

Minutes
Charter Review Commission
Human Services, Education, Recreation and Culture Committee
March 6, 2006

Attendance: Commissioners, Donna E. Rice, Ronald Smith, Joan Lillis and George Arthur.
Commission Analyst Hank Bromley
Mr. Phil Endress, Commissioner of the department of Mental Health

The meeting of the Committee was called to order at 8:05 AM

Commissioner Rice welcomed Commissioner Endress. Mr. Endress took some time to explain the function of the department of Mental Health, its authority, and jurisdiction. The department oversees the work locally of four state offices – Office of Mental Health, Office of Alcohol & Chemical Dependency, and Office of the Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled (OMRDD). The department is primarily funded by Medicaid. He contracts with 45 different outside agencies for services. NYS requires Erie County to have a Dept of Mental Health in order to receive \$45 million in state aid. There is very little funding coming from Erie County.

The Department of Mental Health is proposed in the Blueprint for Change to become a lead agency for Child and Family Service. Mr. Endress supports the Blueprint but does have some concerns over the loss of identity of his department.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ronald P. Smith, Commissioner