May 2011. She believes that once the environmental review process is complete we may see immediate drilling. There are permits ready to go. We may see this in 2011. We are already seeing an increase in trucking in the county from this. Dr. Anderson asked if it is anticipated that they will remove the moratorium? Is there any chance that New York will not approve it? Mrs. Dlugos stated that there has been some anticipation in the state budget that this will pass. In addition, the Obama Administration is directing to make this happen, as we need to increase our domestic energy supply.

Mrs. Dlugos stated the drilling companies reserve rooms at hotels. This will prevent availability of rooms for our emergency needs. Is there a way to reserve rooms for our emergency needs? The problem is that the drilling companies are paying very high rates and it will be very difficult to compete.

C. Next Steps – Ms. Muller asked that we compile a list of what the next steps should be. The committee agreed that the following list be something that we use as we go forward.

- a. Create a list of private developers and speak to them regarding housing.
- b. Advocate with politicians or political groups that may already have an interest in housing. Focus on funding opportunities that agencies such as Arbor could apply for to develop housing timely to meet the needs.
- c. Look at vacant facilities across Steuben County. Evaluate potential of vacant facilities for housing development projects.

D. Designation of Vice Chair – Dr. Anderson nominated Jeff Eaton to Vice Chair the Committee. Jeff Eaton accepted.

E. Upcoming Speaker – A Geologist from the USGS will be speaking at the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee. Please contact Amanda Chapman in the Clerk of the Legislature's office if you are interested in attending so your seat can be reserved.

F. Other – Ms. Muller asked the committee to let her know if there are other community agencies, organizations, individuals that would be a resource to the group for future meetings/membership.

**IV. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting will be held on October 25, 2010 at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Donna Evingham  
Confidential Secretary  
Department of Social Services