

**MINUTES
RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEARING**

JULY 14, 2009

The Public Hearing meeting of the Richland County Health and Human Services Board was called to order at 5:30 p.m. July 14, 2009 by Jeanetta Kirkpatrick in the Main Conference Room of the Community Services Building, 221 West Seminary Street, Richland Center, Wisconsin.

Members Present: Betty Havlik, Fred Clary, Jeanetta Kirkpatrick, Marilyn Rinehart, Ray Schmitz, Paul Kinney, and Walter Gust.

Members Absent: Dr. Jenny Myszkowski and Robert Holets.

Citizens Present: Bob Sheire, Heidi Sheire, Dr. Richard Edwards, Norma Pyfferoen, Jolene Coy, Marcella McNelly, Sharry Rucinski, Roger Wahl, Steve Nockerts, Ann Greenheck, Katrina Johnson, Scott Banker, Diane Cox, Joanne Welsh, Bonnie Tydrich, and Windy Goodman.

Others Present: Angie Rizner, Christy Duhr, Lori Thuli, Linda Symons, Lois Martin, Marianne Stanek, Patrick Metz, and Randy Jacquet.

Approval of Agenda and Posting: Motion by Betty Havlik, seconded by Ray Schmitz to approve the agenda and proper posting. Motion carried.

Introductions and Review Purpose of the Public Hearing: Jeanetta Kirkpatrick reviewed the instructions of the Public Hearing noting that the purpose is to solicit comments by the public regarding the services and programs of Richland County Health & Human Services to assist in the development of the 2010 budget and plan. The Board and all those present introduced themselves.

Citizen Comments about the 2009 Budget and Services: Steve Nockerts and Dr. Richard Edwards came forward to speak in support of the Richland Community Free Clinic. Steve Nockerts noted that many community professionals donate their time to this cause, lab and x-ray costs are assumed by the Richland Medical Center, and the Family Prescription Center donates needed medications. Steve Nockerts stated that “the County RN’s are vital to this clinic.” It was noted that Health and Human Services Public Health nurses determine eligibility analysis for the patients and Richland County also donates \$10,000 annually to the Free Clinic. Steve Nockerts reported that approximately 40-50 patients are seen every Tuesday from 8am – Noon. These numbers have increased due to many individuals having lost health insurance coverage due to the loss of their job. Dr. Edwards stated that the clinic runs very efficiently right now and on average see approximately 10 new individuals every week.

Jeanetta Kirkpatrick noted that the Richland Community Free Clinic is a unique model from what other counties have operating. Steve Nockerts stated that “it is a clinic within a clinic.” Discussion was held regarding the Public Health nursing time needed to staff the clinic. Marianne Stanek reported that one Health and Human Services nurse works at the clinic 4-4 ½ hours per week and the patients would have to come here to get the same nursing service if they no longer were able to staff the clinic. Discussion was held regarding the individuals who frequent the clinic. Dr. Edwards reported that 99% of the patients are Richland County residents, but the clinic does not turn away anyone. Randy Jacquet clarified that the Public Health nursing time would have to be approved by the Health and Human Services Board, but the \$10,000 annual donation would have to be approved by the County Finance Committee. Steve Nockerts stated that both of these donations to the Richland Community Free Clinic are equally important.

Scott Banker spoke in support of the continuation of the Rockbridge Meal Site as part of the Richland County Nutrition Program. Scott Banker noted that the Rockbridge Meal Site operates only 3 days out of the week; where other meal sites are open 5 days per week. Scott Banker stated that if the meal sites have to be cut, that each site should be cut based on a percentage to make it more equitable. Scott Banker noted that the Rockbridge Meal Site operates solely on volunteers, but understands that there is a cost to rent the facility and pay for the meals; however there are “potential ways to cut costs at the meal site.” Scott Banker stated that the Rockbridge Township could possibly help out, and the township as well as the meal site volunteers may have suggestions to help operate this meal site during these tough times. Scott Banker noted that the Rockbridge Meal Site patrons appreciate all that has been done over the last few years to start-up this program in our community.

Discussion was held regarding the number of individuals that frequent the meal site. Scott Banker stated that this increases as the meal site events are announced. It was noted that the 2008 Health and Human Services Annual Report reflects an annual attendance of 4,235 which is the second largest number of meals served by the program. Discussion was held regarding the expenses incurred by the Richland Center School District due to the leasing of the Rockbridge School as a meal site and the other current renters of the facility. Fred Clary reported that Health and Human Services experienced an approximate deficit of \$450,000 in 2008 and is facing an even greater deficit in 2010. Marianne Stanek reported that the Richland County Nutrition Program is slated to receive \$10,500 in Federal stimulus monies from July 2009 – September 2010, but this is one time funding and can only be used for food purchases only.

Heidi Sheire stated that she is here to speak in support of Rich in Community and Family Care’s transportation needs. Heidi Sheire reported that the Towne Taxi is the only transportation option for the elderly and the disabled in the community and they are often closed evenings and weekends. Heidi Sheire stated that she would like to see the transportation services in the community improved to include service availability Monday – Sunday.

Ann Greenheck spoke in support of the Elderly Benefit Specialist Program offered by the Aging & Disability Resource Center. Ann Greenheck noted that this program is free to those individuals over 60 years of age, and was an excellent source of information for her when she was in need of assistance with health insurance issues. Ann Greenheck stated that the program does have a suggested fee or donation, but only \$1,000 was collected last year to help support the program, and our community needs to realize that "Health and Human Services services are not free services; we must pay our way." Ann Greenheck noted that the Elderly Benefit Specialist Program provided a savings of \$931,429.45 to Richland County residents in 2008, as noted on page 20-22 of the 2008 Health and Human Services Annual Report.

Fred Clary questioned if the Elderly Benefit Specialist Program is anticipating any cuts in 2010. Patrick Metz stated that we are not aware of any new cuts from the State, but there has been no increase in these funds either over the years and there are significant tax levy dollars allocated to the program. It was noted that any donations/fees that are collected on behalf of the program go directly to the program.

Katrina Johnson stated that she would like to "contribute my thoughts on how to generate money." Katrina Johnson explained her educational and work experience in relation to working with therapeutic recreation, noting that it is critical to create sustainability in children under the age of 11. Katrina Johnson stated that she would create group programs that can receive billable social work hours. This would be done by reviewing the demographics of the population, reviewing area strengths/weaknesses and needs, checking current staff/intern abilities, and researching existing program funding sources.

Discussion was held regarding how we could bill for these programs. Katrina Johnson stated that an "Individual Education Plan" would be created and we would receive Federal reimbursement through Special Education and successful outcomes would be documented. Jeanetta Kirkpatrick stated that this is a concept we should explore with Health and Human Services providing the services and the Richland School District billing for the services. Katrina Johnson stated that many of the community families who have children with special needs have expressed to her that they feel "intimidated and that there are no options for them." Randy Jacquet stated that unfortunately there are no new monies to establish such a new initiative with the hope of a later payoff. Discussion was held regarding CESA III services and that this could be a more appropriate connection for this concept.

Fred Clary stated that the Health and Human Services Department finances are a major issue with an approximate \$450,000 deficit in 2008 and an uncertain amount of State aid scheduled to be significantly reduced for 2010. Richland County is restricted to only an additional tax levy increase of \$180,000 per year for the entire county's operations. Fred Clary noted that Richland County is only permitted to levy 2%, which was increased to 3% for 2009 only. Scott Banker stated that at the township level a special meeting must be held to increase beyond a 3% levy and a vote would be necessary to approve the

increase. Fred Clary stated that a referendum and paper ballot must be passed in order to increase the allotment at the county level.

Adjourn: Motion by Paul Kinney, seconded by Walter Gust to adjourn the meeting at 6:26pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angie Rizner
Office Supervisor