

Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Health and Human Services and Veterans Service Committee

Date of Meeting: Thursday, May 5, 2022

Electronic and Hard Copy Filing Date:

Location: Department of Health and Human Services
Buffalo County Courthouse
2nd Floor Conference Room
407 S 2nd Street, Alma, Wisconsin

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS/INTRODUCTIONS

Member's present were Brad Schmidtkecht, Kim Beseler, Liz Hoffmaster, Wendy Kleinschmidt, Richard Mueller, Brian Michaels, Nathan Nelson, Carol McDonough, and Mary Anne McMillan-Urell. All provided a brief introduction.

OTHERS PRESENT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING

Dave Rynders, Felicia Decker, Josie Knauber, and Ryan VanDeWalle attended the meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ANY MATTERS THAT WILL BE TAKEN UP BY THE COMMITTEE AT THIS MEETING.

None

3. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made by Ms. McMillan Urell and seconded by Ms. McDonough to approve the April 5, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion approved.

4. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Mr. Rynders called the meeting to order. Mr. Nelson nominated Ms. McMillan-Urell for Chair. Mr. Mueller made a motion to close the nominations and Mr. Nelson seconded the motion. Motion approve. Ms. McMillan-Urell was elected Chair unanimously. Ms. McMillan-Urell opened nominations for Vice Chair. Ms. McDonough nominated Mr. Schmidtkecht for Vice Chair. Mr. Nelson made a motion to close the nominations and Ms. Beseler seconded the motion. Motion approve. Mr. Schmidtkecht was elected Vice Chair unanimously.

5. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – WESTERN DAIRYLAND APPOINTMENT

After a brief discussion exploring if other members may be interested in serving in this role, Ms. McMillan-Urell agreed to represent Buffalo County on the Western Dairyland board. Mr. Schmidtkecht nominated Ms. McMillan-Urell to appoint the Western Dairyland committee, and Ms. Beseler seconded. The motion was approved.

6. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – REAPPOINTMENT OF LIZ HOFFMASTER TO CITIZEN MEMBER POSITION

Mr. Nelson motioned to reappoint Ms. Hoffmaster as a citizen member of the Veterans/DHHS Committee. Ms. Beseler seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

7. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION - REAPPOINTMENT OF BRAD SCHMIDTKNECHT TO ADRC COMMITTEE

Ms. Hoffmaster motioned to reappoint Mr. Schmidtknecht to the ADRC Committee. Ms. McDonough seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

8. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – VETERANS SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT

Ms. Felicia Decker presented her Veterans Services Report including sharing highlights from the CVSO Association Spring Conference. Ms. Decker reported receiving a \$1,000 donation for the Veteran Brick Memorial. Two fund raisers for the Memorial are currently under consideration. Mr. Mueller asked about the process for putting up flags at cemeteries for Memorial Day recognition and Ms. Decker explained the process.

9. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION - VETERANS SERVICES MONTHLY VOUCHERS

The monthly vouchers were reviewed. A motion was made by Ms. Beseler and seconded by Mr. Mueller to approve the monthly vouchers as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

10. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – VETERANS SERVICES CLASSIFICATION K. A RESOLUTION TO CREATE AND FILL A PART-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE BENEFIT SPECIALIST POSITION

Ms. Decker presented the resolution to the committee, to create the position of Administrative Benefits Specialist per the preapproved budgeted amount for up to 680 hours in 2022. The position is calculated to be paid \$19/hour. Ms. Decker explained this resolution passed last month but there was some process still needed to be completed so the resolution is back again for action. Money is allocated in the current budget to fund this part-time position. Mr. Mueller motioned to approve this resolution. Ms. Hoffmaster seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

11. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – VETERANS SERVICES POSITION DESCRIPTION

No changes were made to the position description.

12. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

Ms. Knauber presented her public health report including the availability of free CO2 tests. Ms. McMillan-Urell asked for a definition of latent tuberculosis and Ms. Knauber provided this information. Ms. Hoffmaster asked for CO2 information she can provide to student families, which Ms. Knauber agreed to provide. Ms. Knauber provided details on the activity level of avian flu noting she has a standing order for prophylaxis treatment for avian flu in case of high-risk human exposures to avian flu, which has not occurred yet in Buffalo County. Dairyland Labs have discontinued doing water testing for commercial sites, but Ms. Knauber reassured the public health unit would be able to handle the anticipated increased workload in this area. Information of the current COVID vaccine clinics at the Buffalo DHHS office was provided; Ms. Beseler asked if there were any difficulties obtaining vaccine and Ms. Knauber responded that

there have not been such difficulties. Ms. Hoffmaster asked if tetanus shots could be provided again as it was in the past. Ms. Knauber informed this was possible as this service had not been funded for quite some time but there were discussions at the state department considering restarting funding, and Ms. Knauber expressed Buffalo Public Health would be more than happy to provide this service if funding creates an opportunity.

13. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – COVID RECOVERY NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Ms. Knauber provided background information for new members on the rationale for conducting a community needs assessment on the impact of COVID-19 to Buffalo County residents. The plan for sending out surveys was described, and an updated budget was included in the committee packet. Ms. Knauber said all that was left to do was to secure the bulk mailing permits from the post office and for the Spanish translation of the survey to be completed. Ms. McMillan-Urell questioned the cost of the translation considering the limited number of persons impacted. Ms. Knauber stressed the need to make the survey available to all residents and Mr. Rynders explained there were civil rights compliance and state contract responsibilities the Spanish translation would help meet. Mr. Nelson asked what the purpose was for the survey and Ms. Knauber provided examples illustrating purpose. Ms. McDonough asked if reminder post cards were needed, and Ms. Knauber responded that reminder cards have proven to be effective in increasing survey completion rates. Mr. Nelson asked if the sample size of 1000 households is large enough. Mr. Rynders responded they aimed to have the sample size large enough to get a response representative of the entire county, but not larger to save unnecessary costs that would result in the same information. Ms. McMillan-Urell asked if the surveys could be sent out through the schools and Ms. Hoffmaster responded it was important to get a good representative sample, not just families with children. Mr. Nelson asked if we could have the survey on the website. Ms. Knauber expressed concern this may skew results and members identified challenges to assuring respondents to a web survey were limited to Buffalo County residents. Mr. VanDeWalle asked what would occur if the response rate was low, Ms. Knauber will consult with DHS staff with survey expertise as to an appropriate response if this situation occurs and will report back to the committee. As the go ahead for sending the survey out was given at the April Committee, and this was review to discuss any further questions and concerns, informal support was expressed for going forward with sending out the survey and proceeding with the community needs assessment.

14. REVIEW/DISCUSSION – BASELINE GROUNDWATER QUALITY/WELL SAMPLING PROJECT IN BUFFALO COUNTY

Ms. Knauber provided the update that there would be no sampling this year because of insufficient time left in the season to complete. At the May 23rd County Board Meeting a presentation will be provided to include Kevin Masarik, Groundwater Education Specialist at UW-Stevens Point. County Board members will have an opportunity to submit questions prior to the meeting.

15. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION –REFILL ACCOUNT CLERK SUPERVISOR

Mr. Rynders shared regarding the resignation of the Account Clerk Supervisor, Jen Severson. Mr. Rynders has a coverage plan in place for this vacancy. He shared that Account Clerk, Peggy Zeman, had previously filled the interim Account Clerk Supervisor role six months ago, and she

is willing to fill this role again. The independent audit process has begun. Mr. Rynders updated on state reporting deadlines, and that the department had received an extension. Previous Account Clerk Supervisor, Shawn Squires, is contracting with the department to assist in completing state reporting by extension deadline of 5/6/22. Mr. Rynders discussed challenges of meeting the extension deadline. Wage of Interim Account Clerk Supervisor was discussed. Ms. Zeman started the interim role on 4/27/22, and there was discussion of retroactive pay. Mr. Rynders discussed Ms. Zeman's interest in applying for the Account Clerk Supervisor position. There was discussion on the timeframe of refilling of the vacant position. Mr. Schmidtknecht made a motion to refill the Account Clerk Supervisor position, and Mr. Nelson seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

16. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM ACCOUNT CLERK SUPERVISOR

Mr. Nelson made a motion to appoint Ms. Zeman as Interim Account Clerk Supervisor, and Mr. Schmidtknecht seconded. Motion carried unanimously. It was clarified that this appointment was retroactive to 4/27/22.

17. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – ACCOUNT CLERK SUPERVISOR POSITION DESCRIPTION PROPOSED REVISIONS

Mr. Rynders discussed two revisions. One being striking out “supervision of support staff duties”. In his explanation, supervision of support staff would be taken from the Account Clerk Supervisor and filled by Mr. Rynders and Mr. LaValla. The second change is requiring a minimum of an associate degree in accounting for this position. There was discussion of pay scale based on supervision exclusion in job duties. A decision was made to finalize pay scale at the next Human Resources committee meeting with the understanding that the language may be changed at that meeting. Mr. Nelson makes a motion to approve changes, and Ms. Beseler seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.

18. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – REFILL ACCOUNT CLERK POSITION IF VACANCY OCCURS DUE TO PROMOTION

Mr. Nelson makes motion to refill Account Clerk position if vacancy occurs due to promotion, and Mr. Michaels seconded. Motion is approved unanimously.

19. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – ACCOUNT CLERK POSITION DESCRIPTION

No discussion.

20. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – ECONOMIC SUPPORT REMOTE CAPABILITY

Mr. Rynders discussed the \$215,000 ARPA funds WREA received. These funds can support overtime costs for staff as there is an increase in workload expected in the months to come. Income reviews have been delayed due to the pandemic, but they are coming due, creating an increase in workload. Additionally, Mr. Rynders shared that the funds can also be used to create a space in the lobby where a client can remotely apply for benefits. The state requires WREA to provide face-to-face consults for benefits application, and this space in the lobby would fulfill that requirement. Buffalo County has three WREA staff, which is the lowest staffing in the 8-county region. Having minimal staff increases difficulty of always meeting the face-to-face

requirement, as staff mostly telecommute. Currently, one WREA staff is in the office every weekday, while the others telecommute. Mr. Rynders shared other counties in the consortium are supportive of this idea, and he will be doing cost analysis over the next few months. Making this space available will reduce pressure of staff turnover or illness disrupting staff work schedule of telecommuting vs. working in the office. The space in the lobby reduces the need of having a WREA staff member physically present in the office. The 8ft x 8ft space would require that two walls and a door that locks be installed to ensure it is easily accessible and confidential. Additionally, supervision of the client would be needed, but this could be fulfilled by the front desk worker. Mr. Rynders shared that he is waiting on a cost estimate. Mr. Rynders shared that in the meantime, he and the WREA leadership want to make sure there are sufficient funds to support the overtime needs over the next months. Once overtime period is complete, he will see if we have enough funding to support creating a space in the lobby for WREA clients. Mr. Schmidtknecht expressed support for exploring this plan. Ms. Hoffmaster asked if the space could be used for other purposes if this need is not present in the future. Mr. Rynders offered other possibilities for this space including clients using for telehealth. Mr. Rynders will bring this back to the committee for action if there are funds to move forward.

21. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS FINANCIAL UPDATE

Mr. Rynders provided financial update that was prepared by Ms. Zeman. He noted that there will be an increase in overtime pay, which is from the WREA staff, and is being paid with ARPA funds. Mr. Rynders has authorized overtime for Ms. Zeman which the committee will see in the upcoming months' financial update.

22. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS MONTHLY VOUCHERS

After review of the 2021 and 2022 monthly vouchers, a motion was made by Mr. Schmidtknecht and seconded by Ms. McDonough to approve the monthly vouchers as presented. Motion unanimously approved.

23. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – MONTHLY UNIT REPORTS

The monthly unit reports were reviewed.

24. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – WESTERN DAIRYLAND COMMUNITY ACTION

No report.

25. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – DHHS DIRECTOR

Mr. Rynders discussed fiscal software needs for the county. He shared that there was a meeting including Mr. Rynders, Mr. VanDeWalle, Pepin County Human Services Director, Paula Winter, and Pepin County Administrative Coordinator Pamela Hansen to discuss state reporting requirements and software capabilities. Mr. Rynders reported that the potential vendor, Tyler Technologies, has solved an issue related to HIPAA requirements. There is a plan to meet with Tyler Technologies to see if this solution will meet HIPAA requirements for the counties. Mr. VanDeWalle shares that if this solution is approved, Buffalo and Pepin Counties would be on the same financial and payroll system. This would help with mutual aid between Buffalo and Pepin Counties. It was shared that if everything works out, Tyler Technologies could go live in late 2023 or early 2024.

26. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

None.

18. REVIEW/DISCUSSION/ACTION – NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 2, 2022, at 6:30 PM.

19. PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

None

20. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Rynders and Josie Knauber