

**MEETING OF THE
WINNEBAGO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES BOARD**

Minutes

DATE: Monday, December 22nd, 2025

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

PLACE: Oshkosh Human Services Building Room 33

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ralph Harrison, Karen Powers, Harold Singstock, KristL Laux, Bryan Stafford, and Walt Ulbricht

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Topel, Renee Soroko, Heather Foust, Janet Rohloff, Melissa Hoodie, and Julie Kotajarvi

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Binder, Eric Sparr, Koby Schellenger (virtual), Paul Kaiser (virtual)

Vice-Chairman Ralph Harrison called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM B: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Steve Binder expressed his gratitude for Bill Topel's dedication and hard work over the years in human services and congratulated him on his retirement.

AGENDA ITEM C1: APPROVE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 24TH, 2025 HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING

Walt Ulbricht moved for approval, seconded by KristL Laux and carried unanimously. (5-0) Brian Stafford was not present at this time.

AGENDA ITEM C2: ACCEPT MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 11TH, 2025 ADRC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

KristL Laux moved for acceptance seconded by Karen Powers and carried unanimously. (5-0) Brian Stafford was not present at this time.

AGENDA ITEM D1: DEPARTMENTAL REALIGNMENT OF CONNECT PROGRAM FROM THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

District Attorney Eric Sparr reviewed the resolution requesting 5 Case Managers, and an Administrative Assistant to move from Human Services Department to District Attorney's Department. All funding associated with position and program expenses will increase the District Attorney's budget and decrease

the Human Services budget. No new funding is needed. The aim is to align departmental services and ensure efficient oversight of programs: Drug Court, 24/7 Alcohol, 24/7 Drug Free, Mental Health Court, Teen Court and the program formerly known as DHS Diversion. There was a question regarding employee sentiment about the move and whether it would have any negative impact. Eric explained multiple discussions with staff. All positions remain with Winnebago County within the same pay grade and current benefits. Bryan Stafford motioned for approval; seconded by Walt Ulbricht. Motion was carried unanimously (6-0).

AGENDA ITEM D2: 2026 BOARD PRESENTATION TOPICS

Renee Soroko requested presentation topics for next year. Please email Renee rsoroko@winnebagocountywi.gov or Julie jkotajarvi@winnebagocountywi.gov. The schedule will be available within the next couple of weeks.

AGENDA ITEM E1: REPORT ON RECRUITMENT & RETENTION AND AGENCY UPDATES BY RENEE SOROKO

Renee Soroko shared we currently have 17 vacancies with the majority in Child Welfare. Interviews are always ongoing. Human Resources oversees recruitment for new hires.

Renee shared a few agency activities. Salvation Army opened as an overnight shelter December 11th – 15th due to below zero temperatures. They requested assistant with staff coverage overnight. We asked staff to volunteer, with four Human Services staff filling shifts. Assistance was approved by County Executive and Corporation Counsel.

So far this month, behavioral health staff took all 8 vans with clients to see the Celebration of Lights one evening. Long term support teams donated sandwiches to the downtown Oshkosh Hope Fridge. Annually, behavioral health staff host a holiday party for clients mostly donated by staff and clients.

AGENDA ITEM E2: FINANCIAL REPORT

Janet Rohloff shared that we are still projecting to be over budget in travel expenses. There are no significant changes in the last few months. We anticipate a potential surplus of roughly \$1 - \$1.5 million. We received our first payment for WIMCR (Wisconsin Medicaid Cost Reporting) in the amount of \$537,000.00.

AGENDA ITEM F1: INPATIENT & INSTITUTIONAL PLACEMENT STATISTICS

Human Services Director Bill Topel reviewed placement statistics: Child Welfare (CW) Division – Juvenile Corrections is at 0.8 Actual Daily Populations (ADP). Residential Care Centers are currently at 3.0 ADP. Behavioral Health (BH) - Specialty Hospitals for adults is at 1.4 ADP with the youth being at 0.0 ADP. Secure Detention is at 2.2 ADP. Foster Care is at 52.5 ADP. Kinship Placements are at 158.0 ADP.

AGENDA ITEM F2: WISCONSIN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Bill Topel shared the WCHSA fall conference was December 4th – 5th located in Wausau, WI. The spring conference will be held April 23rd and 24th in Wisconsin Dells. County Board members can register with the County Clerk's office and citizen members can register with Nancy Ruedinger.

Bill extended his sincere appreciation to the Board for its dedication and support throughout the years. Bill's official retirement day is January 2nd, 2026.

AGENDA ITEM G: BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Karen Powers thanked the WAVE committee for the holiday luncheon. She thanked those who work in Human Services, acknowledging the demanding and difficult nature of our work.

Bryan Stafford thanked Bill for his contributions to the county throughout his 18 years.

With no further business Karen Powers moved for adjournment; seconded by Bryan Stafford and carried at 3:03 p.m. The next meeting will be held on **Monday, January 26th, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. in the Oshkosh Human Services Building in Room 33.**

Respectfully submitted by Julie Kotajarvi, Human Services Department/jk