

MINUTES

The Vernon County Department of Human Services Committee met on Monday, May 12, 2014. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Sherman Erlandson. Proper public notice was given. Motion made by Hicks to approve the minutes as sent. Second by Richardson. Motion carried.

Audience to Visitors

No one from the audience wished to speak.

WHEAP Contract Provider Comments – Cindy Harter, CouleeCap

Schwarz introduced Cindy Harter from CouleeCap who is contracted to administer the WHEAP/energy assistance program for Vernon County. Schwarz stated Harter does an excellent job with the program and asked her to share some highlights. Harter stated she does the energy assistance applications. Harter stated that 1,212 applications were processed from 2012-2013 and as of May 7, 2014, 1,265 have received benefits. Harter stated that approximately 420 new households have applied this year. Harter stated that LP went from \$1.69/gallon to \$5.99/gallon and gave the example that if a home needed 200 gallons of LP the price went from \$338 to \$1,198 or an increase of \$860 per minimum fill. Harter stated she is seeing more people not paying their bills over the winter because they can't have their heat source turned off then in the spring when the moratorium is off they have a large heating bill. Harter also stated there is a Keep Wisconsin Warm state funded program for elderly, veterans, disabled or homes with small children that also helps with heating expenses. Erlandson requested that Eitland have a handout with these statistics on it and mail with next month's minutes.

Review/Approve 2014 Purchase of Service Contract Amendments

Eitland stated there were 2 contract amendments that needed approval. CouleeCap received an additional \$45,000 in crisis benefits (no county dollars) and Longview Home for Boys a \$32,919 increase in the mental health court committed line item. Motion made by Hicks to approve these two contract amendments in the amount of \$77,919. Second by Cox. Motion carried.

Presentation of Vouchers/Internal Transfers

Vouchers were presented. Eitland also had a handout of a voucher reference sheet showing facilities we use throughout the year. Motion made by McCoy to approve the vouchers in the amount of \$355,138.77. Second by Brault. Motion carried.

Erlandson stated he should have introduced the new committee member Mary Bringe earlier in the meeting – Welcome Mary! Eitland stated that pursuant to State Statute, the Human Services Committee consists of 6 County Board Members and 3 members of the community as 1/3 of the committee has to be members of the community representing the populations we serve.

Internal transfers were presented. Motion made by Brault to approve the internal transfers in the amount of \$45.24. Second by McCoy. Motion carried.

Discuss and Take Action on Attendance at Mental Health Conference

Eitland stated she has not received word yet on the mini-grant that she submitted for \$2,000 for suicide prevention and rural mental health service improvements. Eitland stated this conference will be held July 17, 18 & 19 in Washington, D.C. Eitland stated she was proposing that the Board approve \$300 in expenses for her out of the Human Services budget if the grant request is approved as submitted. Eitland stated she would be paying for her own flight and training materials. After discussion motion was made by Hicks stating that if the grant is approved the county would pay up to \$1,000 of Eitland's additional costs including flight and training supplies because this will benefit the county as a whole. Second by Cox. Motion carried. Eitland stated she will also be going to the Finance Committee because costs will exceed the daily county hotel rate.

Discuss and Take Action on Request to fill position

Eitland stated Sarah Larson, one of the Economic Support Specialists (ESS), submitted her resignation. Eitland stated that when we became part of WREA it was determined that Vernon County needed 3 full time permanent ESS workers. Eitland also stated that through the Federal Affordable Care Act, there are 3 limited term full time ESS workers and one of these LTE positions is also vacant. Eitland stated she was requesting to fill Sarah Larson's position which is a fully funded position in the WREA budget. Motion made by Vosseteig to allow Eitland to advertise for the Economic Support positions. Second by Hicks. Motion carried.

Income Maintenance – Chris Stanke

Stanke stated she wanted to compliment the ESS workers for stepping up in Sarah Larson's absence. Stanke said she can always count on the Vernon County workers.

Stanke stated that applications from the health care exchange are slowing going down. Stanke stated that caseload numbers were at about 2,700 but after the Marketplace Open Enrollment they are up to 5,100.

Clerical/ES/Administration – Kelly Schwarz

Schwarz stated we have another change in the way we do our bill paying. Schwarz stated that in 2012 we entered our information into our Visual WISSIS system and the information was uploaded into the state system. This was not working well so now we are entering the data directly into the state system and it will download to our Visual WISSIS system.

Schwarz stated the office clean up went well.

Long-Term Support/ADRC WW – Jean Klousia

Klousia stated the ADRC has an exciting week coming up. Klousia stated the Governor is proclaiming the week of May 11-17 as Aging and Disability Resource Center Week in Wisconsin. Locally, this is of special importance as we have had an ADRC in La Crosse and Jackson counties since 1998. Both La Crosse and Jackson were part of the initial nine counties who piloted the ADRC concept. In 2008 we formed the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Western Wisconsin. This was and still is a four county partnership including Jackson, Vernon, Monroe and La Crosse Counties. Annually our ADRC continues to receive and provide services to over 10,000 referrals for adults who are elderly or disabled. We are pleased to have four offices and over 30 dedicated and quality staff present in our four counties. Services include information and assistance services, long term care options counseling, short term case management, benefits counseling, prevention and early intervention services and access to long term care programs.

Klousia stated United Health Care will be doing outreach on May 22nd from 1-3:30 at the Bethel Buttik in Westby. Klousia stated we will have a table there to inform people about the ADRC.

Klousia stated Human Services will be sponsoring a town hall meeting on May 14th from 6-7:30 at Viroqua Elementary regarding underage drinking. Klousia stated we have seen an increase in 3 party alcohol petitions this year in relation to the past. There will be another town hall meeting May 21st at the La Farge school gym. Klousia stated the Judge and Sheriff will be a part of these meetings.

Family & Children's Unit – Jim Lee

Lee handed out the statistics for April.

Lee stated there were 9 children in out of home care. Lee stated there was 1 child in residential care. Lee stated there was 1 child at Lincoln Hills.

Lee stated there were 11 families in the CST program.

Lee stated there are 10 individuals receiving Kinship Care.

Lee stated Angela Mink the new Social Worker began working the end of April. Lee thanked the other workers for helping out in the absence of 2 other social workers.

Financial – Marsha Everson

Everson stated the audit process began about 3 weeks ago.

Everson went over the Budget vs. Expenditure report and stated we should be at 33%. Most items are within expected expenditures.

Director's Report – Pamela Eitland

Eitland stated she has not heard anything on the dental care grant and hopes to hear by the end of May.

Eitland stated she had talked at the last meeting about WCHSA redefining the structure of the Board. Eitland stated this has not been done as WCHSA is working on the wording of what the vote will look like. Eitland stated as discussed at last month's meeting she will vote on what she feels is in the best interest of Vernon County.

Eitland gave a status report on the Comprehensive Community Services program. Eitland stated that the joint committee on finance had an objection to release funding. Eitland stated that Wisconsin Counties Association testified at the joint committee on finance and the vote was 12-3 to go ahead and release the funds. This would be a joint measure with Crawford County and Centerpoint Counseling. Center Point has hired a part time individual to help develop this program. Eitland stated there are no levy costs to the counties for this program. Eitland stated the dollar amount was made part of the statute and the state will cover the non-federal portion of what counties would usually pay for.

Eitland stated she wanted to inform the board that concerns were raised about Western Wisconsin Care staff not following proper procedure and statute. Eitland stated that as a result of us bringing this to their attention we are offering a training for their staff. Eitland stated the training will be given by Jean Klousia, Greg Lunde and (potentially) Stephanie Hopkins. Eitland stated Sparta, La Crosse and Tomah staff will be there and about 120 people are expected. Eitland stated this is another great collaboration between Human Services and a professional agency.

At this time Erlandson asked if there were any concerns of the committee. There were none.

The next meeting of the Human Services Committee will be Monday, June 16th at 9:00 a.m.

Motion made by Radcliffe to adjourn. Second by Hicks. Motion carried.

Submitted by,

Kim Tainter
Administrative Secretary

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sherman Erlandson
Dennis Brault
Frank McCoy
Dianne Radcliffe
Brian Richardson
Ralph Hicks
Mary Bringe
Jay Vosseteig
Maynard Cox

MEMBERS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Pamela Eitland
Kim Tainter
Jean Klousia
Cindy Harter
Sheri Hammond
Kelly Schwarz
Marsha Everson
Chris Stanke
Jim Lee