

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: Thursday, June 25, 2009

LOCATION: Neenah Human Service Building, Room 008

TIME: 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Griesbach, Jef Hall, Jim Koziczowski, Ron Kuehl, Donna Lohry, Mike Norton, Rob Paterson, Harvey Rengstorf, and Tom Widener

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

Tom Widener, Vice-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. Tom 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. Tom reviewed the guidelines for the hearing.

The following information is testimony given:

Testimony given by Lynnae Sievert: Lynnae represents Cerebral Palsy of Mideast Wisconsin. On behalf of consumers and families, she thanked the Board for its support in allowing their agency to assist individuals to live independently in the community and provide respite care to the families. With the support of the Board their consumers are also able to use the toy lending library and have access to equipment through the loan closet. They are also able to send consumers to Camp Sandy Wheels, as well as provide other family supports.

Testimony given by Lori Hill: Lori is the executive director of Friendship Place, a non-profit drop in center in Neenah for the chronically mentally ill. She thanked Winnebago County for its past support, and she asked that they please consider continuing to support them.

Testimony given by Christopher Strong: Chris is the director of transportation for the city of Oshkosh and the manager of the Oshkosh Transit System. He thanked the Board for its ongoing support of transportation programs to the elderly and disabled in Winnebago County. The participation of all of the funding partners is vital in keeping transportation options affordable and available. Chris said their request for increased funding from the County for 2010 is based in large part on the growth of the elderly population. He thanked the Board for its consideration of his request.

Testimony given by Lea Kitz: Lea is the director of ARC of Winnebago County. She said that as we move into Family Care she has a concern about services that will be lost for our families; the lack of an independent appeals process; and the small size of the board. She hopes that in the Human Services budget for next year the Board plans the real possibility that there will be a number of people the County currently supports who will not qualify for Family Care, and she hopes that we continue to support them. Lea encouraged the Board to look at the budget information and try to tie numbers to the program, such as how many people are being served. She expressed that the Human Services Board has worked very hard and has done a good job in serving the people of Winnebago County, and she appreciates that.

Testimony given by Tammy DeBruin: Tammy said she enjoys visiting Friendship Place because it is just like family. She hopes the Board keeps supporting it.

Testimony given by Terri Stern: Terri is the director of the Winnebago County Nutrition Program, which provides meals for group meals sites and home-delivered meals to homebound low income elderly and disabled adults. She said the program primarily receives its funding through Winnebago County. She said they will serve about 130,000 meals this year, which will be 5,000 more than last year. Meals are offered on a donation basis, but because of the economic crisis the donations have decreased about 8%. This money is built into their budget as revenue to operate the program. Terri said the Nutrition Program is a basic needs service, which enables many elderly and disabled residents to maintain or improve their nutritional intake of healthy food; helps them to improve their health or to better control certain chronic health conditions; and allows them to remain living independently in their own homes. The program provides a daily safety check for the recipients of home-delivered meals and provides a social outlet at the congregate meal sites. Terri thanked the County and staff for the wonderful support that they have given the Nutrition Program over the years. Advocap is confident that the Board will give due consideration of their request for full funding for 2010. Terri said the County can be proud of the commitment and support it has made to its elderly and disabled residents through such services as the Nutrition Program whose goal is to enhance the health, functioning and quality of life of the elderly and disabled population in Winnebago County.

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