

**MEETING OF THE  
WINNEBAGO COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES BOARD**

**Minutes**

**DATE:** Monday, March 6, 2023

**TIME:** 3:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Oshkosh Human Services Building Room 33

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeffrey Beem, Ralph Harrison, Chris Kniep, Rebecca Nichols, Karen Powers, Harold Singstock, Rachel Youngquist

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Larry Lautenschlager

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bill Topel, Renee Soroko, Annette Beattie, Heather Foust, Ann Kriegel, Beth Roberts (Zoom), Tammy Steier and Pam Bartelt

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Norton, County Board Representative, District 20

Vice Chair Ralph Harrison called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**AGENDA ITEM #1: PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Annette Beattie acknowledged that March is *Social Worker Appreciation* month and recognized all our amazing dedicated social workers in Human Services.

**PROGRAM #2: TINY HOME PROJECT**

Deputy Director Renee Soroko introduced Julie Dumke from Oshkosh Kids Foundation. Julie has been overseeing the Tiny Home Project which is part of a large community grant. Julie recognized and thanked all the social workers as they are major partners in working on the Tiny House Village. The mission of this project is to provide crisis intervention to children and families by assisting with transitional and affordable housing. This includes providing strategic aid and connecting families to resources for education, employment, transportation and basic needs. Their goal is to build the Tiny House Village to help the homeless families of Oshkosh with volunteer funds so that it will not burden the City of Oshkosh with its maintenance or sustainability. The poverty rate for the Oshkosh Area Schools is 43% with Oshkosh being identified as the city with the fastest increase of extreme poverty for the past seven years. Families can be referred by social workers (county or school), Oshkosh Kids Foundation or Advocap. There is a screening process and if they qualify, they can choose Tiny House Villages. There are other options to choose from but these are very limited and landlords are selective. Families need to meet established guidelines to rent in the village. Goals are to obtain a \$20+/hour paying job with reliable transportation and obtain stable housing. They have partnerships with Habitat for Humanity, Rawhide, Fox Valley Extension for cooking classes, Boys & Girls Club for daycare and many other community

members. The village is on the bus line, is walking distance to support services, schools and bus lines and consists of 32 furnished homes, a community center, two community gardens, a playground and green space. Rent is based on a sliding scale of the family income. Support will be provided for families as they transition out of the village for an additional six months as needed. Case managers assist with daily living skills and home maintenance. The project is expected to be completed by June 2023.

### **AGENDA ITEM #3: APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 6, 2023 HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING**

Jeff Beem moved for approval of these minutes; seconded by Chris Kniep and carried unanimously. (7-0)

### **AGENDA ITEM #4: ACCEPT MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 13, 2023 ADRC COMMITTEE AND DECEMBER 13, 2022 ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES MEETINGS**

Karen Powers moved for acceptance of these minutes; seconded by Harold Singstock and carried unanimously. (7-0)

### **AGENDA ITEM #5: INPATIENT & INSTITUTIONAL PLACEMENT STATISTICS**

Human Services Director Bill Topel shared a new report, created by Annette Beattie, Child Welfare (CW) Division Manager, for Kinship Care Placements for the past couple years. Moving forward, this report will show the number of children in placement per that given month. Bill then reviewed placement statistics: Child Welfare (CW) Division – Juvenile Corrections remains at 1.0 Actual Daily Populations (ADP). Residential Care Centers are at 1.7 ADP. Behavioral Health (BH) - Specialty Hospitals for adults is at 3.7 ADP with the youth being at 0.4 ADP. Secure Detention is at 0.6 ADP. Foster Care is down to 41.0 ADP.

### **AGENDA ITEM # 6: FINANCIAL REPORT**

Janet Rohloff, Administrative Division Manager was not in attendance. Director Bill Topel mentioned that while there are still a few outstanding items, Janet expected the surplus from 2022 will remain at \$4 million. Next month Janet will begin reporting the projections for 2023.

### **AGENDA ITEM #7: DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT**

Human Services Deputy Director Renee Soroko shared that we continue to work on providing in-house trainings on relevant topics for all agency staff. Recently we ran a drill to practice our procedure for handling emergency situations in the buildings. Many staff responded to the announcement to assist with the situation. More practice is needed in reception when answering the designated 'safety phone'. The only calls that come in on this phone are to be followed up on with a particular script. We've had a lot of turnover with office staff and continue to train.

There has been a change to the county wide Social Media Policy while Renee has also revised our Human Services Department Social Media Policy. We will inform staff of both policies and

highlight changes. The county wide compensation schedule has been completed and recommendations are being addressed within the agency and with the County Executive's office and Human Resources. Information sessions will allow employees to hear about the plan before the board meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup> and make suggestions.

### **AGENDA ITEM #8: DIRECTOR REPORT**

Bill Topel announced the Human Services Day at the Capitol will take place April 12, 2023. Renee noted names of those planning to attend. We will meet in the Oshkosh parking lot at 7:00 am. The meetings will begin at 9:00 a.m. for sessions with the senators and legislators. The priorities of Wisconsin County Associations (WCA) are: 1) 100% funding of Medicaid Crisis services; 2) \$10 million additional Adult Protective Services funding; 3) Birth to 3 Funding for more services for children with developmental issues; 4) Public Health related topics.

### **AGENDA ITEM #9: BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

Chris Kniep mentioned that she and Alisa Richetti, ADRC Dementia Care Specialist, have scheduled another *Powerful Tools for Caregivers* session in May, 2023. She commented that she is glad adult protection is being addressed with legislators as there are a number of issues that caregivers face. Chris shared she participates in the *Permanency Plan Reviews* and complimented those staff and community members that are involved in these challenging situations as they work with all involved in a respectful manner as they help families resolve situations.

With no further business Jeff Beem moved for adjournment; seconded by Karen Powers and carried at 4:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on **Monday, April 3, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the Neenah Human Services Building in Room 008.**

Respectfully submitted by Pam Bartelt, Human Services Department/pb