

**MINUTES**  
**RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
**April 9, 2020**

The regular monthly meeting of the Richland County Health and Human Services Board was called to order at 10:00a.m. on April 9, 2020 by Linda Gentes virtually via Zoom.

Members Present: Linda Gentes, Dr. Jerel Berres, Jayme Walsh, Debra Kyser, Kerry Severson, Ingrid Glasbrenner and Marty Brewer.

Others Present: Tracy Thorsen, Robin Hampton, Jessica Stanek, Angie Rizner, Sharon Pasold, Roxanne Klubertanz-Gerber, Meghan Rohn, Rose Kohout, Stephanie Ronnfeldt, Edie Moore, Myranda Culver and Clinton Langreck.

Approve Agenda and Posting: Motion by Ingrid Glasbrenner, seconded by Jayme Walsh to approve the agenda and proper posting. Motion carried.

Approve March 12, 2020 Health and Human Services Board Minutes: Motion by Dr. Jerel Berres, seconded by Debra Kyser to approve the Health and Human Services Board Minutes. Motion carried.

Directors Report: Tracy Thorsen reviewed the timeline of activities relating to the Public Health Emergency.

- March 4, 2020 - Public Health guidance was sent out to all Richland County Departments regarding the COVID virus.
- March 9, 2020 - After the announcement of the second confirmed case of the COVID virus in the state of Wisconsin, Health and Human Services began posting prevention information throughout the agency, as well as on the Richland County Health and Human Services Facebook page.
- March 12, 2020 - Key County Personnel began meeting to discuss a response to the Governors declaration of a Public Health Emergency and the Richland County COVID webpage was created.
- March 13, 2020 - All senior meal sites were closed, and the closure of all K-12 schools was ordered.
- March 16, 2020 - The Richland County Department Head meeting focused on the county's response to the Governor's order restricting mass gatherings to less than 50 people. The Health and Human Services Management Team met to finalize the remote work policy in preparation for needing to have staff work from home.
- March 17, 2020 - The Governor further restricted mass gatherings to less than 10 people, drive-thru testing services began at the Richland Hospital, and the Richland County Administrator issued a Disaster Declaration. The County Board Meeting was held utilizing a combination of in-person and remote WebEx video conferencing. Health and Human Services canceled all out-of-office meetings, trainings and conferences for all staff and began limiting face to face contacts with clients unless it was deemed absolutely necessary.
- March 18, 2020 - The Richland County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was opened and Angie Rizner was reassigned as the County Public Information Officer (PIO). All childhood immunizations being provided by the agency were put on hold.
- March 19, 2020 - The first COVID-19 related deaths were confirmed in Wisconsin.
- March 23, 2020 - Health and Human Services closed the office to the public, however services continued to be provided through a variety of alternate means. The Transportation Program began limiting services to only essential medical appointments and for individuals with no other alternatives.
- March 24, 2020 - The Safer at Home Order was issued and the agency worked to ensure services could continue to be provided to clients remotely as a large number of staff prepared to work from home.

Many technical and workflow logistics needed to be worked through resulting in several emergency purchases.

- March 26, 2020 - Public Health announced Richland County's first two positive COVID Cases.
- March 27, 2020 - More than half of the agency's staff moved to remote work arrangements. The remaining staff were set up last week and there are now 45 staff working remotely either full-time or part-time, and 16 staff who continue to work in the office. State agencies began holding various weekly meetings to provide program updates regarding waivers and variances.
- April 3, 2020 - The Third case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Richland County.

Tracy Thorsen noted that this week staff are continuing to adjust to their new routine and providing services remotely. While all of these changes have been stressful, she expressed she is very proud of how staff have handled these challenging times and noted everyone continues to work very hard to ensure the needs of the community continue to be met.

While typically the Aging and Disability Resource Center staff are required to complete long term care functional screens, options counseling, enrollment services and assistance with Social Security Disability applications face-to-face, the state is allowing these services to be provided over the phone or via video conferencing. The Transportation Program is continuing to provide transportation to medically necessary appointments as well as operate bus routes for people to obtain groceries and medications, however the number of people on the bus is being limited to two passengers at a time. The Aging and Disability Resource Center is also working with the Dementia Care Specialist as well as the Alzheimer's Association to provide a Web based call-in support group that is available for all four counties in the region.

The number of reports being received by the Child and Youth Services Unit has decreased significantly since the implementation of the Safer at Home Order and this is a trend being seen across the state. Where reports are being received, the seriousness of the incidents is much more severe. There is a concern that this trend may be due to higher risk children not being seen as frequently outside of the home, and once the Safer at Home order is lifted, the Child Protective Services and Youth Justice System will be overwhelmed. Staff are increasing the frequency in which they contact families that are served to ensure they continue to feel supported.

Staff in the Behavioral Health Unit are providing Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Adult Protective services using telehealth or Zoom, which is HIPAA compliant. When it is determined to be necessary staff are meeting with some individuals in the community. Crisis services are also being provided over the phone and after assessing the situation, if a face-to-face assessment is needed staff respond accordingly.

The state has made changes to eligibility requirements making it easier to apply for benefits people may need as a result of the substantial negative financial impact from the COVID crisis. Some changes to the various programs include the extension of renewal timelines, the waiving of work requirements, and accepting "best information available" for verification documents. It was noted that while the Economic Support Unit will typically receive between 100 to 150 FoodShare applications per week, due to the number of recent job losses over 300 applications were received over the course of one weekend. Changes were also made allowing daycare providers to continue being paid even if they have closed. Providers are also being allowed to care for more children for extended hours of operation in order to support essential workers in the midst of school closures. Marty Brewer expressed concern over the children who depend on schools for a variety of essential needs.

Health Officer Update and COVID-19 Response: Rose Kohout provided information at the Emergency Operation Center this morning regarding the 4 confirmed cases in Richland County and noted in depth contact

investigations have begun. As of yesterday the county has received 148 negative tests and each of those individuals has been contacted to have their symptoms and exposure risks assessed. Once the tier process for testing individuals began there was a decrease in the number of people being tested. It is hoped that as the in-house capabilities increase and more labs come online, we may be able to see results more quickly. A leased employee has been brought on to assist with the increased work load and there is also the option of utilizing the Richland School District nurse. It was noted that this situation has highlighted the important work done by Public Health.

Review and Approve Health and Human Services Vouchers: The Richland County Health and Human Services Voucher Report for April 9, 2020 was distributed. The following items required additional discussion: Robin Hampton noted an error on the report and the total amount listed for the vouchers expenses should be \$33,416.77.

Voucher #35 – Bailey/James M.: This was to pay for window blinds for several offices in the Community Services Building including the new County Administrator’s office.

Voucher #42 – Cardmember Services: This was to pay for extra shelter supplies; however, it was explained that extra funds we received from United Givers will be utilized to cover these expenses.

Voucher #1 – Department of Health and Human Services: This was to pay for a lab certification that allows lab testing to be done by the agency.

Voucher #46 & #66-68 – JComp Technologies Inc.: This was to pay for all of the equipment necessary to allow remote work possible for staff.

Voucher #55 – Quadient Inc.: This was to pay for our postage machine service. It was noted the provider has recently changed it name.

Voucher #10-16, #24-25, #44-45 & #75 – Quill Corporation: This was to pay for all quill supplies for the agency. There was a larger purchase made for extra supplies to support sanitizing the building over the last month as well as a larger purchase for copy paper.

Voucher #18 – The Richland Observer: This was to pay for advertisements for the Chapter 980 Committee, a Nutrition Advisory Council vacancy, two Economic Support Vacancies and a WHEAP Advertisement.

Voucher #74 – Scott/Barb: This item was listed as being payable to Barb Scott in error and was actually purchased with the MIS credit card. Therefore, the item was removed from the voucher list and will appear again next month.

Voucher # 17 – UW Madison: This was to pay for three Child Protective Services workers to attend trauma informed care training.

#### *2020 Previously Paid Vouchers*

#1 – CCI: This was to pay for two staff to attend Trauma Informed Training and was paid for by Treatment Court.

Motion by Marty Brewer, seconded by Jayme Walsh to approve the 2020 Richland County Health and Human Services vouchers including prepaid vouchers listed below. Motion carried.

## 2020 and Vouchers

Unit	No. of Vouchers	Amount
Richland County Health and Human Services – 2020 Expense Reports	17	\$7,054.31
Richland County Health and Human Services – 2020 Admin Vouchers	26	\$27,178.40
Richland County Health and Human Services – 2020 Prepaid Vouchers	3	\$1,293.01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>\$33,416.77</b>

Angie Rizner mentioned she mailed out the per diems and a signature sheet for the vouchers. Both of these documents need to be signed and returned.

2019 Budget Summary: Tracy Thorsen explained that each month more information is received that gives more insight on how the previous year will end and an update on the 2019 budget was provided. Placement expenses through December totaled \$1,230,967. Health and Human Services added \$105,549 of 2018 carry over funds to the budgeted \$1,009,619 in Funds 54 and 44 leaving a 2019 placement funds deficit of \$115,799. However the 2019 projected year end funds remaining in the Health and Human Services Core Budget continues to be adjusted and has increased since last month to \$455,650. When the deficit in the placement fund is covered, \$339,851 would be remaining in the Health and Human Services core budget. Tracy Thorsen continued to emphasize that this is highly unusual and should not be expected again. This year is looking to be especially tight. As a result, it was recommended these funds be put back into the placements funds.

Discussion was held regarding what contributed to the increase in the remaining funds over the last month and Tracy Thorsen explained that there are several factors that contribute. When the budget was created it was done without the expectation of Health and Human Services receiving its full allocations since in the past they have been held back to cover the cost of placements. Now that a charge back process has been developed the agency was able keep those allocated funds for the services they were actually intended for. Another large factor was the outcome of WIMCR, and in 2019 Health and Human Services was not required to pay back any funds which has not always been the case. Robin Hampton added that this too could still change since there is a review still being done.

2020 Budget Summary & Richland County Placement Report: Robin Hampton reviewed the 2020 budget as of March 31, 2020. It was highlighted that Detox Services is already showing 79% utilization for the year. These funds are intended to assist a person who is being hospitalized for detox services and we have already had an individual in this situation this year. Dr. Jerel Berres questioned the total % utilization of 24% and asked for clarification if this was a percentage of the 2019 or the 2020 budget. After discussion it was determined that there was an error and the 24% should be 19%.

Health and Human Services revenues were reviewed and revenues are slowly coming in at this point with \$502,696 having been received so far. It was noted that if the charge back process were not in place, the budget balance would be -\$171,712. However, with the charge back process in place, the core budget balance is restored to \$24,928. Robin Hampton emphasized that 2020 will be a very tight budget year and there will not be any wiggle room.

The 2020 Placement Report was reviewed and Tracy Thorsen explained that expenses were exceptionally high in January and February. This is something that will continue to be monitored closely. Adult Institutional and Inpatient Placement costs after reimbursements totaled \$216,610 and Adult Crisis Stabilization expenses

totaled \$4,185. There were fewer individuals in Adult Community Residential Placements in February and costs came to \$17,424 bringing total expenses in Fund 54 to \$238,219.

Child Institutional, Inpatient, and Detention Placements remained relatively the same with no new placements starting or ending in February. Total costs for Child Institutional Placements came to \$32,722 and \$10,215 for Detention Placements. Some additional placements were seen in the number of Child Foster Care placements due to a family being served short term. Costs for Group Home and Treatment Foster Care services totaled \$18,894 and costs for regular Foster Care totaled \$5,359 giving an overall total for expenses in Fund 44 of \$67,190. Tracy displayed a chart that illustrated monthly placement expenses over the last three years. In general, costs have been high this year for January and February.

2020 Contract Monitoring Report: Angie Rizner distributed the 2020 Contract Monitoring Report and reviewed those contracts that currently exceeded 17%, noting that most invoicing should be through February. While Kareo is currently over 17% it was noted they have billed through the month of March. The Family Children’s Center, La Crosse County Human Services, Schmidt Consulting, LLC., Tellurian, Inc., and Winnebago Mental Health Institute are all over utilized, will continue to be monitored, and may need to be amended in the future.

Approve Contracts, Agreements, and Amendments (Mailout #1): Myranda Culver reviewed additional information that was prepared regarding the proposed contract with Vista Care. Vista Care is well known for being able to serve clients with the most extreme behaviors and who most often times cannot be placed anywhere else. The client in need of these services has been placed in Winnebago Mental Health Institute for the majority of the past year at a total cost of approximately \$105,00 and it has been determined by the treatment team, in collaboration with Winnebago Mental Health staff, that the clients care has reached a point where it may not be possible to find another community setting. The contract with Visa Care would require a 12-month commitment, and potential funding options and opportunities for reimbursement were reviewed including Medicaid reimbursement through Comprehensive Community Services and the 2021 WIMCR reconciliation process.

<b>RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES</b> <b>2020 NEW HHS CONTRACT/AGREEMENT/MOU APPROVALS (4-9-2020)</b>		
<b>TLC HOMES, INC. DBA VISTA CARE</b>	To provide adult family home services to an individual who due to mental health issues is unable to live independently. (Sheboygan)  <i>This will require County Board approval</i>	For a total amount not to exceed <b>\$475,000.</b>

Motion by Debra Kyser, seconded by Marty Brewer to approve the New 2020 contract and forward the recommendation on the County Board. Motion carried.

Personnel Updates: Tracy Thorsen announced the hiring of Aubrey Bruckner, Economic Support Specialist; and Toni Cabrera, Economic Support Specialist, effective April 13, 2020. Motion by Kerry Severson, seconded by Marty Brewer to approve the hiring of Aubrey Bruckner, Economic Support Specialist; and Toni Cabrera, Economic Support Specialist, effective April 13, 2020. Motion carried.

Tracy Thorsen requested that Claire Stoeffler, Substance Abuse Counselor, pass probation and be placed on regular status effective March 30, 2020. Motion by Kerry Severson, seconded by Marty Brewer that Claire Stoeffler, Substance Abuse Counselor, pass probation and be placed on regular status effective March 30, 2020. Motion Carried.

It was reported that Diane Cox, leased Child Protective Services Consultant, had completed the work required of her and submitted her resignation effective March 27, 2020. Kay Cunningham, leased Limited Term Public Health RN was hired to assist with the increased workload in the Public Health Unit, however soon realized the arrangement would not work. As a result, she submitted her resignation effective March 27, 2020. Sheryl Scott, leased Public Health Consultant was hired through Southwest Workforce Development Board to assist the Public Health Unit during the time of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

Tracy Thorsen made note that recruitment efforts are occurring for two Mental Health Therapist positions. All other vacant positions are on hold. Vacant county positions not being filled at this time in an effort to offer a cost savings to the budget include: Clerical Assistant II, Secretary, Quality Coordinator, Early Intervention Special Educator, Occupation Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Temp/Casual Nutrition Site Worker, two Public Health Nurses and a Health & Wellness Coordinator.

Recognition of Linda Gentes and Jayme Walsh: Tracy Thorsen thanked Linda Gentes and Jayme Walsh for their participation on the Health and Human Services Board and noted their support and commitment to the agency has always been appreciated by the staff. Linda Gentes noted she has been humbled by the work done at Health and Human Services and stressed the importance of the agency to the vitality of the community.

Approve Emergency Purchase of Business Zoom Licenses (Mailout #2): The Business Zoom communication platform meets standards to provide confidential services while it has become necessary for the Health and Human Services office to remain closed to the public during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The purchases of these licenses allows staff to provide confidential services to clients while maintaining HIPAA privacy and security standards. Tracy Thorsen received approval from Linda Gentes, Health and Human Services Board Chair, and Jeanetta Kirkpatrick, County Board Chair, to proceed with the emergency purchase. Motion by Kerry Severson, seconded by Ingrid Glasbrenner to approve the purchase of 10 Business Zoom licenses from Zoom Video Communications, Inc. (San Jose, CA) totaling up to \$2,000 and authorize the expense reimbursement to MIS. Motion carried.

Approve Emergency Purchase of Laptops (Mailout #3): During the process of quickly transitioning staff to remote work due to the COVID Public Health Emergency, it was determined the agency did not have enough laptops available for staff. Tracy Thorsen received approval from Linda Gentes, Health and Human Services Board Chair, and Jeanetta Kirkpatrick, County Board Chair to proceed with the emergency purchase. Due to the extremely high demand it proved to be extremely difficult to obtain this equipment, however MIS was able to secure 10 laptops for the entire county, 6 of which were for Health and Human Services. At the time Tracy Thorsen made the emergency request, the cost of the equipment was \$8,880 however there was an additional expense for \$1,867 for VPN routers and accessories, increasing the amount that was approved verbally. Motion by Kerry Severson, seconded by Jayme Walsh to approve the purchase of 6 laptops computers with accessories from JCOMP Technologies, Inc. totaling \$10,747 and forward the emergency purchase onto the County Board for approval. Motion carried.

Approve Emergency Purchase of Virtual Private Network (VPN) Routers (Mailout #4): Tracy Thorsen explained that the agency did not have the necessary VPN routers to allow for the Capital Consortium Call Center phones to function remotely, and for staff who do not have county issued cell phones to have a functional office phone while working remotely during the public health emergency. At the time of the purchase the total purchase price was not yet received from the MIS Department. Discussion was held regarding the potential for any of these expenses to be reimbursed by the state. Tracy Thorsen noted that there may be some opportunity for reimbursement either through the Capital Consortium or FEMA funds that are designated to reimburse COVID-19 related expenses. Motion by Debra Kyser, seconded by Kerry Severson to approve the purchase of 20 Cisco VPN Routers from JComp Technologies, Inc. totaling \$3,049.60. Motion carried.

Approve Emergency Purchase of Technical Service/Labor (Mailout #5): Tracy Thorsen explained that in addition to the purchase of the Virtual Private Network (VPN) Routers, technical support was needed for the set up and installation of these routers. This too was a cost that was not known at the time the approval was obtained from the Health and Human Services Board Chair. Motion by Marty Brewer, seconded by Debra Kyser to approve the purchase of 12 hours of technical service/labor from JComp Technologies, Inc. totaling \$1,140. Motion carried.

Approve Emergency Purchase of Additional Business Zoom Licenses (Mailout #6): As staff are getting more familiar with the new routine of working remotely and providing services through virtual technologies, it is becoming more apparent that the 10 Business Zoom licenses purchased are not sufficient to meet the needs of the agency. Tracy Thorsen explained that while it is being requested to purchase up to 10 additional licenses, it is likely that only one or two would be purchased as the need arose. Ingrid Glasbrenner questioned if this technology will continue to be utilized even after the stay at home order has expired. Tracy Thorsen noted this is an interesting question that is being considered as staff are become more comfortable with utilizing the technology to serve clients. Kerry Severson asked why Zoom is being utilized while some departments in the county are using WebEx. It was noted that Business Zoom is HIPAA compliant which is a requirement for this agency. Motion by Marty Brewer, seconded by Debra Kyser to approve the purchase of up to 10 additional Business Zoom Licenses from Zoom Video Communications, Inc. (San Jose, CA) not to exceed \$2,000. Motion carried.

Approve the Mitel MiVoice Boarder Gateway Purchase: The Mitel Border Gateway platform allows all Health and Human Services staff to have access to the voice and data capabilities of their office phones on laptops so they can work remotely. Since it was unclear at the time if the MIS department would be able to secure the necessary VPN routers for all of the Economic Support Services phones, the decision was made to move forward with this purchase. Motion by Kerry Severson, seconded by Debra Kyser to approve the purchase of Mitel Boarder Gateway for \$3,405.00. Motion Carried.

Adjourn: The next meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. Motion by Marty Brewer, seconded by Debra Kyser to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meghan Rohn  
Confidential Administrative Secretary