

Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Health and Human Services and Veterans Service Committee

Date of Meeting: Thursday, March 2, 2023

Electronic and Hard Copy Filing Date:

Location: Department of Health and Human Services
Buffalo County Courthouse
2nd Floor Conference Room
407 S 2nd Street, Alma, Wisconsin

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Members present were Kim Beseler, Liz Hoffmaster, Wendy Kleinschmidt, Carol McDonough, Mary Anne McMillan-Urell, Brian Michaels, Richard Mueller, and Nathan Nelson.

Ms. McMillan-Urell announced Mr. Brad Schmidt knecht resigned from the County Board; Mr. Schmidt knecht was the Vice-Chairman of the Home Committee. A new Vice-Chairman will be voted in at the April 6, 2023, meeting.

OTHERS PRESENT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING

Dave Rynders, Lee Engfer, Dennis Bork/Non-Voting Member, Felicia Decker, and Mary Hildebrand. Jamie Weaver attended via Zoom.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING MATTERS THAT WILL BE TAKEN UP BY THE COMMITTEE AT THIS MEETING

None

3. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made by Ms. Beseler and seconded by Ms. Hoffmaster to approve the February 2, 2023, minutes as presented. Motion approved.

4. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – VETERANS SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT

Ms. Decker reported the flags and markers arrived for the season. The 2023 CVSO supplemental grant money will be received soon. The grant money will be used for Outreach, social media presence and updating office equipment. Stats were shared. Ms. Decker stated the February meeting for the brick memorial project has been rescheduled for March.

5. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION - VETERANS SERVICES MONTHLY VOUCHERS

The February vouchers were reviewed. A motion was made by Ms. Beseler and seconded by Mr. Michaels to approve the February 2023 vouchers as presented. Motion approved.

6. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

Ms. Weaver presented the monthly numbers/stats. Jamie reported the state is recommending returning to in-person clinics in August for WIC appointments. Ms. Rheana Thewis, Public Health nurse and Ms. Molli Eckelberg have been working on the Reproductive Health program partnering with Alma and Mondovi schools to provide feminine products and education on TSS (Toxic Shock Syndrome). Since July 2022, DHS has confirmed five cases of TSS in teenage girls associated with tampon use. The new reproductive health clinic will start offering RH services in March 2023. An update was given on the Well Sampling Project; 825 letters and pre-paid postcards are ready to be mailed to residents within the County asking for their participation in the sampling and data collection; the deadline for response and participation is April 15, 2023. Stats were shared on the vaccine breakthrough cases for Buffalo County. The Public Health Educator activities were presented by Ms. Weaver.

7. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – ARPA FUNDED PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATOR PLAN

Ms. Weaver presented a tentative plan of work activities and time frame (2023-2024) for Darby DeGross, Public Health Educator:

- ARPA Well Sampling Project/Oversight & Coordination
- Current Preparedness Plan/Revise & Develop
- Drug Free Communities coalition/Harm Reduction activities
- Social Media campaigns/Advertising for available programs
- CHIP/CHA (Community Health Assessment) support
- ARPA Lead Project
- Continue COVID follow-up
- Back-up for Narcan training

Ms. McMillan-Urell questioned Mr. Engfer regarding the Opioid grant if it is specifically for DHHS or for County use. Mr. Engfer stated the grant is restricted for DHHS and potentially CJS. Mr. Rynders spoke extensively about the drug free community's coalition to reduce drug activities that DHHS had been exploring and the grants that are available. Mr. Rynders stated this had been studied and researched covering 12 different sectors of the community before COVID-19 hit and then it was put on hold. DHHS has already identified activities taking place throughout the community with schools, UW-Extension, other organizations and DHHS to reduce drug use activity. Mr. Rynders stated they want to re-engage the effort and apply for grants; one involving a 3-year regional grant which would fund the salary and benefits of a school resource officer that would serve all 4 school districts. Rynders recommended using Ms. DeGross to pull it all together.

8. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – REFILL CASE MANAGER/SOCIAL WORKER POSITION

Mr. Rynders reported a CPS (Child Protection Services) position has been vacant for five months. A new position became available in the CLTS/CCS (Children's Long-Term Services/Comprehensive Community Services) which a current CPS staff member applied for and filled the position which then created a second vacant position in CPS. Rynders made a request to re-fill the second case manager position. A motion was made to approve re-filling the

second case manager position by Ms. Hoffmaster and seconded by Ms. Beseler. Motion approved.

9. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – RECRUITING EFFORTS/COVERAGE PLAN

Mr. Rynders stated it has been a challenging recruitment process to refill the 5-month vacancy CPS position. He presented a plan which included reaching out to Technical Colleges with a 2-year Human Services degree and used social media (FB) to advertise the position.

Ms. Shelley Place filled the CLTS/CCS position, but Rynders explained they are holding back transferring her to the position until the CPS vacancy is filled. Mr. Rynders' coverage plan includes him taking some introductory safety training for non-child protection staff to offer assistance within the agency during the vacancy period. Mr. Rynders is proposing withdrawing from some of the Director responsibilities and flex himself in the direction of Social Services. Rynders has also authorized overtime for Ms. Place during this time. Mr. Rynders shared that it is a 6-month delay before a Case Manager with no CPS experience can take on a case [as a primary worker](#).

10. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS FINANCIAL UPDATE

Mr. Rynders presented the financial update through January 2023 pointing out the 2022 year is not closed yet. Mr. Engfer shared that Ms. Rustad and Ms. Zeman have been heavily involved in the financial system and should be recognized for all their time spent updating the new chart of accounts.

11. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS MONTHLY VOUCHERS

A motion was made by Mr. Michaels and seconded by Ms. Kleinschmidt to approve the monthly vouchers as presented. Motion approved.

12. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – MONTHLY UNIT REPORTS

The monthly unit vouchers were reviewed. Ms. Renchin, Social Services Manager reported a substance abuse (opioid) disorders grant was applied for which will assist clients on medical assistance with room and board while receiving opioid treatment.

13. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – WESTERN DAIRYLAND COMMUNITY ACTION

Ms. McMillan-Urell reported Western Dairyland has received \$24 million in grants.

Mr. Rynders inquired about the capital campaign to purchase a house to provide a homeless shelter in the Mondovi area. Ms. McMillan-Urell reported they were looking at homes with a 90-day rental at \$835/month rent, 2 bedroom. Looking for people to volunteer to raise funds, looking for homes to purchase around \$200,000, 1-2 bathrooms, 3 bedrooms preferred. Looking for \$500,000 for a home in Mondovi and Trempealeau, and \$100,000 for repair and maintenance. The capital campaign would fund 30% or \$150K and grant funding and corporate dollars would raise 70% or \$350K.

14. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS DIRECTOR REPORT – TELECOMMUTING UPDATE

Mr. Rynders presented a telecommuting update sharing the following:

- Provided an org chart of current DHHS office space.
- 5 staff currently telecommuting full-time: (2) Economic Support, (1) Child Support, (2) Public Health
- Plan to restructure existing space to create office space
- Survey results from neighboring counties

Ms. McMillan-Urell addressed the differences between a county entity and a company. Companies can offer telecommuting to all workers whereas not all county staff can take advantage of the telecommute option. Ms. McMillan-Urell and the HR committee have heard from disgruntled workers who feel they're receiving unequal treatment as far as paying for gas and wear & tear on vehicles and want to be paid more.

Mr. Engfer clarified the article Mr. Rynders referenced was not the same source as the webinar. HR recommended Mr. Engfer reach out to other counties in the State to find out what other ES positions are doing regarding remote vs not remote; the responses from 30 counties were similar to Mr. Rynders survey results.

Mr. Rynders made the following recommendations:

- Create space for the full-time telecommuting positions who will return to office.
- Retain the telecommuting option for (3) Economic Support positions and the limited timeframe position (Ms. DeGross) through 2024.
- Provide a degree of hybrid telecommuting (maximum 2 days/wk)

Ms. McMillan-Urell recommended waiting for the HR committee's decision on the legal issues and to move forward on plans to reconstruct space to create offices using ARPA funds to do the remodel. The HR committee meeting is Monday, March 13th.

Mr. Rynders reported he will add the Vice Chair election to the April agenda.

15. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

None

16. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – CLOSED SESSION TO CONDUCT EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS – ROLE CALL VOTE. *The Committee may enter into closed session pursuant to WI State Statutes 19.85 (1)(c) for the purpose of considering employment or performance evaluation of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.*

A motion was made by Ms. McDonough and seconded by Ms. Beseler to go into closed session. A roll call vote was taken. Motion approved at 7:57 PM.

17. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – THE COMMITTEE MAY RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Ms. Beseler and seconded by Ms. McDonough to return to open session. Motion carried.

18. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 6, 2023 @ 6:30 PM

19. PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

None

20. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Michael and seconded by Ms. Hoffmaster to adjourn meeting at 8:21 PM. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Hildebrand

DRAFT