

MONROE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Meeting of January 17th, 2013
Community Services Center, Sparta, Wisconsin

BOARD PRESENT:

Carol Las, Chairperson
Craig Buswell, Vice Chairperson
Christopher King, Secretary
Susanne Peck
David Pierce
Robert Retzlaff
James Rice
James Shilling

STAFF PRESENT:

Linda Lazer, Director
Susan Rettler, Clinic Administrator
Ron Hamilton, Social Work Suprv.
Diane Erickson, Business Administrator
Cathy Abbott, Admin. Services Coord.

GUEST:

Andrew Kaftan, M.C. Corporation Counsel

Call to Order: Chairperson Carol Las called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Employee Recognition: Ms. Lazer recognized that Dia Holseth was retiring on this date after working 33 years as a Social Worker with the agency. Board members were informed that a certificate of recognition and a cake will be presented to Ms. Holseth following the meeting.

Approval of Open Meeting Minutes for January 3rd, 2013: Following brief review, A MOTION WAS MADE BY ROBERT RETZLAFF, SECONDED BY DAVID PIERCE, AND CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOR to approve the minutes from the regular open meeting of January 3rd, 2013 as printed.

Public Comment Period: No one presented at this time.

Human Services Board Orientation:

Ms. Lazer denoted an updated agency organizational chart had been included in the Board books. She also introduced Diane Erickson, as the agency's new Business Administrator, who took over the position in late January, followed by introductions of the Board members.

Staff/Director Oral Reports:

Director's Update and WREA and WRIC Reports: Ms. Lazer reported that she attended two meetings within the past two weeks where the financial status of the Western Region for Economic Assistance (WREA) was discussed. It is felt that due to staff vacancies and delays in filling positions, their fiscal status will be balanced for 2012. Ms. Lazer is also working toward increasing Monroe County's financial allocation for 2014 as the current commitment is falling short of current expenditures.

Ms. Lazer indicated two meetings had been held for the Western Region Integrated Care where discussions continued in more depth about the administrative structures for the three counties' (La Crosse, Monroe, and Jackson Counties) agencies and specifically for mental health services. It has become clear that there is an inequity in administrative support among the counties, as well as significant differences in workloads that are a cause for concern.

La Crosse County will be implementing Netsmart software (previously CMHC) to assist with planning and program development. There may be a potential for our agency to receive funding to upgrade our current software through participation with this grant since we are aware of the pending sunset clause on our current CMHC software package in 2014.

A joint meeting involving WRIC, the Eau Claire collaborative, and State representatives was held recently to review the two separate grant projects. Eau Claire's collaborative involves seven counties and has just hired a coordinator to work on their project.

Aging and Disability Resource Center and Behavioral Health Units: In follow-up to the previous meeting, Ms. Rettler provided Board members with copies of a March 2011 edition of the Wisconsin Traffic Safety Reporter and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that addressed information about the ignition interlock devices.

Children and Family Services Unit: Mr. Hamilton announced that he received information just today that the ongoing standards for child protective services cases went into effect immediately. This will impact workloads involved with child protective services cases in that social workers are being mandated to increase the initial and ongoing contacts with children, their parents, and extended family members, as well as with collateral contacts.

Board Member Reports/Discussion:

Oral Report on Aging and Disability Resource Center of Western Wisconsin Advisory Committee Meeting: James Rice reported that the next meeting for the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Western Wisconsin Advisory Committee will be mid-March.

Oral Report on Mississippi Valley Health Services Board Meeting: Carol Las indicated a Board and Directors meeting for the Mississippi Valley Health Services Board is scheduled to be held on January 23rd, and she will provide an update at the February meeting.

Oral Report on Western Wisconsin Cares (WWC) Meeting: James Shilling updated Board members about Care Wisconsin, a new Family Care service provider being approved for this area. He went on to indicate that Western Wisconsin Cares (WWC) is anticipating the transition of some of their clients, as well as new participants to choose the new provider. With the advent of this new service option, it is unsure where their office will be located and it is also anticipated that there will be an increased demand on recruitment of social workers and nursing staff. It is also anticipated that an increase in service requests will fall to the Aging and Disability Centers since they need to provide options counseling to anyone wishing to change providers as well as seek initial services. Mr. Shilling also shared that WWC received a rating of 100% on their annual review, and their membership doubled in 2012 resulting in their reserve fund being expended.

Board Items:

Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA) Board Member Appointment: Carol Las indicated that she has been invited to represent Monroe County Human Services Board at the Wisconsin County Human Services Association meetings. The Department already is a member of the agency, so there would be no additional cost associated for Ms. Las to serve in this capacity. Following discussion, A MOTION WAS MADE BY CRAIG BUSWELL, SECONDED BY CHRISTOPHER KING, AND CARRIED BY MAJORITY VOTE WITH ROBERT RETZLAFF OPPOSED to approve Carol Las' appointment to the Wisconsin County Human Services Association representing Monroe County Department of Human Services.

Mr. Retzlaff questioned the necessity for all the variety of types of meetings, the increasing annual dues paid for memberships to multiple state-wide organizations, and the expense associated for attending ancillary meetings. Further discussion indicated an importance for local agencies such as Human Services being provided and taking advantage of opportunities to have a voice in issues that impact agency revenues, mandated standards, and procedures, as well as to collaborate with other counties required to do similar work.

Human Services Board Composition/Appointments Requirement per §46.23: Ms. Las asked for clarification on appointment of Human Services Board members based on the variance in definitions between the State statute and the County Ordinance in reference to having at least one Human Services Board member who has either been a recipient or has had someone from their family be a recipient of Department services.

Corporation Counsel Andrew Kaftan was present at the meeting to provide a legal opinion about this item. Mr. Kaftan noted that Section 15-48 of the County Ordinances could be clearer if reformatted. His opinion also noted that Board members could not be required to divulge this information, but the person making the recommendation for appointment should know that the appointee may meet these qualifications. Various methods were discussed for assuring that this qualification is met in the future. Mr. Kaftan cautioned the Board about being so descript about meeting guidelines that it becomes extremely difficult to meet the requirements.

Following discussion, A MOTION WAS MADE BY CHRISTOPHER KING, SECONDED BY JAMES RICE, AND CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOR that the appointing party fulfills the Statute to affirm that the Human Services Board now meets the qualifications as to composition as set forth by the County Ordinances and the State Statutes.

Human Service Board Membership Terms: Discussion also occurred concerning the length of terms of Human Services Board members and the potential for removal as a Board member if they are no longer serving a term on the County Board. Again, there seems to be a variance in the language contained in the Statutory language from the County Ordinance in regard to the term of "may" be removed versus the term of a County Board member "shall" be the same as their term of office. Mr. Kaftan again cautioned as to whether more restrictiveness would be prudent and suggested that if the Human Services Board feels strongly that a change is necessary to the County Ordinance, he encouraged they offer a resolution to amend the Ordinance language.

Update on County Ordinance to Comply with Statutes Regarding the Human Services Board:

Based on the above discussions, the Board should designate a member or a sub-committee to discuss the County Ordinance issue with County Corporation Counsel, Andrew Kaftan.

Policy/Operational Items:

Use of Cameras in Investigations Policy: Ms. Lazer shared a copy of the Use of Cameras in Investigations Policy denoting the revisions made in the policies. A MOTION WAS MADE BY CRAIG BUSWELL, SECONDED BY CHRISTOPHER KING, AND CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOR to approve the policy with the denoted revisions.

Fiscal Reports:

Monthly Financial Report: Ms. Lazer presented the profit loss report indicating the department's budget through November 2012 was running at a deficit. She commented on the specific revenue shortfalls and increased expenditures especially in the area of juvenile out-of-home placements.

Ms. Lazer indicated that she had hoped to provide much more agency financial detail at this meeting; however, due to the transition of staff in the Business Administrator's position and the short time between the two meetings in January, she needed to postpone this report to the February meeting to allow for a more comprehensive report to be presented.

Line Item Adjustment: Diane Erickson outlined line items that exceeded their budgeted amounts, i.e., Workers' Compensation, mileage, telephone, and other services to clients, and other line items where funds would be transferred from to cover the overages, i.e., salaries, fringe benefits, and collection fees. She indicated that a total of \$68,000 would be transferred to cover those areas that exceeded their budgeted amounts. Following review, A MOTION WAS MADE BY CRAIG BUSWELL, SECONDED BY JAMES SHILLING, AND CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOR to approve the line item transfers adjustments as denoted above.

Reserve Resolution: A copy of the previous resolution that had been implemented for initiation of the \$300,000 reserve fund was shared by Ms. Lazer with Board members. She agreed to draft a new resolution with an increased limit of \$500,000 for Board members' review at the February meeting. Board members asked that the County Administrator be invited to the next meeting to be involved in this important discussion and to understand the rationale for this request and potential resolution. If necessary to meet with the Administrator's schedule, Board members were willing to change the meeting date and time.

Payment of Agency's Monthly Vouchers: Following the Board members' individually reviewing the December 2012 vouchers, A MOTION WAS MADE BY ROBERT RETZLAFF, SECONDED BY CRAIG BUSWELL, AND CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOR to approve payment of the monthly vouchers for December.

Date of Next Meeting/Agenda Topics/Location: The next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 21st at 8:30 a.m. and will be held in room 443-444 at the Community Services Center, Building A, in Sparta. Ms. Las indicated that should has accepted employment for the next four months and may not be able to make arrangements to attend those Board meetings. In her absence, Vice-Chairperson Craig Buswell will be responsible for conducting the Board meetings. Discussion and potential action about the resolution to increase in the reserve fund was denoted for next month's agenda.

Adjournment (approximately 10:30 a.m.): With no further topics for discussion, this meeting adjourned after A MOTION WAS MADE BY DAVID PIERCE, SECONDED BY JAMES SHILLING, AND CARRIED WITH ALL IN FAVOR. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Cathy L. Abbott

Administrative Services Coordinator