

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

**Minutes**

**DATE:** Wednesday, June 29, 2022

**TIME:** 8:30 a.m.

**PLACE:** Whitman Airport

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeffrey Beem, Ralph Harrison, Chris Kniep, Larry Lautenschlager, Donna Lohry, Rebecca Nichols (Zoom), Karen Powers, Harold Singstock

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Rachel Youngquist

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bill Topel, Renee Soroko, Annette Beattie, Heather Foust, Ann Kriegel, Beth Roberts, Janet Rohloff., Tammy Steier and Pam Bartelt

Chairman Larry Lautenschlager opened the hearing at 8:30 a.m. by welcoming those present in the room and via Zoom. Human Services Board members and Human Services staff introduced themselves. Larry explained 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. Larry reviewed hearing guidelines.

The following information was testimony given:

Lorin Ganzel, Neenah citizen, would like to propose that funding be provided to support Route 10. He frequently uses this transportation as he unable to drive. He relies on the connector to Oshkosh for various appointments and events. Mr. Ganzel suggested that non-profit agencies be considered for additional funding as well.

Melissa Blom, Director of Early Childhood Prevention Programs for Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, thanked the county for the ongoing support of prevention program 'Parents as Teachers'. Winnebago County has previously provided financial support in the amount of \$53,400. That money goes toward targeted intervention services with families that our Child Welfare department has recognized as needing the support. *Parents as Teachers* is an intense evidence-based model that provides education and skills for early childhood development. They provide numerous screenings to help parents be sure their children are on target for their developmental age. Additional community resources are shared with each individual family and child. When families receive voluntary prevention services early, they likely avoid future involvement with Child Protective Services. The long-term results of early family prevention save tax payers dollars in the future as children are well prepared for their school age years.

Family Services is requesting an increase for next year (and future years) of \$50,000 to offset expenses. Ms. Blom stated their agency is grateful for the support and consideration.

Kelly Hinz, Parent Connection Program Manager, shared a success story of a family that had moved into our county and had no family in the area. An assessment determined they were eligible for services as both parents have mental health concerns and had suffered abuse and neglect as children. Being new to the area, the family had several barriers including isolation and having no support network. The *Parent Connection* program was able to provide referrals to mental health services and community connections for involvement and resources. The family recently shared they feel they would not have been in the position they are now without this program. They were appreciative of the educational information, home visits and services to learn skills to be good parents.

Chairman Larry Lautenschlager read a testimony from Mike Norton, County Supervisor District 20: A couple of particular issues I am concerned with are the amount and type of mental health programs/services offered by Winnebago County which will be an even greater need in the post pandemic. The second issue is funding for Route 10 between Oshkosh and Neenah that has been cut — totally initially- but now I believe there is a plan to restore funding for an alternative transportation service to meet the needs for those in the rural areas and all areas of Winnebago County. I encourage you to support funding for the new transportation alternative proposed by Beth Roberts. In the meantime, I also encourage you to read the Wisconsin County Association Magazine from this month to read about how other areas in the state have come up with interesting services and programs to meet the needs in their areas. Possibly Winnebago County can work with others to have a similar program established here. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brad Spanbauer, UW Oshkosh Sustainability Director, provided comment on budget concerns related to Route 10 transportation services. Per a City of Oshkosh memo, Go Transit knows that Route 10 is an important service line for our community. This is also an important bus service for UWO as consumers use to get to UWO campus from the Neenah area. He understands that Winnebago County will no longer be funding the Route 10 Go Transit service at 37% of the cost. Brad stated he is aware the board is unable to answer questions, however inquired whether the AARPA Funds received in 2021 and 2022 have been allocated.

With no further testimonies offered, the Public Hearing was closed at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Bartelt, Human Services Department/pb