

WASHINGTON COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT (HSD)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

September 19, 2013

Meeting called to order at 8:01 a.m. in Room 1023 of the Public Agency Center, 333 East Washington Street, West Bend, Wisconsin, by Chairperson L. Borman, who read the open meeting statement.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Bassill, Les Borman, John Bulawa, Kristine Deiss, Sarah Follett, Ralph Hensel, Jane Schultz, Paul Ustruck

MEMBER EXCUSED: Dawn Eyre

GUESTS PRESENT: Herb Tennes, County Board Chairperson; Dave Rank, DAILY NEWS; Kathleen Christenson, Family Promise

HSD STAFF PRESENT: Karen Alt, Eric Diamond, Sandy Hoefert, Ruth Reines, Sue Thornton, Jim Strachota

Review of Minutes: J. Bulawa made motion, S. Follett seconded, to approve the HSD Board minutes from the August 23, 2013, meeting as distributed. Carried.

Homeless Issues, Family Promise and Restat Building Project: As K. Christenson explained, the Family Promise of Washington County Board of Directors and Network are made up of representatives from the community, business, law enforcement, service providers and local churches. Working in conjunction with Family Promise, the Homeless Coalition has developed a ten-year strategic plan to prevent and eventually end homelessness in Washington County by providing resources and supportive services necessary to assist clients in obtaining and maintaining permanent housing. She then described the purpose, content and progress on the Homelessness to Housing (Restat Building) Project.

HSD has budgeted \$32,500 in 2014 to assist the homeless with primary goals of identifying people with behavioral health issues, connecting them with services and assisting law enforcement when responding to crisis calls and the information hotline.

Grant Application for the Post Unification Support Program: S. Thornton described current Child Protective Services (CPS) provided in Washington County and presented examples of current activities. There are continuing and additional mandates and conditions from the State and Federal governments to be met in child abuse and neglect situations, and we feel we are meeting those requirements.

The State post reunification support grant is offered to all counties, providing \$1,100 per month per child to support and prevent them from re-entering the foster care system after they are reunited with their parents following foster care placement. Washington County has applied for a capacity to support three children and their families who receive treatment and supportive services. Child welfare requires change in parents' behavior before their children can be returned to them. Some parents are unable and/or unwilling to change which can result in the termination of parental rights (TPR) and the eventual adoption of the child by another family. Neglect is defined by law and must be proven, requiring CPS to find the balance between interfering with the family and child welfare.

Discussion followed on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), persons affected by opiates, the increase in cases of pregnant women addicted to opiates and children born addicted to opiates, resulting in withdrawal and possible special needs.

Intent to Provide Comprehensive Community Services on a Regional Basis: E. Diamond reported that he is focusing on modifying residential services provided to 14 people suffering with severe and persistent mental illness from Washington County. Eight of these individuals are currently placed in settings outside of the County, which inhibits involvement in local programming. A few local providers have been contacted regarding the possibility of serving these people in the Washington County community. It is hoped that transitioning to more independent, less-restrictive living local settings can be accomplished without increasing costs.

Discussion followed on how to assist mentally ill persons, preventing isolation, being able to contribute to society, identifying people with potentially violent tendencies and societal acceptance of mentally ill people.

Currently, Washington County provides Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) independently, with 60% of the funding coming from State Medicaid and the remaining 40% County match. CCS programming includes intensive case management with clinical supervision to serve mentally ill persons with a goal to reduce the need for inpatient stays. The County is investigating the possibility of forming a regional CCS program with Ozaukee and Sheboygan Counties. It is felt that CCS regionalization would result in shared resources, expertise and costs and possibly niche residential providers. A main incentive for regionalization is that the State would remove the counties' responsibility for the 40% funding match. The application to indicate intent to regionalize CCS programs is due December 1, 2013, with defined models that have to be utilized in order to meet State requirements.

Summary of Public Hearing: Since a number of people at this meeting attended on September 10, Chairperson L. Borman asked them to comment on the HSD Public Hearing. H. Tennes indicated that many of those who spoke related their experiences and gratitude for the assistance they have received in working with HSD. S. Follett echoed Mr. Tennes' statement. P. Ustruck said the Public Hearing was well attended and that all spoke very highly of the programs they are involved in and the number of people being helped. K. Deiss said the Public Hearing focused on programs rather than the budget. J. Schultz indicated that not only people receiving assistance spoke but several professionals and providers also expressed thanks to the County. L. Borman said that providers indicated their appreciation to be able to provide assistance to participants and how many of them would be in different places and situations had they not received that help.

The next HSD Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2013, starting at 8:00 a.m. Representatives from local law enforcement agencies will be presenting information on AODA issues in Washington County.

Motion made by M. Bassill, seconded by K. Deiss, to adjourn. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Ustruck, Board Vice-Chairperson
Karen Alt, Recording Secretary

Copies of all non-privileged material pertinent to this meeting are available at HSD offices.