

Rusk County HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

AGENDA

DATE: December 14, 2023

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Rusk County Government Center-County Board Room, Ladysmith, WI 54848

Note: Items listed on the Agenda are for discussion and possible action by the Health & Human Services Board;

CALL TO ORDER

PUBLIC COMMENT-Limited to Five Minutes Per Person

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- November 9, 2023

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

- Approval of Health & Human Services Vouchers and Out-of-County Travel Requests
- 2023-2024 Contract Approval Process

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- Senior/Youth Center Door Project Update
- Clark County Commission Appointment
- Clerk III Reclassification Request
- Children's long-Term Support Recruitment

PUBLIC HEALTH

- WIC-Lead Testing Purchase
- Community Health Assessment/Plan Updates
- ARPA Allocation Usage

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Program Reports
 - o Children & Family Services
 - o Economic Support
 - o Veterans

ADJOURN

This agenda was prepared by Jeremy Jacobs at the direction of Chair Schneider. Posted December 7, 2023.

At any time, a quorum of another County Committee or of the County Board may be present at the meeting to observe the proceedings, but no action will be taken except by those Committee Members for the stated Committee meeting and only on noticed agenda items.

Please note that, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact the Rusk County Clerk, at 311 Miner Ave. E. Ladysmith, WI Phone: (715) 532-2100. For deaf and/or hard hearing, please call us through Wisconsin Relay 711.

UNAPPROVED
RUSK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2023

Meeting called to order by Chair Schneider at 9:01 AM.

Board Members Present: Phil Schneider, Randy Tatur, Dan Gudis, Mary Schneider, Tom Hanson, Ken Brown, Ted Hakala, Mark Schmitt, Dr. John Ziemer (virtual), Excused: Lois Goode, Dave Willingham

Staff Present: Jeremy Jacobs and Kay Whittenberger. Appearances by Heather Anders and Kaylee Bugbee.

Public Comments:

None

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Schmitt, second by Hakala, to amend the October 12, 2023; minutes to include: to appoint the Health & Human Services Board Chair *or assigned designee* to the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee. Motion unanimously carried. Motion by Gudis, second by Brown, to approve the October 12, 2023; meeting minutes as amended. Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of Health & Human Services Vouchers and Out of County Travel Requests:

Jacobs reported on various purchases, invoices, and Out of County Travel. Motion by Hanson, second by M. Schneider, to approve Vouchers and Out of County Travel. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Gudis, second by Brown, to enter into Closed Session at 9:27 AM. All responded yes.

Closed Session announced by Chair Schneider

Employee job performance pursuant to Wi Stats 19.85(1)(c) for considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the government body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.

Motion by M. Schneider, second by Schmitt, to enter into Open Session at 9:40 AM. All responded yes.

Health & Human Services:

Discussion held.

Motion by Hakala, second by Gudis, to approve recruitment for the vacant Economic Support Specialist position. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Hanson, second by Schmitt, to approve recruitment for the vacant Economic Support Specialist-Medicaid Enhanced position. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Schmitt, second by Gudis, to present the Property Committee with the installation of new electric exterior and interior doors at the Senior/Youth Center. Motion unanimously carried.

Rusk County Department of Health and Human Services
Children and Family Services

November 2023 Board Report

	November Referrals	2023	2022	2021	2020
CPS reports	19	164	217	194	175
Services reports	8	66	105	90	104
Delinquency/JIPS	7	48	58	61	31
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Children in Out-of-Home Care		12			
Children in home on caseload		28			
Youth Justice cases		28			
Interstate Compact Case		1			
Courtesy cases (assisting another county)		4			
Placements		5 children placed with relatives 2 children placed in Rusk County foster home 1 child placed in relative foster care 4 children placed in private agency home			

Child Protection: 2 of the 12 children are in out of home care due to physical abuse and neglect. The remaining 10 are in out of home care due to neglect stemming from parental drug use. We are struggling to find placements for some youth at this time due to high behavioral needs and limited placement options.

Youth Justice: The YJ team continues to work with juveniles who have received referrals due to law violations.

Kinship Care: We are currently providing kinship for 12 voluntary cases, 4 long-term cases and 3 court-ordered cases.

Children’s Long-Term Support (CLTS): We are currently serving 88 children under this program. 34 of these children are also enrolled in CCS. 9 children in the process of being screened for eligibility.

Foster Care: We have 2 foster homes in our county which limits our options for children in need of placement. This has caused us to seek homes outside our county as well as utilizing costly private agency homes.

As always, please reach out to me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Respectfully,

Ashley Nelson, CSW
Children and Family Services
715-532-2120

ECONOMIC SUPPORT REPORT FOR December 2023

Public Health Unwinding continues. MAPP work requirements will resume as of Jan 2024. Premiums were supposed to start back up in Jan 2024 but now they are on hold again. Members are receiving notices from DHS of this change this month. The Consortium is planning trainings for workers since this process has been put on hold for the last 3 years. The Consortium is expecting an increase in calls due to these letters. The State estimates that this change will impact 36,000 members.

There are some changes to the FoodShare Vault (temporary) card process. Adding two new forms, separation of duties and limiting the number of cards. These changes are expected to go into effect Dec 1st, however there are several questions still outstanding. It is unsure at this time if this process will be changed as of Dec 1st or not. No notification has been received as of 12/4/2023.

Interviews for the two open ES positions are scheduled for Nov 29. Per DHS, new workers need to be hired two weeks prior to the DHS New Worker Cohort Start for time to get passwords and complete DHS prerequisites. The next cohort start will be Jan 8, 2024 or Feb 5, 2024.

In Feb 2024, the Consortium will be changing the call center hours of operation to M-W 8-4, Thu 11-4 and Fri 8-2, as a compromise for those counties, like Rusk, that close early on Fridays. Right now, ES workers still have to work until 4 pm on Fridays due to the Consortium contract. DHS requires the call center to be open a minimum of 35 hours and open each day of the work week. Feb 2024 was the soonest that change could be implemented due to notification requirements to DHS and to customers. Rusk County workers are very excited to be able to join with the rest of the county workers that are able to participate in this scheduling option. Workers will start earlier in the day to meet the 38.75 hours each week. They will be given work assignments for any time that they are not on the call center.

FOODSHARE – October 2023 numbers

Rusk County

FS Cases- 1,256

FS Recipients- 2,317

Total FS Benefits Paid- \$331,371

Northern Consortium Cases

Consortium FS Cases- 16,272

Consortium FS Recipients- 30,067

Consortium FS Benefits- \$ 4,330,603

Health Care

Badger Care – 1,653

EBD Medicaid- 653

Long Term Care - 210

Badger Care- 23,449

EBD Medicaid -7,589

Long Term Care -3,150

WISCONSIN HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (WHEAP):

Rusk County- 2024 Heating Season started October 1st: 700 applications, 605 Households received Energy Assistance totaling \$373,520. There were also 13 households that received furnace repairs or replacements totaling \$26,703.

Veterans Services HHS Board Report 10/1/2023 – 11/30/2023

Forms and Reporting:

- Total Federal VA Forms filed for veterans (October, 1 2023 – November, 30, 2023) = 225; 184+ of which directly involved Federal Service Connected, Pension and/or burial claims.
- Reported deaths for 4 Rusk County veterans; Authorized burial benefits filed for 3 county veterans' next – of – Kin; Ensured over \$3,300 received easing the financial burden of veteran's funeral and internment for the grieving families.
- Coordinated mental health treatment for 2 combat veterans through the La Crosse Vet Center and/or other VHA channels, providing skilled counseling while establishing substantiated medical proof for potential service connected claims.
- Processed VA Health Care Claims for 4 local veterans through the Minneapolis or Tomah VA Medical Centers. All filings approved resulting in full health benefits for the veterans.
- Submitted two CHAMPVA dependent health care benefits for two surviving spouses' post-death of the veteran and a single filing for the spouse of a veteran recently granted the 100% P&T Award. CHAMPVA provides qualifying dependents with an excellent health insurance coverage through the federal VA free of charge.
- Petitioned WI Property Tax credit for 2 qualifying veterans (or surviving spouses) ensuring 100% reimbursement of CY2023 property taxes (home + 1 acre).

10 Service Connected, Pension and specialized claims finalized by the VA

Earned benefits and pensioned dollars totaling \$260,305 (to include three veterans receiving a \$45,000 annual entitlement EACH) allocated from the Federal VBA. These tax-free monies go directly in the pockets of Rusk County resident veterans and/or their surviving family.

Highlights:

- WDVA Transportation Grant finalized and \$533 funds received. Transportation of CY2022/2023 veterans to VHA medical facilities was drastically reduced due to veterans taking full advantage of Community Care and the benefit of seeing their civilian physician in the local community.
- Yet another Congressional assistance request filed for spouse who recently lost her husband to service connected disabilities. Worked closely with Rep Tiffany's Office and vital records at Madison to amend the veteran's death certificate resulting in the DIC award to the surviving spouse (\$1,600 a month benefit).
- Federal background check for Geri Leisch finalized and appointment received for issuance of the Personal Identification Card (PIV) allowing her to process federal claims as an Accredited Representative of the Wisconsin Dept of Veterans Affairs (WDVA). There will still be a long learning curve and will take advantage of all training forums available.

- Facilitated establishing teleconference with the Board of Veterans Appeals (Law judge, Washington DC) and one Higher-level Review (HLR) with a west coast Regional Office. Representation and testimony resulted in HLR approval and back pay of over \$70K awarded.
- Multiple Fiduciary filings and coordinating direct deposit changes through the FID HUIB located in Milwaukee. VBA does not accept private Power of Attorney and Fiduciary must be established when the veteran is deemed “incompetent” to handle financial matters.
- Assisted with coordination and participation of the multi-service annual Veterans Day ceremony/events.
- Presented multiple informative sessions on the recent legislation to include the 2022 Pact Act. The Act establishes 20 new presumptive disabilities and other qualifying factors for Gulf War, Post 911 and Vietnam Veterans based on exposure of deadly toxins while deployed to a multitude of SW Asia locations.
- Worked two HISA Grants through VHA, Minneapolis VAMC ensuring potential funding backing of \$6,800 for each submission focusing on disability home modifications.
- Assisted 5+ veterans with establishing new direct deposit information to the federal VA as a result of main bank changing ownership/management. Each individual coordinated meeting involves an office visit and telephonic coordination between the VBA and the veteran.
- Worked with rep and procured 6 full turkey donations from Jenny-O. Large Thanksgiving “baskets” sanctioned and created by various HHS employees making the holiday a lot brighter for 6 Rusk County families struggling financially.