

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY
AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC) COMMITTEE**

MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: Monday, September 12, 2022

TIME OF MEETING: 3:00 p.m.

PLACE OF MEETING: VIRTUAL

Members Present: Paul F Janty, Kate Pfaendtner, Michael Norton, Rob Paterson, Elizabeth Jones, Harold Singstock, Jan Olson, Tamar Mathwig

Members Excused:

Fritz Rudy and Michael Robinson

Staff Present: Beth Roberts, Nicole Davis-Dawald, Brian Nagler, Alana Erickson

Paul Janty called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

1. **Public Comments** – no public comments.
2. **Approval of August 8, 2022 minutes** – **Kate Pfaendtner** made a motion to approve the September meeting notes, motion seconded by **Mike Norton**, followed by approval of all committee members in attendance. **Rob Paterson** commented about a name misspelling within the minutes and asked what the acronym ERN stands for. **Beth Robert** said Employer Resource Network is a national company that works with employers such as schools to help support employees. Rob also asked if Beth had any additional information regarding the fall kits which had been purchased by the Finding Balance Together Coalition. Beth reported that most of the fall kits had been handed out at the open house. A few are still available from Public Health. The Ladies Benevolent Society had awarded a \$1300 grant specifically for purchasing the kits. Minutes were approved as read.
3. **Caregiver Shortage – All** – **Beth Roberts** reminded members that the Committee had identified the caregiver shortage as a focal point to look at what impact the Committee could have on the caregiver shortage. Past discussion included how to engage refugees or people from other counties to consider entering into that field, utilization of ERN for staff retention, and talking as a group about ideas which could impact the caregiver shortage.

Paul Janty questioned how many employees working through Lakeland and similar providers have union representation and whether a formal working contract with union representation would attract employees. Beth replied that since the abolishment of unions under the Walker administration, she believed none of the employees are unionized. A comparison of employee numbers from when unions existed to current could be done; however, it would be difficult to correlate the decline in caregivers to being caused by loss of union representation. Beth stated that according to surveys, the decline is being caused by factors such as low pay, undesirable working hours, and sporadic shifts.

Nicole Davis Dawald stated they have tried to give employees the hours they had requested; however, this did little to help the situation. Nicole had heard that a lot of young people entering the workforce prefer jobs that are easy and provide fast results; whereas caregiving is neither of these. In addition, caregiving professions are not given much credit nor receive immediate gratification.

Brian Nagler stated that caregiving is difficult work and not just about the wages; it comes from the heart. Other employers offer very competitive wages and benefits for work which is not as difficult and has more desirable working hours; so, many employees are choosing to take on other careers.

Harold Singstock stated that he believes another reason for worker shortages is that the government has been giving out too much money to people during the pandemic which has lowered the incentive to work. Committee members also discussed how 9/11 along with the pandemic has contributed to the thought that life is short so exciting opportunities should be explored.

Kate Pfaendtner asked if there are actual numbers to back up the issue and stated it might be helpful to poll agencies on how many positions have shortages, what is the pay, etc. and then apply for one of the grants to increase wages as this appears to be the root of the problem. **Beth Roberts** reported that an intern had attempted to gather this information and found that agencies consistently identified that they would expand services and take on more clients if they had more staff. Beth stated she would share results of that survey with the Committee again. ARPA and Cares Act cannot be utilized to increase wages as those funds end in 2024. Beth is working with Lakeland and Covey on trying to increase the status of the career and provide better support to caregiving employees.

Nicole Davis Dewald stated that Parkview has an entire wing which has been closed for an unprecedented length of time. There is currently no plan to reopen the wing as there are not enough employees to staff it.

Beth Roberts gave the reminder that many employers are experiencing staff shortages including businesses and restaurants are closing for this reason. World Relief could be contacted to ask whether people coming to the US are considering caring for people who speak their language. This could help put a dent on the caregiver crisis.

Kate Pfaendtner gave the idea to provide more earned time off for those who work consistently. She stated an RN friend of hers just resigned her position as she was very frustrated with working 60+ hours a week to cover staff not showing up for their shifts. **Beth Roberts** replied that situations such as this are contributing to the staff shortages as those who like working in the caregiving are leaving the field due to becoming burned out working extra hours.

Beth Roberts reported that she believed one of the solutions is to create less of a need for paid caregivers. For example, individuals who need care be rotated to different family members to provide care. This concept would reduce the number of people with paid caregiver needs. Another thought is providing more support for spouses who provide care 24/7. This could take the form of some non-paid or natural support rather than having to place the spouse in a residential setting. "Share the care" or "time banking" are examples of this. **Brian Nagler** stated that these ideas should be revisited as the number of individuals in need of care is continually increasing.

Paul Janty stated that China has taken the innovative approach that credits are earned for providing care for others. Credits previously banked can be utilized to receive caregiving. **Beth Roberts** stated that she believes no one has submitted a grant proposal to set up an infrastructure for this as a system to track time would be needed. **Kate Pfaendtner** stated that Timebanks.org is an option available for time tracking that she had used in the past. **Brian Nagler** stated the concept is "using the gifts you have been given." Kate stated that this concept could be pitched to neighborhoods, schools, and faith communities. **Alana Erickson** stated this is being pitched to the neighborhood association and there is an alliance meeting tonight to gain a sense of the varying skill areas for when needed.

Rob Paterson commented that he believed that children need to take mental health classes now and could have a good attitude if instilled at an early age. **Beth Roberts** added that some high schools had paused programs in that field during COVID and she will check back to see if those are running again. Beth asked Committee members to research time banking. It would make sense to start time banking at a neighborhood level in the hopes of branching out.

This subject will again be on next month's agenda. Any materials, ideas on presenters, etc. can be routed to Beth Roberts.

4. **Caregiver Support Program (CSP) Updates – Brian Nagler**

Brian stated that regarding caregiver programs, agencies are increasing wages resulting in rate increases for providing care. Brian stated that as there is only so much money available to help each person, less hours can be provided per month due to the rate increases. Beth Roberts reported that at least 2/3 of agencies have increased rates.

Brian reported that at the beginning of 2022, the NFCSP program was over-authorized due to COVID funding monies expiring. In response, staff worked to create efficiencies by reducing the amount of supportive home services that each person was receiving. In most situations, supportive services were reduced for each individual from two hours per week to four hours per month. When appropriate, there has also been attrition when assessments determine Family Care to be appropriate. 96 individuals are still being served by the program.

Brian reported a reduction in NFCSP expenses from \$19,000 in January to just over \$4,000 a month currently. Unfortunately, this is still a little bit over budget. There is currently a waitlist for NFCSP services. When evaluating the program for efficiencies, it was found that the program had become a "mini-waiver" program for client needs with care plans that included services such as lifeline and meals on wheels. Brian stated that if people have that many needs, then they should be served through Family Care or IRIS. NFCSP funding is designed to be caregiver needs based in an effort to prevent caregiver burnout.

AFCSP – AFCSP requirements include making \$48,000 or less in income and having a dementia diagnosis. Because of these requirements, AFCSP funding is utilized less than NFCSP. 22 people are currently being served through the AFCSP and there is no current waitlist for services.

Brian will report on demographics at the next Committee meeting.

5. **Next Meeting Location – Beth Roberts** – Prior to COVID, the Committee had been meeting in-person on a rotation of two months in Oshkosh and then one in Neenah simply due to the make-up of the Committee. Now that hybrid meetings will continue in the future, **Beth Roberts** inquired whether Committee members in the Northern section of the county would attend in-person meetings held in Neenah. **Elizabeth Jones** stated that attending meetings via Zoom works well for her and not to hold meetings in Neenah meetings for her sake. Beth added that both of the current Committee vacancies are from the northern part of the county, so their input will be considered once on the Committee. Beth proposed that meetings be held only in Oshkosh until there is a request to resume every third meeting be held in Neenah. **Kate Pfaendtner** made a motion for in-person meetings to be held only in Oshkosh with **Elizabeth Jones** seconding the motion. The motion was unanimously passed.

6. **Staffing Changes / Updates – Beth Roberts and Brian Nagler**

Beth Roberts reported that typically there is not much turnover in the ADRC other than retirements. There are a couple of upcoming changes as one of the Oshkosh EBS will be leaving her position as of October 5th and recruitment has begun to fill this position. Additionally, due to workload and number of referrals, the ADRC is being expanded in the Northern part of the county. After some shifting of staff, there will be five staff in Neenah instead of four and maintain six in Oshkosh. The ADRC has been short staffed as several staff have been out or are currently out for various medical reasons. **Brian Nagler** stated that time optimization has been necessary due to the number of staff out.

7. **Reports:**

a. **Committee Member Updates**

Nicole Davis Dawald:

- Nicole reported that a new multicultural program is starting through a partnership with the YMCA. Members of the community with different cultural backgrounds will utilize the YMCA's community kitchen to present cooking of foods that are important to their

culture. The program will be held once a month on Tuesday mornings at the Y beginning in November. The goal is to promote diversity through food. Any connections for presenters can be forwarded to Nicole. Nicole added that she is looking for a way to pay for the ingredients so the program can be held at no cost. The Y is working on promotional materials. During the summer, the program will be held with children and will be intergenerational. The event will be taped by the Y and put on Facebook and YouTube so people can make the recipes at home. Chou from Human Services will be presenting on how to make Pho.

- Nicole reported that two new interns started this week and may attend upcoming Committee meetings. Interns will be joining other staff in taking bus trips to Walmart, the Senior Center, and a doctor's office in order to advocate for improved bus services. Nicole and **Rob Paterson** will detail how the trips went at the next Committee meeting. In February, this will be done on a larger scale for bus advocacy day.
- Nicole and Alana are going to Madison later this month for an AARP event to learn about housing options.

Alana Erickson:

- Alana reported that she had supported Nicole this past week on the chat with the State reporting on Aging Plan goals at which time she included the Wellness Plus goal. Alana provided the link which contains stats on the number of classes and participants. Alana reported Wellness Plus is looking to have seven new leaders being able to teach in 2023. This will offer Joanne more consistency rather than training a new leader every time a class season comes around. Some extra hours have been approved for Joanne due to multiple Wellness Plus demands from senior events such as The Time of Your Life, the senior exercise and nutrition at the YMCA, and School for Seniors being held in Neenah.
- COVID updates – Community rates have gone back down to low. The brand-new booster which has been adjusted to include the Omicron variants will be ready by the 21st for the Health Department to disperse through vaccine clinics. The website www.wcvaccine.org contains information on local vaccination clinics and fliers to share. Alana stated they continue to try to target some of the smaller, more precise areas.
- Teresa Paulus has announced her retirement for February of 2023. Teresa has been with the Health Department for 31 years and is one of the main health promoting aging nurses that Health and Human staff work with.
- Q: Will COVID booster shots be available when flu shots are given out to county staff?
- A: This would be difficult because of the different vaccine vials, staff would have to be doubled, and most locations for county staff vaccinations are not lab-type areas.
- Alana reported that recent requests brought to the County Board have failed to bring some money into the Health Department to support work through grants. Alana stated there is a lot of confusion and conspiracy fears around the work being done by Public Health. Alana urged Committee members to try clearing up any confusions.

Kate Pfaendtner had no updates to report.

Jan Olson had no updates to report.

Tamar Mathwig had no updates to report.

Elizabeth Jones had no updates to report.

Harold Singstock had no updates to report.

Rob Paterson reported he had attended the "Berry Special" ADRC open house on August 16th. Rob stated it was well-attended and that staff did an outstanding job. Beth commented that a lot of positive feedback has been received regarding the open house.

Mike Norton reported that there has been a good response to the housing study presentation and that there is interest in the study with some County Board Supervisors providing suggestions. Mike thought that Beth and others should get together with the doctor who conducted the study to find out what steps are next.

Regarding newer members not showing up, **Beth Roberts** reported having spoke with both of the newer members. Fritz has been busy and intends to come upcoming meetings. Likewise, Michael has now completed orientation and indicated his intention to come to meetings. In addition, the intention for the two position vacancies is have those be filled by individuals from the northern section of the county with representation for older adults.

Rob Paterson asked Mike if he had spoken with the County Executive about members being unable to cast votes when virtually attending a board meeting. **Mike Norton** was informed that this does not apply to those boards and commissions that have citizen members. The County Board requirement is in-person voting; however, the ADRC Committee can conduct voting even in hybrid meetings. **Beth Roberts** stated that Corp Counsel stated members attending via virtual means cannot vote.

Beth Roberts had additional updates to report:

- Bus Route 10 – Bus Route 10 is ending in May of 2023. In the meantime, an extension of the paratransit will be piloted on a red card/blue card system and expanding that beyond older adults and/or disabled populations for employment and dialysis transports. This will be a more direct, on-demand type of service. Beth will provide more details on this when more information is provided to her.
- Winnebago County Meal Sites – Meal sites in Omro and Winneconne opened last week. An update is forthcoming on when Oshkosh and other meal sites will be opening.
- Homeless Prevention Program (HELP) – Beth has chosen a supervisor for the new Homeless Prevention Program who will be starting in the later part of October and will begin helping take referrals for individuals at risk of housing instability, hiring, and program development. This individual will be introduced to the Committee at the November meeting.

With no further business, **Paul Janty** adjourned the meeting at 4:11 PM.