

## **Buffalo County Minutes**

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

**Date of Meeting:** Thursday, February 2, 2023

**Electronic and Hard Copy Filing Date:**

**Location:** Department of Health and Human Services  
Buffalo County Courthouse  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
407 S 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, Nathan Nelson, Brad Schmidtkecht

### **OTHERS PRESENT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING**

Dave Rynders, Jamie Weaver, Felicia Decker, Mary Hildebrand

### **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 Mr. Mueller and seconded by Ms. Hoffmaster to approve the December 1, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion approved.

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

Ms. Decker presented information on a supplemental grant available due to CVSO legislation that was passed. The grant was received in the amount of \$14,228 (ARPA funds) for the sole purpose of Outreach which will be used partly for office equipment. The grant needs to be used by 2025. The annual Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) grant of \$9350 was submitted by the due date January 31, 2023. An update on the Memorial wall project was shared with a plan to meet in February with Turnbell the contractor. The December/January stats were provided. Ms. McMillan-Urell donated a \$50 gift card to Veterans Services that she received from Western Dairyland.

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

The December/January vouchers were reviewed. A motion was made by Ms. Beseler and seconded by Ms. Kleinschmidt to approve the December 2022 and January 2023 vouchers as presented. Motion approved.

## **6. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT**

Ms. Weaver presented the monthly Public Health numbers from December through January 2023. Weaver announced that Kai Jiang, Environmental Health Specialist has passed all her training with the State. The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) Opioid Summit was held on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, which Ms. Weaver attended. Regional group discussions were held on what other counties are doing with their settlement dollars. The following updates were shared by Ms. Weaver: Mickey Ganschow gave birth on 1/1/23 and is on maternity leave, the COVID-19 vaccination clinics ended when the AMI contract expired and the vaccine rates for Buffalo County as of 1/26/23 were 61.3% of the population receiving the primary series and 19.3% receiving the updated booster. The Public Health Educator activities were shared. Rheana Thewis, Public Health nurse has started working with communicable disease follow-up.

## **7. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – LOCAL DISTRIBUTION OF FENTANYL TEST STRIPS**

Ms. Weaver reported the State released training on the use of fentanyl test strips. A video was presented from Taylor County on “Harm Reduction’s Role in Prevention” where the end goal for an individual is to reach a pathway to recovery. Harm Reduction programs and services not only provide a safe mechanism for use but also offer hope. Ms. Weaver shared data from Wisconsin Counties that distributed fentanyl test strips to clients who have reported back on results. A bar chart was presented comparing the type of drug to the percent that tested positive for fentanyl. Ms. Weaver shared a (draft) disclaimer on the USE OF TESTING STRIPS IS AT YOUR OWN RISK that will be included in the kits that will be distributed throughout Buffalo County. The disclaimer was reviewed by Corp Counsel, Tom Bilski. After discussion was held, a motion was made by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mr. Schmidt knecht to approve the distribution of fentanyl test strips as a harm reduction service throughout Buffalo County. Motion approved.

## **8. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – CLOSED SESSION TO CONDUCT EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS – ROLE CALL VOTE**

*The Committee may enter into closed session pursuant to WI State Statues 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. McMillan-Urell and seconded by Mr. Schmidt knecht to table going into closed session until next month when Mr. Engfer, County Administrative Coordinator is in attendance. Motion approved.

## **9. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – TELECOMMUTING AND SPACE PLANNING**

Mr. Rynders presented an overview of the miscommunication regarding intermittent telecommuting involving DHHS staff. The limits of telecommuting were discussed regarding three staff that reside in Minnesota. Rynders explained there are 6 positions designated to telecommute full-time due to lack of office space. An org chart was provided to show the DHHS office space and how to accomplish creating space to bring staff that live in MN back into the office. Ms. McMillan-Urell suggested re-constructing either the small or large conference room to create more office space and use available ARPA funds for the project. Mr. Rynders will research the idea of using conference room space for additional offices and report back on his findings. Ms. McMillan-Urell also shared comments from others on the unfairness of staff that can’t telecommute vs those who do telecommute.

**10. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION –ECONOMIC SUPPORT SPECIALIST, PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATOR, CHILD SUPPORT SPECIALIST AND SUPPORT STAFF SPECIALIST POSITION JOB DESCRIPTION REVISIONS**

Mr. Rynders presented the last four job descriptions to be revised. A motion was made by Mr. Michaels and seconded by Mr. Nelson to accept the revisions to the four job descriptions. Motion approved.

**11. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – IMPACT OF 2023 OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL ON FOOD SHARE, MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND BADGERCARE PROGRAMS**

Mr. Rynders shared information on the bill that passed to expand Food Share benefits during COVID-19 will end on February 28, 2023, which will have a significant impact on people. Rynders will be contacting the area food pantries in Buffalo County to make them aware of the change and the need to be prepared for more activity.

Mr. Rynders also reported the BadgerCare reviews that were suspended during COVID-19 will be reinstated April 1, 2023, which will impact the workload of WREA staff.

**12. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS FINANCIAL UPDATE – STATUS OF MONTHLY RECONCILIATION WITH COUNTY FINANCIAL SYSTEM**

The financial update was presented through December 2022. Mr. Rynders reported on the status of the monthly reconciliation activity with county fiscal and the projections that were made to be back to normal by December have been achieved. Mr. Engfer is meeting monthly with departments regarding finance. Rynders and other staff met with Pepin County fiscal staff to discuss the goal of having all the same chart of accounts with the new fiscal system.

**13. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS MONTHLY VOUCHERS**

A motion was made by Mr. Schmidtkecht and seconded by Ms. Beseler to approve the monthly vouchers as presented from November and December 2022 as presented. Motion approved.

**14. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – MONTHLY UNIT REPORTS**

The monthly unit reports were reviewed. Ms. McMillan-Urell brought to the attention of the committee the chart of protective placements/protective services lines were pointing to the wrong percentages for Pepin and Buffalo.

**15. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – 2023 VETERANS/DHHS MEETING SCHEDULE**

The 2023 meeting schedule dates were reviewed and approved as presented.

**16. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – WESTERN DAIRYLAND COMMUNITY ACTION**

Ms. McMillan-Urell reported Western Dairyland has \$24 million in grants to work with.

**17. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Rynders serves on the Buffalo County Coalition Against Violence. Rynders reported that the Bolton Refuge has been the organization that provides advocacy to victims of domestic violence. There has been a lack of consistent response and follow through and in a response to that the coalition has met with the Department of Justice to push for change and requested working with another provider. The DOJ said a formal complaint has to be filed.

Mr. Rynders presented information on an opportunity for Buffalo County to join a regional grant effort spearheaded by the Chief of Police in Menomonie for a School Resource Officer for three years that would serve all four school districts.

**18. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT**

None

**19. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 6:30 PM.

**20. PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**20. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ms. Beseler and seconded by Ms. McDonough to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 PM. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Hildebrand