

MINUTES
SAUK COUNTY BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES

Meeting: August 14, 2023, 4 p.m., County Board Room 326A, West Square Building, Baraboo, WI

Chair, Patricia Rego called the meeting to order and certified compliance with the Open Meeting Law at 4 p.m.

PRESENT: Patricia Rego, James Bowers, Joan Fordham, Cliff Thompson, Delmar Scanlon, Jake Roxen, Valerie McAuliffe; BY ZOOM: Joel Chrisler; EXCUSED: None; ABSENT: None.

Others Present: Jessica Mijal, Stephanie Box, Lori Dee

Motion by Valerie McAuliffe, seconded by Jake Roxen, to adopt agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by James Bowers, seconded by Delmar Scanlon, to approve the minutes for the previous Human Services Board meeting held on July 10, 2023. Motion carried.

Public Comment:

None

Communications/Director's Report:

- a. Board Materials: Distributed electronically. Jessica Mijal stated she met with McGrath regarding the wage study and a subsequent meeting to go over the proposed wage scales and Human Services positions. Jessica felt it was good dialogue, McGrath came in prepared, and understood Human Services. Department Heads will preview McGrath's final recommendations on August 16, 2023.

Jessica indicated budget meetings were held in July with each individual unit and then had a budget meeting with Brent Miller today; same conversation as the past few years, how to do more with the same or less and had some good dialogue.

Tomorrow the Capital Consortia will be on site, meeting with Jessica Mijal, Jeana Neumaier, and Economic Support staff.

On Thursday, Jessica will be meeting with other counties to discuss creating more diversion opportunities for community members with dementia. Hope is to create a respite facility for individuals with dementia. There is one currently in existence elsewhere in the State that has had some success and looking to build upon that. Funding for that is going to be a big question mark.

Jessica indicated there is a shortage of foster homes across the County/State/United States. If you know of anyone who is interested in fostering, have them reach out. This has been a unique summer with a high number of placements. Summer is usually not our busy time.

Business Items:

- a. Discussion and Action to Approve Monthly Vouchers: Distributed electronically. Stephanie Box reviewed the Monthly Voucher Report. Motion by Joan Fordham, seconded by Delmar Scanlon, to approve monthly vouchers for \$2,569,513.65. Motion carried.
- b. Accounts Receivable Report: Distributed electronically. Stephanie Box reviewed the Accounts Receivable Report for June 2023. Have sent 53 accounts to Credit Management for \$118,610.09 and 51 accounts to State Debt Collections for \$63,484.10. Revenues received to date from: Credit Management \$3,682.49; State Debt Collections \$13,313.68, and TRIP \$19,047.57. No hardships have been authorized to date.
- c. Discussion and Action to Approve Collection Requests: Motion by James Bowers, seconded by Valerie McAuliffe, to approve collection requests of sending 3 accounts for \$1,340.25 to State Debt Collections and 1 account for \$542.80 to Credit Management Control. Motion carried.

- d. Monthly Reports: Distributed electronically. Stephanie Box reviewed the June 2023 Volatile Line report. Stephanie reported out-of-home placements and foster care placements are projected to be over budget. We had a new group home placement this year but have not had any in a couple of years. Year-end variance is projecting to be unfavorable.

Department Updates:

- a. Discuss Contracting Chapter 51 After-Hours Crisis Services: Jessica Mijal requested discussion and feedback. Jessica discussed crisis services and gave some history. We have always done Crisis services during the day in-house. We long had a contract with Innervisions Counseling who provided our after-hours 51 crisis on-call for evenings/weekends/holidays. That contract was terminated due to quality concerns. The goal at the time was to find another entity; could not find anyone locally who had interest in doing that. Northwest Connections was an option but Dan Brattset, Director, and Sharon Boesl, Deputy Director, wanted to keep it local to provide crisis services. As a result, we brought crisis services in house. We pulled qualified staff from the child protection/welfare pool and put them into the 51 pool.

Northwest Connections triages the calls and sends them on to the after-hours crisis worker. We currently pay Northwest Connections \$8,500 per month to answer phones and to send most of those phone calls out to our crisis staff to respond. Jessica Baldauf, Outpatient Manager, Heidi Schultz, Crisis Supervisor, and Jessica Mijal meet with Northwest Connections to talk about what it would look like to go forward with a bigger contract with them. We would continue to do crisis in-house during the day and instead of County staff doing crisis after hours, we would utilize Northwest Connections to provide that service. They would hire locally and have a requirement that their crisis workers have to live within 30 minutes of where they would need to respond to, so the hires would be local. Northwest would oversee the supervision and provide the training for those staff. Jessica stated financially, the switch may be a wash. The \$8,500 is also what other counties are paying. For the other counties, the monthly fee includes answering the phone and doing an assessment. Right now we are paying staff to do the assessments. Jessica is also looking at productivity indicating sessions are being cancelled as staff are too tired after their crisis shift to see clients the next day; that's time we are not able to bill for services in the clinic. There is concern about staff morale – some like after hours crisis, others do not. Jessica feels there are retention issues and difficulty in hiring. There are things to sort through before moving forward.

The child welfare crisis system will continue as is; statutorily needs to be done by County staff. We still have issues of employee morale and retention, but not much can do from a Statute standpoint. There may be some other things we can do and will be having a conversation with Jenna Greenwood and Lori Follendorf.

Patricia Rego commented about contracting out employees and services and evaluating the quality of the services. Jessica stated this is what Northwest Connections does and crisis services is what they provide. Northwest would continue to participate in quarterly stakeholder meetings, they would have more of a lead in that.

Jessica indicated Northwest Connections does not have concerns about hiring in this area. Jessica asked Human Resources and Corporation Counsel's office if it would be allowable should any staff currently doing on-call would want to continue and whether Northwest could hire them into that role and was told that would be allowed.

James Bowers discussed his conversation with Sue at St. Vincent de Paul in Baraboo. When Sue encounters people who are homeless, she refers them to Human Services and Bill Harris' program for job training. James indicated he told Sue to refer them to Community Action who has the umbrella over the homeless situation in the area including the homeless shelter and alternative housing. Discussed how those calls that come into Human Services are handled.

Patricia Rego asked about other options, keep doing what we are doing. Jessica indicated she does not feel there is an entity that would be able to manage this. This is Northwest Connections' business and is familiar with how to operate. Joan Fordham expressed concern for quality of services for consumers and financial impact. Patricia expressed retention and recruitment of staff. Jessica Mijal indicated if we go in this direction with Northwest Connections, there will be some growing pains. The Crisis Supervisor will still have daytime crisis staff to manage along with the contract management.

- b. Discuss Committee on Consolidation of Committees: Patricia Rego reported the committee on consolidation of committees met last month. This committee is made up of all the chairs of the oversight committees. Patricia reported groupings are going to possibly be recommended and is ultimately the County Board's decision. The breakdown under the help entity is looking at Human Services being grouped with Public Health and ADRC grouped with Board of Trustees. Patricia indicated they discussed the number of supervisors on committees may be large. Patricia indicated things are still being ironed out and the next meeting is next Tuesday at 5:00 in Room 213 and all are welcome to attend to ask questions and express any concerns. Patricia indicated the first information was that the new oversight committees would do policy making only but indicated approving the vouchers is also important. Keep this on the agenda for next month.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Sauk County Human Services Board will be September 11, 2023, at 4 p.m. in the County Board Room 326A. Joan Fordham stated one of the list of priorities for the County Board next year is to discuss closing the Health Care Center. She requested to start doing research of what additional costs if any would be incurred by Human Services if the Health Care Center is closed and be a future agenda item.

Motion by Valerie McAuliffe, seconded by Cliff Thompson, to adjourn at 5:03 p.m. Motion carried.

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