



ROCK COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, April 28, 2021 – 4:30 P.M.

Call to Order: Chair Knudson called the virtual meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 28, 2021.

Committee Members Present: Brian Knudson, Supervisor; Sally Jean Weaver-Landers, Citizen Representative; Shirley Williams, Supervisor; J. Russell Podzilni, Supervisor; Kaelyb Lokranz, Supervisor; Kathy Schulz, Supervisor; Angelina Reyes, Citizen Representative; Ashley Hoffman, Citizen Representative; and Pam Bostwick, Supervisor.

Committee Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Katherine Luster, Director; Tera O'Connor, Deputy Director; Greg Winkler, Deputy Director; Sara Mooren, Administrative Services Manager; Jennifer Thompson, ADRC and APS Division Manager; Maria Delgado, Economic Support Division Manager; Verence Sandoval, Administrative Intern; John Weber, HSD Analyst; Tricia Stilen, CPS Foster Care Program; Julie Butz, Children's Long Term Support Program Manager; Tracy Mayer, Behavioral Health Clinician; and Bette Trimble, Crisis, Intake and Outpatient Services Program Manager.

Others Present: Ann Seffernick, United Cerebral Palsy; Doug Wilde, Rock County Supervisor; Patrick Singer, Rock County IT; Jamie Kersten; and Sue Rusch.

Approval of Agenda: Citizen Representative Weaver-Landers moved the agenda to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Podzilni. Supervisor Schultz requested that the Submission of Committee Requests be moved towards the end of the agenda now and moving forward. The agenda was unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Approval of Minutes of Human Services Board Meeting of April 14, 2021: Supervisor Bostwick moved the minutes to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Williams. The minutes were unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Supervisor Podzilni mentioned a questionnaire he received anonymously from a post office box in Afton. He stated that he does not respond to anonymous requests.

Approval of Contracts and Transfers: Citizen Representative Hoffman moved thirteen contracts to the floor, seconded by Citizen Representative Weaver Landers. Ms. Mooren answered questions. The contracts were unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Rock County HSD April Employee Impact Recognition Award: Ms. Luster recognized Heather Campbell as the April IMPACT Award recipient. She shared the nomination with the Board and thanked Heather for her service.

Foster Care Advisory Committee Update: Ms. Mayer stated that communication has been an ongoing topic and seeking solutions to improve this is important to the group. Ms. Stilen shared that the group generated a survey with the help of Kendra Schiffman that was sent to all foster parents last week. Good responses have been received, such as training opportunity suggestions and ways to get information to foster parents. Supervisor Schultz requested the current number of foster parents and possible reasons why some have stopped participating in the program. Ms. Stilen responded that there are 87 licensed providers and Ms. Mayer shared some data that reflected reasoning for foster care providers closing their license, including personal reasons, family circumstances, and permanency is reached for relatives. Ms. O'Connor added that there are currently 153 children receiving foster care in Rock County. Ms. Luster stated that she will share some cumulative data later in the agenda when she shared information about the Alia grant.

Resolution In Support Of Governor Evers' 2021-2023 Executive Budget Proposals for Caregivers: Supervisor Schultz moved the resolution to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Podzilni. Ms. Thompson summarized the resolution and stated that Supervisor Doug Wilde authored the resolution. In essence, significant dollars are added into the budget to support:

- a tax credit for caregivers
- dementia care specialists around the state
- an Alzheimer's family caregiver support program
- care giver use of the WI FMLA Benefit
- a guardian training program and ombudsmen
- ensures CLTS eligible children receive services
- hospitals making sure there are care giving programs available upon discharge

Supervisor Wilde shared that because the Education, Veterans and Aging Services Committee meeting members were delighted by the proposals to support caregiver initiatives, they put the resolution forward. He shared that by doing so, staff feel supported and that the committee has their back and understand the value of their work. Supervisor Wilde also stated that lines 1-24 were accidentally omitted (original presentation of staff committee) and requested an amendment to the resolution. Supervisor Shultz moved to have amendment submitted, seconded by Supervisor Bostwick. The amendment was unanimously approved. APPROVED. The original resolution as amended was unanimously approved. APPROVED.

United Cerebral Palsy Update on Birth to Three: Ms. Seffernick is the Director of the Birth to Three program. She shared that UCP's one year anniversary was last December and they are back up to pre-pandemic referral numbers – 40 per month. Currently services 220 kids at any given time (includes both evaluations and services provided). Last June, UCP began conducting exit surveys for all families leaving the program and almost all responses were satisfied or extremely satisfied with services. When UCP first started providing services, only two families were frustrated with the changeover of providers. Since then, all responses have been positive. Made intentional effort to increase diversity in the children coming into our program. Last December 18% of new referrals were not checking white as their ethnicity/race. That increased to 25% by June and this percentage is now at 35. Ms. Seffernick joined the Latino Service Provider Coalition and UCP has done a lot of Child Find outreach, both of which has helped increase diversity. The State is working on a public service announcement titled "The First 1000 Days" to dispel myths

about Birth to Three, promoting services, and to encourage people who work with children to refer to this program.

Report on HSD Work Regarding Housing/Homelessness: Mr. Winkler shared a PowerPoint and gave an overview of what HSD does to help people in the County with housing issues. He stated that Department's role regarding stable housing involves identifying what clients need to feel safe and stable, helping them to address those needs, and finding resources. There are number of common barriers to housing:

- upfront costs, such as security deposits
- lack of sufficient monthly income to cover expenses
- lack of skills to navigate housing market
- addiction and/or mental health symptoms that interfere with ability to obtain housing
- history of evictions and/or prior court judgments related to back rent or property damage
- conviction for certain crimes such as a sex offense or other offense that presents safety concerns

Mr. Winkler also defined steps that HSD takes to help:

- Provide support to clients to maintain current housing
- Assist clients to search for housing
- Authorize HSD funding to pay for housing
- Connect clients with specific housing resources
- Support and monitor placements in supervised settings

A survey of staff related to HSD regarding housing assistance received 60 responses that included information about 309 clients who have received housing assistance from HSD:

- Staff helping clients search for housing = 65%
- Connecting clients with housing resources = 61%
- Supporting clients to maintain current housing = 52%
- Using HSD funding to support housing = 27%
- Supporting placements in supervised settings = 18%.

Mr. Winkler also presented a list of responses that demonstrate how the ADRC helps callers with housing issues (1300 calls January 2020 – March 2021). APS regularly provides housing services to APS clients, as well. More details were presented in regard to how HSD provides funding for people with housing issues. Mr. Winkler's presentation will be emailed to the Board. Mr. Winkler and Ms. Luster answered questions.

Director's Report:

- **Update: COVID Related Departmental and Community Needs:** Ms. Luster shared that HSD continues to follow CDC guidelines and there has been no change in protocol. She noted there was a lull in COVID exposures, however, we have had a few staff-related exposures recently. HSD does not track staff who have been vaccinated, though data was collected in regard to staff interest in receiving the vaccination if offered and more than half, but less than three fourths indicated an interest. This may have changed since that time. HSD continues to wear masks and practice social distancing.

- **Update: Dr. Daniel Hale Williams Rock County Resource Center:** Ms. Luster advised that progress continues. IMT toured the site yesterday. Ms. Luster indicated that she had taken video when the HSD Board toured and shared it with staff. Details to prepare for the move and the actual move itself are being compiled into an occupancy manual that will be shared with staff. The furniture quote exceeds what had been budgeted, which was expected. Mr. Sutherland is drafting a resolution to increase funding, which will hopefully be approved. Ms. Luster also spoke briefly about the interior aesthetics, stating that three wall murals are planned of Rock County sites.
- **Alia Innovations Child Welfare Grant** – Ms. Luster gave a brief overview of Alia, which received a grant that will be used to fund an initiative around supporting Rock County families to reduce the number of kids in care and to reduce racial disparities in our child welfare outcomes. Alia is currently focused on recruiting for two positions to support the initiative. Our community will have access to high quality national technical expertise with a goal of keeping kids in their homes. Ms. Luster shared data connected with this work and will send this to the Board. The data included a snapshot of the disparity of Rock County children and youth entering out-of-home care each year 2017-2019; a trends report (trending down) for CPS in Rock County 2014-2020; and, data reflecting the number of kids who achieve permanency through reunification, which is significantly lower than the state average when compared to comparable counties. It is hoped that the grant will target reunification, in particular.

Submission of Committee Requests: Supervisor Schultz shared that a month ago our state was losing a lot of food share dollars because of a disagreement about the COVID arrangements - has this been resolved? If not, can we create a resolution?

Next Meeting: Wednesday, **May 12, 2021** at 4:30 p.m. – via Zoom.

Adjournment: Supervisor Schultz motioned to adjourn, seconded by Supervisor Lokrantz with unanimous approval at 5:40 p.m.

Kathleen Wellnitz, Secretary

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD