

# Rusk County HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

## AGENDA

DATE: August 8, 2024

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

- July 11, 2024

### HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

- Approval of Health & Human Services Vouchers and Out-of-County Travel Requests
- 2024 Contract Approval Process
- 2025 Budget Proposal Review

### HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- Social Worker/Social Service Worker/Social Services Case Manager Update
- Finance Accountant II-RCTC Resignation/Recruitment
- Child Support Specialist Reclassification Request
- Disability Benefit Specialist Resignation/Recruitment
- Information & Assistance Resignation/Recruitment

### PUBLIC HEALTH

- General Updates

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Program Reports
  - Economic Support
  - Veteran Services

### ADJOURN

*This agenda was prepared by Jeremy Jacobs at the direction of Chair Schneider. Posted August 2, 2024.*

*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**  
**July 11, 2024**

Meeting called to order by Chair Schneider at 9:02 AM.

Board Members Present: Phil Schneider, Tom Hanson, Dr. John Ziemer, Lois Goode, John Moore, Mark Schmitt, Ted Hakala. Excused: Mary Schneider, Sherry Wallace.

Staff Present: Jeremy Jacobs, Ashley Nelson, Carla Closs. Appearances: Kathy Walthers, Virginia Jacobs, Jeannie Ollinger, Kaylee Bugbee.

**Public Comments:**

None

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

Motion by Schmitt, second by Hanson, to approve the June 11, 2024; meeting minutes. Motion unanimously carried.

Chair Schneider declared the Public Hearing regarding the 2025 Health and Human Services Budget open at 9:15 AM.

**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 Moore, to approve Vouchers and Out of County Travel. Motion unanimously carried.

**Public Hearing Regarding 2025 Health and Human Services Budget:**

No members of the public present.

Discussion was held with regards to the proposed 2025 budget:

- Review of agency services
- Unmet needs
- Local/State budget implications
- Suggestions-System/Deliver, budget projections

**Health & Human Services:**

Discussion held.

Motion by Hakala, second by Schmitt, to forgive the accrued foster care interest and future foster care interest only, on the child support debt reduction request as presented; the foster care arrears are to remain in full and it is expected the noncustodial parent (NCP) make payments on the foster care arrears as they are able. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Moore, second by Ziemer, to forward the longevity proposal as presented to the Personnel Committee. Motion carried 6-1, Goode voting no.

Motion by Moore, second by Hanson to forward to the full County Board the Resolution “Advocating for an Inpatient Behavioral Health Facility for Northern Wisconsin”. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Health:**

Discussion held.

Embrace Presentation- Harm Reduction.

**Program Reports:**

The Board received written reports from Child Support, Public Health, Adult Services and ADRC-Senior Services.

Motion by Hakala, second by Hanson, to close the Public Hearing regarding the 2025 Health and Human Services Budget at 11:02 AM. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned by consensus of the committee at 11:04 AM.

Next meeting: August 8, 2024

As prepared by: Carla Closs, completed on 7/11/2024 at 2:07 PM

## ECONOMIC SUPPORT REPORT FOR August 2024

MAPP premiums begin August 1<sup>st</sup>. Consortium has already seen numerous calls and in person meetings due to the MAPP premiums.

FoodShare interviews will begin again as of Sept 1<sup>st</sup>. They have been waived due to COVID policy.

New worker, Michael is in his training cohort with the State. He will complete this training Aug 16. Training is going well.

### FOODSHARE – June 2024 numbers

#### Rusk County

FS Cases- 1,243

FS Recipients- 2,306

Total FS Benefits Paid- \$316,668

#### Northern Consortium Cases

Consortium FS Cases- 16,068

Consortium FS Recipients- 29,555

Consortium FS Benefits- \$ 4,130,062

#### Health Care

Badger Care – 1,471

EBD Medicaid- this report was not working

Long Term Care – 205

Badger Care- 20,597

EBD Medicaid – this report was not working

Long Term Care -3,030

### VISCONSIN HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (WHEAP):

Rusk County- 2024 Heating Season started October 1st: 1110 applications, 1009 Households received Energy Assistance totaling \$638,570. There were also 44 households that received HVAC repairs or replacements totaling \$116,485.

## Veterans Services HHS Board Report 6/28/2024 – 7/30/2024

### Forms and Reporting:

- Total Federal VA Forms filed for veterans (June 28, 2024 – July 30, 2024) = 223; 149+ of which directly involved Federal Service Connected, Pension and/or burial claims.
- Reported deaths for 7 Rusk County veterans; Authorized burial benefits filed for 5 county veterans' next – of – Kin; Ensured over \$11,144 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 7 local veterans through the Minneapolis or Tomah VA Medical Centers; All filings approved resulting in full health benefits for the veterans.
- Submitted 2 CHAMPVA dependent health care benefit for surviving spouse post-veteran's death and 1 submission for a 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 3 qualifying veterans (or surviving spouses) ensuring 100% reimbursement of CY2023 primary residence property taxes (home + 1 acre).

### **9 Service Connected, Pension and specialized claims finalized by the VA**

Earned benefits and pensioned dollars totaling \$139,000 received and allocated from the Federal VBA to include PACT Act/TERA claim grant to Iraqi veteran resulting in \$52,800. These tax-free monies go directly in the pockets of Rusk County resident veterans and/or their surviving family.

### Highlights:

- Coordinated the start of accreditation and internal VBA required training(s) for newly administered CVSO. Worked with VA Milwaukee Regional Office representatives and to gain Office General Council accreditation of 5 Federal/State Regional Offices.
- Previously submitted 2024 CVSO Grant payment received from the WI Dept of Veterans Affairs. The annual allocated \$11,688 received and deposited in the main CVSO account.
- Accomplished Accredited Representation informal conferences on two Higher Level Reviews with VBA Regional Office (Seattle) rating supervisors.
- Received multiple donations from a private individual and local business totaling \$1,000. Monies deposited in the Rusk County Veterans Emergency relief fund intended for emergent situations that our county veterans may face.
- Worked with SSVF case manager for placement of a homeless veteran new to Rusk County; housing and upgrade status through the Veterans Health Admin procured.

- Coordinated a representative to facilitate multiple Memorial Day services with assistance of multiple county service organizations. Relayed multiple agendas through various media outlets.
- Assisted multiple veteran families with gaining military service data and awards for numerous mural paintings (Bruce and L-Smith).
- Attended district Commanders meeting providing pertinent veterans related VBA/VHA to the leadership of our multiple service organizations.
- Seeing an uptick of external county and state veterans and families wanting internment and memorial services at our closest Veterans State Cemetery (Spooner, WI) due to the WDVA now lifting the five-year residency for burial in the 3 State Veterans Cemeteries.

\*\* Please note, approximately 3 weeks not cataloged in this report due to extensive FMLA leave.

*Health and Human Services Board,*

*I wish to express my appreciation for the opportunity to work in my position for the past 8+-years. Words cannot describe the purpose and meaning I've experienced in service to the veterans and their families of Rusk and surrounding counties. I will cherish the relationships that have developed with the many veterans and fellow co-workers and I pray my tenure will be remembered as both impacting and my actions dedicated as that is how they were intended.*

*I wish the Rusk County Veterans Service Office continued success in representing and caring for a percentage of the population that have literally earned and are truly deserving of their benefits.*

Erik Stoker  
Rusk CVSO