

## **RICHLAND COUNTY CHAPTER 980 COMMITTEE**

**April 29, 2019**

A meeting of the Richland County Chapter 980 Committee was held at 3:00 p.m. on April 29, 2019 in the Main Conference Room of the Community Services Building, 221 West Seminary Street, Richland Center, Wisconsin.

Members Present: Tracy Thorsen, Mike Bindl, Benjamin Southwick, Mary Collins Johnsrud, Scott Timm (by phone) and Lynn Newkirk.

Members Absent:

Others Present: Meghan Rohn.

Approve Agenda and Posting: Motion by Benjamin Southwick, seconded by Mike Bindl to approve the agenda and proper posting. Motion carried.

Approve April 17, 2019 Richland County Chapter 980 Committee Minutes: Motion by Benjamin Southwick, seconded Mike Bindl by to approve the April 17, 2019 Richland County Chapter 980 Committee Minutes. Motion carried.

Consideration of Housing Options for Impending Release of Sex Offender: Discussion was held regarding the recent order made by Judge Rood. Scott Timm explained that based upon this order and previous law, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services was required to give notification of placement to Ashland County. Now that notification has been given, Ashland County has 60 days from the date of the notification letter to propose an alternative placement option based on Judge Rood's order. Scott Timm explained that the residence being proposed is a residence in which the Department of Health Services already has a lease established and has an individual placed. This is most likely the reason the defense attorney chose the location.

Tracy Thorsen questioned if the order made by Judge Rood is running independently of the order Richland County is operating under issued by Judge Sharp. Benjamin Southwick noted that while he would believe this is the case, it is not entirely clear. Scott Timm agreed that the situation has become extremely confusing and noted that Judge Sharp's order requiring a county committee be formed to establish a placement points to the fact that they are operating under Act 184. He went on to explain that under Act 184 a judge does not have the authority to find good cause of placement outside of the county, adding another element of confusion to Judge Rood's order. Benjamin Southwick's recommendation is to continue to comply with Judge Sharp's order and continue the search for a placement within Richland County.

Tracy Thorsen reported that she was able to email the township clerks with information regarding what the committee is searching for in hopes of obtaining any possible information about potential properties available for rent. She noted that of the 16 townships she contacted she received only 5 responses, all stating they did not have any information to share. Tracy Thorsen also followed up on a few private contacts given to her by Benjamin Southwick, however those contact did not result in

any success either. Benjamin Southwick added he reached out to an acquaintance that owned a hunting cabin and inquired if he would be interested in pursuing leasing the property, however he was informed that the cabin is not equipped for permanent living.

Tracy Thorsen spoke with former County Board Supervisor Bob Hollets and he explained that, while he did not have any available space, he was willing to reach out to others. Tracy Thorsen gave him additional details regarding the type of location the committee is looking for. There has still been no communication from any of the sellers of any of the properties that the committee reached out to.

Tracy Thorsen discussed a few other leads that are currently being followed up on. Denny Jax has been in contact with Angie Rizner and is looking into a potential option. Mark Schmitz is a realtor living in Madison with a connection to the county. Lynn Newkirk suggested he contact Tracy Thorsen, however they have not yet been able to connect.

Discussion was held regarding the vacant motel in Sextonville. It was unclear if this was suitable for habitation. Tracy Thorsen noted she could follow up with the Public Health Officer to see if she could obtain any information and will also continue to check for updates on the Zillow website. Discussion was held regarding what information could be told to potential landlords to make the idea more appealing since these leases have the potential to be generous. Scott Timm explained that the department typically will pay above average and have paid between \$1,000 and \$2500 per month in the past, however it varies depending on the value of the property. He added it is fine to share this information. Benjamin Southwick asked if the Department of Health Services needs to inspect the property. Scott Timm explained that an inspection is not needed and they rely on the landlord to disclose any relevant information.

Benjamin Southwick will discuss the vacant school house located on Highway 14 with Kerry Severson and will also email Richland County Board Supervisors to see if there are any other leads. Benjamin Southwick also noted he could petition Judge Rood for clarification on the two standing orders.

Adjourn: The next meeting was scheduled for May 14, 2019 at 2:00pm in the main conference room of the Community Services Building. Motion by Benjamin Southwick, seconded by Mike Bindl to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meghan Rohn

Confidential Administrative Secretary