

Buffalo County Minutes

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

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, March 1, 2022

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

Member's present were Kim Beseler, Larry Grisen, Liz Hoffmaster, Wendy Kleinschmidt, Carol McDonough, Mary Anne McMillan-Urell, Richard Mueller, Steve Nelson, and Brad Schmidtkecht.

OTHERS PRESENT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING

Dave Rynders, Mary Hildebrand, Felicia Decker, Mickey Ganschow, Josie Knauber

2. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ANY 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. Schmidtkecht and seconded by Ms. McDonough to approve the February 1, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion approved.

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

Ms. Decker shared that Deputy Steve Schiffli participated in the VFW midwinter conference collaborating outreach and referrals with other CVSO and partners.

The NWCVSVO regional training hosted program specialist, Jeremy Otto from the WDVA (Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs) who shared information on the Veterans employment grants available which will pay up to \$5000 in a 12-month period to employers who hire a Veteran. Ryan Burkhardt from the VAMC (Veterans Affairs Medical Center) of Minneapolis talked on suicide prevention and the safe training being offered that Buffalo County will participate in. Stephanie Bertucci, also from the VAMC of Minneapolis provided information on patient advocacy as well as an updated contact phone book to be used as a resource for the Veterans office.

Ms. Decker updated the committee on the Veteran Brick Memorial donations.

The next course of action is public outreach via the media. Ms. Decker and Mr. Schiffli will be presenting a financial proposal to the Finance Committee in the near future. The financial goal needs to be met to formally accept the bid from Turnbells prior to November 2022. The construction/repair timeline will begin mid-summer. Mr. Mueller suggested part of the needed repairs by the stairway should be the responsibility of the County. Ms. Decker confirmed that the bid includes a share of the county's responsibility.

Stats were reviewed.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Mueller and seconded by Ms. Beseler to approve the monthly vouchers. Motion approved.

6. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

Ms. Knauber presented the Public Health report addressing the (3) Human Health Hazard investigations which included a water/sewer issue, and bugs with a short-term resolution.

Covid-19 vaccination clinics were held throughout the county with a total of 98 Pfizer and 3 J&J vaccinations administered. Ms. Knauber reported 34.2% of Buffalo County residents have received an additional/booster dose as of 3/1/2022.

A chart was presented by Ms. Knauber detailing the rate of COVID-19 cases by vaccination status and booster status compared to the unvaccinated. The data clearly shows a significant amount of vaccinated people are less likely to get sick vs those not vaccinated. An additional chart showing the rates of COVID-19 deaths by vaccination status and booster doses vs the unvaccinated are significantly reduced when vaccinated.

Data was presented regarding COVID-19 hospitalization rates by vaccine status in ages 18+ and adolescents ages 12-17 from January 2021 to 2022 vs the unvaccinated which shows vaccinations very effective.

Ms. Knauber reported the COVID-19 death rate in Buffalo County is significantly less than in surrounding counties and the state. Ms. Knauber commended the residents of Buffalo County for putting forth the effort to stop the spread of COVID. Ms. Beseler inquired if Buffalo County resident deaths in Minnesota are being reported to Buffalo County; Ms. Knauber confirmed that the Buffalo County Health department is notified of those deaths. Ms. McMillan-Urell stated that hospitals are receiving incentives for marking COVID-19 as the reason for death-on-death certificates. Ms. Knauber requested the source of information be provided by Ms. McMillan-Urell to the Public Health department for review.

COVID-19 Highlights were shared by Ms. Knauber which included:

- Community Zoom meetings to address questions on COVID-19 updates
- Collaboration with the schools to address/modify protocols to minimize illness and maximize in-person learning
- Collaboration with schools on protocols
- Reviewed duties of Public Health Educators with committee members
- Cases continue to drop but remain high – January 617 cases to 319 cases in February

Ms. Knauber explained the new prevention steps based on the COVID-19 community levels released by the CDC are rated low, medium, and high. Buffalo County's community level remains high.

Ms. McMillan-Urell shared information on the meeting Ms. McDonough and her attended with the contact tracers to discuss the discrepancy of the phone records as well as the need to better understand what the duties of the contact tracers are on a daily basis. Ms. McMillan-Urell also stated the committee would possibly be looking at new policy guidelines as well as hiring from within the state and having a committee member sit on the hiring board. Mr. Rynders suggested the Public Health monthly report include a breakdown of the monthly duties of the contact tracers. Ms. McMillan-Urell addressed the issues resulting from COVID-19 and what the recovery plan will look like. (Agenda line item #10)

7. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF CAPX2020 OR ARPA FUNDS TO COMPLETE A BASELINE GROUNDWATER QUALITY/WELL SAMPLING PROJECT IN BUFFALO COUNTY

Mr. Rynders presented a resolution that was developed collaboratively by a workgroup involving Health & Human Services, Zoning, and GIS and Land Conservation departments to approve the expenditure of CAPX2020 or ARPA funds to complete a baseline groundwater quality/well sampling project in Buffalo County. The plan will move through (3) committees: Veterans/DHHS, Land Conservation, and Finance.

The resolution would direct up to \$50,000 of CAPX2020 or ARPA funds to test over 300 wells and analyze the results for total coliform, bacteria, nitrate, pH, alkalinity, total hardness, chloride, conductivity, corrosivity, and diamino chlorotriazine. Discussion was held requesting more information on the breakdown of expenses, who will lead the project, who will do the testing, and what is the action plan of the data received. Mr. Nelson made a motion and Mr. Schmidtknecht seconded it, to table the resolution until a member of the task force can present a breakdown of the cost as well as explain how the groundwater quality/well sampling project will be implemented and what is the action plan once the data is received. Motion approved.

8. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Ms. Mickey Ganschow, Public Health Educator presented the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) focusing on mental health as their priority. Ms. Ganschow shared the goals and objectives for the plan:

- Decrease the gap between mental health prevalence and mental health treatment by 2% by January 2025
- Identify (3) priority populations and deliver health education and promotion tailored for those priority populations by January 2025
- Create a campaign that promotes acceptance, educates, reduces stigma, and engages Buffalo County community members by January 2025

Ms. Ganschow reported that a workplan is in place along with a working document. A yearly progress report will be released on CHIP to report what goals have been accomplished, what is being worked on, and what needs to be changed. Also, 3 meetings will be held a year to check in and social media will be used to increase community participation.

9. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – SIGNS OF SUICIDE AND BOTVIN PROGRAMMING IN THE SCHOOLS

Ms. Ganschow shared information on programs she is involved in with the community which includes SOS (Signs of Suicide) and the Botvin program.

SOS is a program that includes youth suicide prevention, screening for mental health and substance use, staff training and resources. Buffalo County students from 8th grade to 12th have been served by this program from 2020 to 2022 with staff and parent trainings available at all 4 schools. Ms. Ganschow provided evidence-based statistics on the SOS program. Mr. VanDeWalle inquired about providing the SOS program to 6th and 7th graders as well. Ms. Ganschow's plan is to eventually offer the SOS program to the middle school students.

Ms. Ganschow provided an overview of BOTVIN LifeSkills which is a substance abuse and violence prevention program. The curriculum has proven to help increase self-esteem, develop healthy attitudes, and improve their knowledge of essential life skills. The BOTVIN LifeSkills program involves 3rd through 5th grade students; 158 participated in the 2020-2021 school year and 333 participated during the 2021-2022 year.

10. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – COVID-19 RECOVERY PLANNING

Ms. Knauber presented a recovery plan that aligns with the DHHS mission statement as COVID-19 cases decrease. The various levels of impact are personal, professional, departmental and community. Ms. Knauber shared that the needs have to be identified as to what has been lost or impacted throughout the pandemic.

The Public Health department will conduct a needs/strengths assessment to understand where recovery is needed. Examples of DHHS programs impacted:

- Less children are getting tested for lead poisoning
- Immunization rates have decreased
- Reproductive Health program has been delayed
- Loss or delay of in-person/in-home services
- Limited community-based placement options, adult family homes, hospital settings for AP, and/or mental health services, foster placements, acute care needs
- Decline in reports for APS (Adult Protection Services)

The following needs have already been identified:

- Substance abuse
- Increased domestic violence
- Food insecurity
- Academic losses
- Health Care worker and overall worker shortage

Ms. Knauber presented what an Improvement Plan would look like which includes working with the SOS and Botvin LifeSkills programs along with Prime for Life and CHIP. The BCDHHS is already doing the following:

- Lead Prevention & Mitigation Initiative
- Reproductive Health
- Narcan – Treat overdoses
- Personal to Community Recovery Post Pandemic
- DEC – Drug Endangered Children
- BC Partnership Council
- Expand telehealth services

The next step would be to conduct a Community Needs Assessment. Ms. Knauber presented the question; do we want to fund a recovery plan? Mr. Rynders referred to the resolution which is funding the 3 Public Health Educator positions through 2024 and highlighted areas of the resolution addressing that funding is available to meet the needs. After discussion was held as to the most effective way to conduct the needs assessment, who would lead the plan, and what duties are involved, a motion was made by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Ms. Hoffmaster to have Public Health present a plan for the Community Needs Assessment at the April 5th, 2022, meeting. Motion approved.

11. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – SUBSIDIZED GUARDIANSHIP PAYMENT SOURCE CHANGES

Mr. Rynders presented a current budget year change of \$5748 for subsidized Guardianship. The State has made changes to their budget which now includes paying for the subsidized guardianship.

12. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – TREMPEALEAU COUNTY HEALTH CARE CENTER ENDING COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES PARTICIPATION

Mr. Rynders provided additional information from last month's discussion regarding the Trempealeau County Health Care Center no longer participating in the CCS (Comprehensive Community Services) program. Mr. Rynders addressed how this loss of CCS revenue will impact the 2022 and 2023 BCDHHS budget. Buffalo County has budgeted \$90,000 CCS non-county funding in 2022 and effective March 1, 2022, the remaining costs will impact the County budget in the amount of \$72,000, all paid for now and into the future with county funds. Mr. Rynders is looking for alternative placement for this individual. Mr. Rynders will share updates on placements going forward.

13. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – APPOINTMENT OF BUFFALO COUNTY ELDER REPRESENTATIVE FOR ADRC GOVERNING BOARD – DEB BETTHAUSER

Mr. Rynders shared that Ms. Deb Betthausen was nominated as the Elder Representative for the ADRC governing board. Mr. Schmidtkecht made a motion and Mr. Nelson seconded it to approve the nomination of Ms. Betthausen as the Elder Representative for the ADRC governing board. Motion approved.

14. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – RE-APPOINTMENT OF BUFFALO COUNTY PHYSICAL DISABILITY REPRESENTATIVE – JAMES HUBERT

A motion was made by Mr. Schmidtkecht and seconded by Ms. Beseler to re-appoint James Hubert as the Buffalo County Physical Disability representative. Motion Approved.

15. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – REFILL ECONOMIC SUPPORT SPECIALIST VACANCY

Mr. Rynders reported that Ms. Kelsi Black accepted the Support Staff Specialist position and requested authorization to refill the Economic Support Specialist vacated by Ms. Black.

A motion was made by Ms. Beseler and seconded by Ms. Hoffmaster to refill the Economic Support Specialist position. Motion approved.

Mr. Rynders shared that he would welcome a committee member to sit in on interviews; Mr. Grisen agreed to participate in the interviews.

16. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – REFILL FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SPECIALIST VACANCY

Mr. Rynders reported on the resignation of Ms. Heidi Bergquist, Family and Community Specialist effective end of day on March 2, 2022. Mr. Rynders requested authorization to refill this position. Ms. McDonough made a motion to authorize refilling the Family and Community Specialist vacancy and Ms. Hoffmaster seconded the motion. Motion approved.

17. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS FINANCIAL UPDATE

Mr. Rynders addressed last month's question regarding the high office expenses. We identified (2) entries, a \$5000 cost for a client that we moved from Office Expense to Purchased Contracted Services and supplies purchased for the B-3 (Birth to 3) program and equipment purchased for reproductive health for a total of \$13,000.

18. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS MONTHLY VOUCHERS

Reviewed

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

19. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – MONTHLY UNIT REPORTS

The monthly unit reports were reviewed with no discussion.

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

Mr. Nelson shared an update on the 6-month report for the Energy and Housing program.

21. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS DIRECTOR

Mr. Rynders shared information on a new financial software program to meet the needs of the County and DHHS. Meetings are scheduled in collaboration with Pepin County to better understand the mechanics of various programs: CLTS, Child Welfare, B-3, etc. Information will be gathered and then presented to Buffalo/Pepin County Administration.

22. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

None

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

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 5, 2022, at 6:00 PM.

24. PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

None

25. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Hildebrand

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