

## Buffalo County Minutes

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

**Date of Meeting:** Tuesday, April 5, 2022

**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**

Member's present were Larry Grisen, Liz Hoffmaster, Wendy Kleinschmidt, Carol McDonough, and Mary Anne McMillan-Urell.

Kim Beseler and Brad Schmidt knecht attended via ZOOM.

Richard Mueller and Steve Nelson were excused absences.

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

Dave Rynders, Mary Hildebrand, Felicia Decker, Josie Knauber, and Ryan VanDeWalle attended the meeting.

Jamie Weaver, Nels Anderson, and Cale Severson attended via ZOOM.

### **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. Grisen and seconded by Ms. McDonough to approve the March 1, 2022, minutes as presented. A roll call vote was taken. Motion approved.

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

Ms. Felicia Decker submitted a request for an Administrative Benefit Specialist due to Steve Schiffli's resignation. Ms. Decker reported on a Criminal Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC) presentation that was held for the Buffalo County Sheriff's department on how the CVSO can assist with saving lives and the resources available for Veterans. The presentation was done in collaboration with Dunn, Pepin, and Jackson Counties. An update was given on the Veteran Memorial project. Ms. Decker shared that she was a guest speaker at the Tomah VA on female Veterans needs and issues. The March stats were shared.

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

The monthly vouchers were reviewed. A motion was made by Ms. Hoffmaster and seconded by Ms. Beseler to approve the monthly vouchers as presented. A roll call vote was taken. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **6. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – ADMINISTRATIVE BENEFIT SPECIALIST POSITION REQUEST**

Ms. McMillan-Urell read the resolution to the committee, to create and fill the position of Administrative Benefits Specialist per the preapproved budgeted amount. Ms. Decker is requesting a half-time to three-quarter time position. After discussion, it was decided to offer \$19/hour for this position. Mr. Grisen proposed an amendment to the resolution heading to add the word “part-time” which would read: *Classification K, A Resolution to Create and Fill a “Part-time” Administrative Veterans Benefits Specialist Position* and an amendment to delete the word “clerical” and add the words “Step 1 level for up to” which would read: *Classification K Step 1 Level for up to* \_\_\_\_\_ number of hours; in the second paragraph. HR will fill in the number of hours.

A motion was made by Mr. Grisen and seconded by Ms. McDonough to approve the amendments to the resolution to fill a Part-time Administrative Veterans Benefits Specialist position for approximately 561 hours. A roll call vote was taken. The motion was unanimously approved.

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

Ms. Knauber highlighted the case/investigation numbers pointing out a significant decrease in COVID cases.

General updates:

- Campaign to offer Carbon monoxide detectors to community members.
- Avian influenza has been detected in wild birds and poultry farms which is highly contagious and fatal to chickens.
- Rural farm health clinics were held on March 9<sup>th</sup> and March 16<sup>th</sup> at 3 different dairy farms which will continue through April at 9 more dairy farms.
- Buffalo County Health & Human Services received a Certificate of Commendation from the Governor honoring the department for contributions to the Buffalo County community and state.

Ms. McMillan-Urell suggested a news release be submitted on the commendation.

COVID 19 vaccination update:

- Weekly appointment-based clinics will be held at DHHS starting this Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. People can sign up on-line via a jot form or call the agency to sign up.
- Vaccine rates as of 3/24/2022
  - Residents with at least one dose: 62.5%
  - Residents who have completed the vaccine series: 60.3%
  - Residents who have received one additional/booster dose: 34.8%

Ms. Knauber presented a list of the Public Health Educator activities that was requested at the March home committee meeting. Ms. McMillan-Urell questioned the activities listed and her

concerns that a majority of the activities were education related. Ms. Knauber explained in detail the tasks and duties of the Public Health Educators. Ms. Knauber highlighted the plan moving forward in the next stage of the pandemic which includes a review of the preparedness plan and preparedness inventory, create after action reports, and complete a needs assessment. Ms. Knauber shared that the Educators are trained to do this work and their focus will be on completing this work over the next few months knowing when the priorities and activities are accomplished, the Public Health department is prepared to match staff with the workload. Ms. McMillan-Urell stated that the Board Chairman, Vice Chairman, and others would like to take a look at these positions and reduce the positions, specifically those who reside out of state. Ms. McMillan-Urell also shared that the County Board's direction is to set an end date for the Public Health Educator's employment. Ms. Knauber explained there are ARPA funds available to have the Educators complete the work. Ms. McDonough expressed the concern that the Public Health Educators live closer. Ms. McMillan-Urell requested an end-date of employment for the Educators to take back to the County Board. After discussion, Ms. McMillan-Urell asked if the project can be completed in a month and both Mr. Rynders and Ms. Knauber confirmed that the project cannot be completed within that timeline. Ms. Hoffmaster inquired whether or not the ARPA funds are needed elsewhere and/or why we don't want to use them for the completion of the recovery plan? Ms. McMillan-Urell shared that the County Board stated that if they're going to have people in these positions, they wanted them to be local.

**8. 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**

Ms. Jamie Weaver presented an update:

- The Zoning Committee has been added to the resolution and will be reviewing the sampling project.
- Public Health has been designated as the lead department for sampling and will be managing the intern's tasks.
- The total budget CAPX2020 and/or ARPA funds request has been reduced to \$42,000 from the original \$50,000.
- Utilizing Dairyland Lab or well drillers data.
- UW-Stevens Point – current samples are being collected from wells identified by WI DNR meeting standards that have a well ID# with a construction report that helps give us standardized samples that are scientifically sound.
- Using historical data would be very time-consuming vs getting fresh data.
- The completion of the project will allow us to get a baseline data needed to identify projects and opportunities available, provide service to the community with free well testing, and provide results, education, and solutions.
- An Assembly bill can provide aide to low-income households with contaminated wells.

Ms. Knauber shared an update from the Land Conservation meeting with UW-Stevens Point who presented a recommendation for sampling strategies that the project will be utilizing. The Land Conservation Committee unanimously voted to move forward with the groundwater quality/well sampling project. Mr. Rynders pointed out that the Land Conservation Committee neglected to sign the resolution. Mr. VanDeWalle and Mr. Schmidtknecht both stated that ARPA funding is earmarked for the project. Mr. Nels Anderson from GIS stated it was a recommendation to do a

sampling every five years but not mandatory. Mr. Anderson explained, to establish a baseline would mean we gain the knowledge of the quality of the water. Mr. Cale Severson, Land Conservationist agreed with Mr. Anderson there is no rule to do water testing every 5 years. The goal is to get a snapshot of information on what the Buffalo County groundwater looks like in 2022. UWSP will compile a full report of the data analysis to inform residents of the groundwater. The collection of this baseline data is an opportunity for land conservation to utilize the information for other areas of the county where needed.

Mr. Grisen suggested meeting with the chairs of each committee to come up with a more detailed plan.

After discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McDonough and seconded by Mr. Grisen to table moving the resolution forward until the new committee members are on board. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Schmidtknecht No, Mr. Grisen Yes, Ms. McDonough Yes, Ms. Beseler Yes, Ms. Hoffmaster Yes, Ms. Kleinschmidt Yes, Ms. McMillan-Urell Yes. Motion approved.

Mr. Grisen inquired if this is tabled, does it move to Finance? Mr. Rynders' understanding is the new Finance Committee would see it after the May Home Committee meeting.

## **9. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – COVID-19 RECOVERY PLANNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT DESIGN**

Ms. Knauber provided the Buffalo County Strategic Recovery Plan and needs assessment survey to the committee which was compiled by the Public Educators. The goal is to better understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Buffalo County community members. Ms. Knauber walked through the components and tentative timeline of the plan's completion. Extensive discussion was held on the proposed timeline of the survey/results, cost of mailing, effectiveness of the survey, efficiency of staff, and the option to table the assessment survey.

Ms. McMillan-Urell shared information she saw on a link from the CDC on Wisconsin vaccination rates. She stated Clark County had low vaccination rates and zero deaths. Ms. Knauber brought up the COVID-19 death rate chart from the March Public Health report showing Clark County as having one of the highest death rates in the State sharing these stats were compiled from the CDC.

A motion was made by Ms. McMillan-Urell and seconded by Ms. McDonough to move forward with the Recovery Plan Needs Assessment having the COVID team prioritize and complete sending surveys, after-action reports, and needs assessment with a deadline of May 31, 2022, with Ms. Gabby Janovec and Ms. Sarah Schlaefer's employment terminated as of that date and retaining Ms. Darby DeGross if needed. A roll call vote was taken, Ms. Beseler Yes, Mr. Schmidtknecht Yes, Ms. McDonough Yes, Ms. Hoffmaster No, Mr. Grisen Yes, Ms. Kleinschmidt Yes, Ms. McMillan-Urell Yes. Motion approved.

## **10. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION –MAYO CLINIC HOMETOWN HEALTH GRANT PROPOSAL**

Mr. Rynders and Ms. Renchin are working with Mr. Olson from the Sheriff's Department to purchase video conference equipment for remote mental health services and/or substance abuse for inmates. A grant has been awarded to UW Extension to purchase the equipment.

Mr. Rynders is working on a Mayo Clinic Hometown Health grant to provide purchase of services remotely. Funding is also available through a mental health block grant.

**11. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – REVIEW OF TELECOMMUTING PILOT PROGRAM FOR PERMANENT POSITIONS**

Mr. Rynders informed the committee of the one-year pilot program for staff telecommuting will expire on May 31, 2022. The positions involved in the pilot program are (3) Economic Support positions, (1) Public Health Educator, (1) Child Support Specialist, and (1) Account Clerk. Mr. Rynders' recommendation is to continue to have the 6 positions telecommute. A motion was made by Mr. Schmidtkecht and seconded by Ms. Hoffmaster to approve the continuation of the (6) staff members telecommuting. A roll call vote was taken. Motion unanimously approved.

**12. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Mr. Rynders presented the 2021 (14-month report) and the 2022 report through February. Mr. VanDeWalle inquired on the potential risk Mr. La Valla had presented where the County may incur expenses. Mr. Rynders explained there was resolution to that situation; the client got put into a funded placement.

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

After review of the 2021 and 2022 monthly vouchers, a motion was made by Ms. Hoffmaster and seconded by Ms. Beseler to approve the monthly vouchers as presented. A roll call vote was taken. Motion unanimously approved.

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

The monthly unit reports were reviewed. Ms. McMillan-Urell inquired about the senior meals vs the donations received. Mr. Rynders reported there is fluctuation due to the timing of when donations are received.

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

No report.

**16. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS DIRECTOR**

Mr. Rynders announced that Ms. Renchin was awarded the grant she wrote to fund room and board for inpatient AODA treatment. These funds will be used for room/board for clients who have medical assistance but can't access inpatient treatment.

Ms. Cammi DeWyre, ADRC Manager and her transportation staff are working on an idea to use 85.21 funds to increase the mileage rate for drivers due to the rising price of gas using non county dollars.

Mr. Rynders reported all 3 vacancies within DHHS are now filled. The Family & Community Specialist position was filled by intern Margaret Killian, and Bryant Adams and Michelle Nelson were hired to fill the (2) Economic Support staff positions.

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

Ms. McMillan-Urell shared that Mr. Nelson is unable to attend Tuesday night meetings and inquired if the Committee would be open to change the Home Committee meeting to the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM.

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

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 5, 2022, at 6:30 PM.

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

None

**20. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Hildebrand

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