



ROCK COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, June 24, 2020 – 4:30 P.M.

Call to Order: Chair Knudson called the virtual meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 24, 2020.

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

Committee Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Katherine Luster, Director; Tera O'Connor, Deputy Director; Greg Winkler, Deputy Director; Sara Mooren, Administrative Services Manager; Ryan Trautsch, Youth Justice (YJ) Program Manager, Penny Nevicosi, YJ Supervisor; Ali McCalmont, Economic Support (ES) Supervisor; Maria Delgado, ES Supervisor; Anissa Welch, YJ Social Worker; Linda Graf, YJ Social Worker; Gena McGuigan, Children, Youth and Families (CYF) Secretary; Kendra Schiffman, Data Analyst; and Patrick Singer, Information Technology (IT) Data Systems Manager.

Others Present: Terry Thomas.

Approval of Agenda: Citizen Representative Weaver-Landers moved the agenda to the floor, seconded by Citizen Representative Kleven. The Agenda was unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Approval of Minutes of Human Services Board Meeting of June 10, 2020: Citizen Representative Weaver-Landers moved the minutes to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Williams. The minutes were unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: None.

Submission of Committee Requests: None.

Approval of Contracts and Transfers: Citizen Representative Weaver-Landers moved two contracts to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Podzilni. Ms. Mooren provided a summary about each of the contracts. The contracts were unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Resolution to Recognize Linda Najdowski: Supervisor Bostwick moved the resolution to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Podzilni. Ms. McCalmont presented the resolution and advised Ms. Najdowski was not able to attend. Ms. Najdowski has served the citizens of Rock County for

twenty-seven years as a dedicated and valued employee. She began her career as a Seasonal Account Clerk for Social Services and Community Programs in 1993 and accepted a like position with HSD in 1994. She provided compassionate care and kindness to all she came in contact with. Ms. Najdowski began her Economic Support Specialist position in 1998, bringing with her a joyous personality and kind spirit to her clients and coworkers alike. She will be missed for her gentle spirit and bringing smiles to many faces with her friendly personality. On behalf of the HSD Board, Chair Knudson congratulated Ms. Najdowski on her retirement and thanked her for her years of service. The resolution was unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Resolution to Recognize Linda Graf: Supervisor Bostwick moved the resolution to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Schultz. Ms. Nevicosi introduced Ms. Graf and presented the resolution, noting Ms. Graf's twenty-seven years as a dedicated and valued employee of Rock County. She began her career as a Master's Level Social Worker doing triage to support Juvenile Justice and Child Protective Services with Rock County Human Services. She served as the gatekeeper to the system and ensured that youth and families got linked with the services they needed. Chair Knudson thanked Ms. Graf for all of the patient and professional support she has provided him over the years. He congratulated her and wished her well in her retirement. Ms. Luster also thanked Ms. Graf, acknowledging her legacy of commitment and compassion that have positively influenced the youth, families and employees who have been impacted by her work and advocacy. Ms. Luster further stated that she has a lot of respect for Ms. Graf and wished her well in her retirement. Ms. O'Connor shared that she has worked closely with Ms. Graf on many initiatives and thanked her for her partnership and commitment to Rock County families. The resolution was unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Resolution Authorizing Temporary Double Fill of One Lead Worker CPS Position: Supervisor Williams moved the resolution to the floor, seconded by Supervisor Bostwick. Ms. O'Connor presented the resolution, stating HSD currently has a vacant lead worker position due to one Child Protective Services (CPS) supervisor now acting in a leadership role. HSD is also short on training staff and two staff are now working in lead roles, assisting with the training of new staff. HSD would like to compensate them for the work they are performing. The time period involved in this temporary situation is from June 15 through November 15, 2020. HSD has funds in the budget to cover the costs. The resolution was unanimously approved. APPROVED.

Human Services Department (HSD) Updates and Action Plans Regarding Addressing Racial Injustice – Ms. Luster & Diversity and Inclusion Committee Members: Ms. Delgado introduced the HSD Diversity Team and stated the committee's mission statement, which was previously sent to board members. She summarized the committee's actions and how it interacts in the community.

Ms. Welch presented goals of the committee, one of which was to glean feedback from HSD All Staff meetings through the use of surveys to learn how staff have been responding to these meetings/trainings. The team will use survey data to assist in planning 2020 trainings. The committee members also attended the YWCA Racial Justice Conference and found the speakers and resources quite valuable. The Diversity Committee created Courageous Conversations with HSD and members of the community. These conversations provide a forum to discuss diversity, inclusion and racial equity. Additionally, the Committee has created a Diversity and Inclusion Resource Guide as well as this presentation for the HSD Board. Future committee goals include: implementing and facilitating additional Courageous Conversations for HSD.

Ms. Schiffman shared a PowerPoint presentation that detailed staff survey feedback. Topics to be incorporated into future staff trainings include:

- Creating HSD policies and procedures/practices addressing diversity, inclusion and equity
- Implementation of monthly or quarterly on-going trainings/discussions as a regular part of professional development
- Recruit/Hire diverse staff (and track this on a regular basis)
- Create zero tolerance policies related to discrimination and racists comments
- Review policies from a diversity/inclusion/equity lens
- Recognize diverse holidays and cultural celebrations

Committee recommendations include:

- A need for acknowledgement of systemic racism from top management, as well as this committee, to prioritize diversity, inclusion, and equity into department-wide initiatives, policies, and practices, beginning with a policy, procedure and practice review
- Ongoing training and accountability for middle management (mainly supervisors) in order for department-wide workplace culture and practice to change in ways that create a more welcoming, inclusive, and equitable workplace
- Ongoing training, professional development, and accountability thereof, for all staff in the area of diversity, inclusion and equity
- Intentional, prioritized efforts to hire and retain diverse staff

All recommendations are being made to help change HSD culture, create a more valuable workplace, and retain staff of color.

The Board and Ms. Luster thanked the committee for their efforts, acknowledging that this group is passionate about this issue. In addition to their own difficult jobs, committee members are committed to this positive initiative and provide helpful leadership to the department. The Board requested the committee's Resource Guide and PowerPoint be emailed to Board members.

Director's Report:

- **Update Regarding Department Operations and Return to Work Planning:** Ms. Luster stated that HSD continues to prepare for returning to the office and opening buildings. This will be a slow process and we will continue to have a lot of staff working remotely while continuing to sustain support to clients.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, **July 8, 2020** at 4:30 p.m. – Virtual Meeting.

Adjournment: Supervisor Bostwick motioned to adjourn, seconded by Supervisor Williams with unanimous approval at 5:11 p.m.

Kathleen Wellnitz, Secretary

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD