

## Commissioner's Meeting Notes March 12, 2026 – Virtual

Meeting began at 9:15, opening remarks by President Leonard Townes and Executive Director Paul Brady.

### **Legislative Update**

- Cross-Systems Proposal; A.7603 (Hevesi) / S.7978 (Brouk)
- Foster Care Agency Liability Insurance; A.9646 (Hevesi) / S.9113 (Bailey)
- Legal Guardianship; S.9205 (Jackson) / A.10400 (Simon)
- Renames the block grant for child care to the early childhood fund and requires OCFS to administer such fund; A.10494 (Clark), No Same-As in Senate
- Budget Update

### **Report from Board of Directors Retreat**

- We are working on creating a Strategic Communications Plan, and templates for association communications to guide NYPWA messaging.
- The Board of Directors introduced themselves to all members, encouraging them to reach out with questions, and there is no such thing as a dumb question. Likely, another Commissioner has dealt with your problem before.

### **Housing, Temporary Assistance, SNAP & Medicaid**

#### Hotel/Motel Proposed Regulations

- The public comment period has almost closed, so if you are submitting feedback, we suggest it is sent out immediately. NYPWA and many counties have submitted feedback.
- Our major issues with the proposed regulations were the medical assessments and the inspections.
- NYPWA feedback is that OTDA has underestimated what kind of time and resources the medical assessments would take. Additionally, DSS staff are not licensed or trained to diagnose diseases nor perform medical assessments.
- Districts must submit a district hotel/motel service plan approved by OTDA.
  - NYPWA feedback is that some counties do not have a network of hotels and use another county to supplement. OTDA is planning to inspect the hotels and approve the service plans. Duplicative work is being done, where one county's hotel/motel service plan should suffice for all agencies that use a given hotel.

#### ABAWD Actions and Notifications

- County DSS have been preparing for this deadline.
- There has been considerable communication with clients. Client response has been low.
- Career Centers, or Job Recruitment offices in county DSS should be utilized to aid in these new regulations.
- The response rate of clients is low (to be expected), and we hope that after some time passes, people will start to comply.
- Several Native American tribal groups submitted waivers to the Federal government for a delay on work requirements and they got their waivers accepted.

#### HUD NOFO Comment Period

- Duration of authorization for housing, and a work requirements are going to be added for housing. NYPWA is opposed to this. People could lose their HUD housing, and they will certainly end up in our DSS offices. Comment period closes May 1.

#### Code Blue Program Ask

- Our OTDA work group was not particularly helpful.
- Proposal to move to a seasonal model, not a temperature model.
- Also, there is a potential change in criminal procedure law so that assaults on Warming Center and Shelter staff be considered felonies as they are with healthcare providers.

#### Outreach on RSP/SAEF

- Increase of \$200 million for housing access voucher program, for a total of \$250 million
- Shelter Arrears Eviction Foreclosure (SAEF) \$20,000,000
- CMS sent a letter to NYS and DOH, Re: Medicaid Investigation by the Federal Government. Specifically, many home care programs are the target.
- State DOH told NYC that they are going to delink the Medicaid application in 2027 and make it a standalone.

#### Services

##### Meeting with COFCCA

- Foster Care Liability Insurers are pulling out of states (California and Pennsylvania currently). We discussed the legislative action above; A.9646 (Hevesi) / S.9113 (Bailey)

##### COFCCA/NYPWA Meeting with OCFS Re: Cross Systems Kids

- NYPWA is going to send out a survey on Out of State Placements in relation to this issue. We are trying to gather this information by survey to guide discussions on the way forward.
- Commissioners commented that school districts need to be included in this discussion as well.
- We also are trying to determine how many kids are “kicked out” to DSS, without any substantial search for placement.

##### Childcare and Child Care Pilots

- There is significantly more funding for childcare in this year’s state budget.
- State is slowly moving towards Universal Childcare, and this investment is a sign of that.
- NYPWA is reiterating to the State that our DSS need to know per county funding as soon as possible.
- Melissa Manno (a Times Union reporter) has contacted about a dozen counties in reference to daycare funding. NYPWA will contact her and share our white paper.

#### Local District Support Issues

##### Summer Conference Theme: “Thriving in Turbulent Times”

- RFP almost completed, as well as Commissioner Hotel links. More materials are being distributed this week. Vendors are already being lined up, so do not delay developing local presentations.

#### State Agency Convening (May 12-14)

- State Agencies are currently creating agendas and soliciting questions.
- Being held once again at the Fort William Henry Hotel in Lake George.

#### Fiscal Administrators Training

- State is open to regional training, but they said that they would not be ready until the fall.
- Some Commissioners are reaching out to retired fiscal staff to come back in and train new staff, and this has worked on a limited basis.
- NYPWA is also considering a contractual agreement with someone who could do this as a NYPWA employee, who could then be dispatched to districts train to train fiscal staff.

#### EXPRESS New York

- Governor's Office is seeking ways to streamline state operations.
- NYPWA is going to submit feedback in relation to housing, cross-systems kids, an onerous increase in audits, and childcare. We are encouraging Commissioners to send in their thoughts.

#### 2026 Meeting Schedule

- In an effort to provide in-person participation to various parts of the state, we are moving several monthly meetings this year.
- April meeting will be held as normal at the Albany Marriott.
- June meeting will be held in Onondaga County (Syracuse)
- September meeting will be in Westchester County.

Meeting concluded at 12pm