

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: Thursday, June 24, 2010

LOCATION: Oshkosh Human Service Building, Room 33

TIME: 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jerry Finch, Jef Hall, Jim Koziczkowski, Ron Kuehl, Donna Lohry, Mike Norton, Rob Paterson, and Harvey Rengstorf

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Tom Widener

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Topel, Ken Stoffel, Leo Podoski, Ellen Shute, Tom Saari, Mary Krueger, Ann Kriegel, Gina Vanden Branden, and Dorothy De Grace

Jim Koziczkowski, Chair of the Department of Human Services Board, opened the hearing at 8:30 a.m. by welcoming those present in the audience and introducing the Board members and staff who were present. Jim explained that the intent of the public hearing is to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on programs funded by the Department of Human Services for residents of Winnebago County who are affected by developmental disabilities, chemical dependency or mental illness, and on the financial and social service programs available through the Department. Jim reviewed the guidelines for the hearing.

The following information is testimony given:

Testimony given by Jean Krings: Jean represents the Hope & Care Drop-In Center in downtown Oshkosh. She thanked the Board for supporting the non-profit center again last year. It helped keep the door open to the chronically mentally ill who frequent the center. She hopes the Board will keep them in their 2011 Budget. Since the size of their building is not adequate to serve more people, she hopes the county considers the possibility of having the Drop-In Center move into one of their buildings with them. She said they are thankful for what the Board does for them.

Testimony given by Lea Kitz: Lea is the director of ARC of Winnebago County. She said people with disabilities have barriers that they deal with in many areas of their lives. The ARC interacts with Human Services in many of the services that are provided. In Child Protective Services, she encouraged Human Services to consider opening a program adapted from a Positive Parenting program in Brown County, especially for parents with cognitive disabilities. Lea said the ARC appreciates the cooperation they've had with the employees of Human Services in providing assistance with informational sessions to individuals who would be affected by the Long Term Care reform. She would like to see the Board set a formal commitment to continue supporting the individuals that don't qualify for Family Care. She would like to see the ADRC area have a more open welcoming atmosphere. She'd like the ADRC to be sure there is help beyond what is required and funded for transitioning youth out of high school and preparing for adulthood.

Lea said she encourages the Board to come up with a different Budget document that is easier for the public to use; although the current Budget book is nicely laid out. Lea gave kudos to Behavioral Health's Crisis Intervention Team and its diversion program. She said it works because of the good working relationship that Human Services has with ARC and the local law enforcement and medical centers. Lea said they are appreciative that Behavioral Health will start offering walk-in services.

Testimony given by Terri Stern: Terri is the director of the Winnebago County Nutrition Program. She said they receive their primary funding from the Older American's Act that flow through the Department of Human Services. They also receive funding directly from Winnebago County. They hope to provide about 112,000 meals to the elderly and disabled throughout Winnebago County for 2011 because of our support. The meals are available on a donation basis to the participants. There are 11 group dining sites throughout the county and 10 individual home-delivered meal routes. The results of a survey every year shows that 90% of the participants that respond feel their chronic health problems are better controlled because they are receiving the meals; they see an opportunity for socialization; and they feel it helps them to remain independent longer and avoid premature and costly institutionalization. Terri said they look to the county to help as much as they can to offset some of the rising costs. A complicating concern of their 2011 budget is that they were a significant provider of meals for clients through the COP program over the past years, and they don't know if Lakeland Care District will contract with them for those individuals that will now be with Lakeland. The issue is if Lakeland Care District will be willing to cover the at-cost expenses to provide the meals. Terri said any funding they receive supports the entire program, including infrastructure costs. She said the county has been very diligent in trying to help resolve some of the financial issues so they can continue to provide good quality service to as many elderly and disabled individuals as possible. She thanked the Board for its continued support.

With no further testimonies offered, the hearing was adjourned at 9:30 a.m. Jim Koziczowski thanked those who attended the hearing.

Submitted by:

Dorothy De Grace, Secretary

Winnebago County Department of Human Services