

# Rusk County HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

## AGENDA

DATE: June 13, 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

- May 9, 2024

### HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

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

### HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- Aging Disability Resource Center Position(s) Update
- Social Worker/Social Service Worker Update
- Veteran Services Officer Retirement/Recruitment
- Clerk III Resignation/Recruitment
- Clark County Commission Representative
- Citizen Representative Recommendation-HHS Board
- Longevity Proposal

### PUBLIC HEALTH

- ARPA Allocation Update

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Program Reports
  - Veteran Services
  - Children & Family Services
  - Economic Support

### ADJOURN

*This agenda was prepared by Jeremy Jacobs at the direction of Chair Schneider. Posted June 6, 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**  
**May 9, 2024**

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

Board Members Present: Phil Schneider, Mary Schneider, Tom Hanson, Ted Hakala (excused 11:17 AM), Lois Goode, Sherry Wallace, John Moore Excused: Dr. John Ziemer

Staff Present: Jeremy Jacobs, Ashley Nelson, Carla Closs, Ashley Gudis. Appearance by Kaylee Bugbee.

Guest: Mark Schmitt

**Public Comments:**

Ladysmith Area Trails Association Members: Dave Borman, Jackie Pedersen, Sharon Larson.

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

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

**Election of Chair**

Jacobs called for nominations of Health and Human Services Board Chair. Hanson nominated P. Schneider. Jacobs called for nominations three times, hearing no other, nominations closed. Verbal vote for P. Schneider as Health and Human Services Board Chair, all yes. P. Schneider is elected Health and Human Services Board Chair.

**Election of Vice- Chair**

Chair Schneider called for nominations of Health and Human Services Board Vice-Chair. Hanson nominated Goode. Chair Schneider called for nominations three times, hearing no other, nominations closed. Verbal vote for Goode as Health and Human Services, Vice-Chair, all yes. Goode is Health and Human Services Board Vice-Chair.

**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 M. Schneider, second by Hanson, to approve Vouchers and Out of County Travel. Motion unanimously carried.

**Health & Human Services:**

Discussion held.

Motion by M. Schneider, second by Hakala, to approve the recruitment of an LTE Social Worker/Social Service Worker in Children and Family Services. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Hakala, second by Goode, to approve the appointment of either Mike Russell or Sherry Wallace to the ADRC of Barron and Rusk County Board. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Hakala, second by Hanson, to approve Mark Schmitt and Alice Kesan as community members on the ADRC Advisory Board. Motion unanimously carried.

No action taken on Clark County Commission Representative appointment.

**Public Health:**

Discussion held.

Motion by M. Schneider, second by Moore, to approve the request for Public Health ARPA funds from the Ladysmith Area Trails Association (LATA) in the amount of \$55,000.00; to be used for equipment and trail maintenance and forward the Resolution to the County Board. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Moore, second by M. Schneider to approve the request for Public Health ARPA funds from ICAA in the amount up to \$1000.00 to be used for the Red Cross Babysitting Class and supplies; and in the amount up to \$5,000.00 for Family Resource Center furnishings and supplies; and forward the resolution to the County Board. Motion unanimously carried.

**Program Reports:**

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

Meeting adjourned by consensus of the committee at 11:30 AM.

Next meeting: June 13, 2024

As prepared by: Carla Closs, completed on 5/9/2024 at 4:20 PM

PROPOSAL

Longevity: Personnel Handbook

Chapter 6

Section 15 Longevity

a. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to recognize, express appreciation for and reward long standing employees for their dedicated services to the county.

b. Eligibility

This policy shall apply to all active full time and part time employees at the time of the longevity bonus pay out. Eligibility and payment are based on consecutive years of service and as of May 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year.

c. Bonus Schedule and Amount

All eligible employees shall receive a longevity bonus according the following schedule:

Years of Consecutive Service as of May 1 <sup>st</sup>	Bonus Amount
5 Years	\$500
10 Years	\$1000
15 Years	\$1500
20 Years	\$2000
25 Years	\$2500
30 Years	\$3000

The longevity bonus is paid in a lump sum on the second paycheck in May to all eligible employee with the milestone year identified above and is subject to federal, state and local income tax withholding and the withholding of the Employee's FICA and Medicare taxes. \*\*\*A consideration here would be actual anniversary date used to determine benchmark. We still have a list based on actual hire date.\*\*\*\*\*Payment is only at benchmarks noted.

d. Other Requirements

1. Longevity bonuses are not prorated. Employees who terminate from the County and return at a later date, no matter how long the gap in employment, shall use the most recent rehire date to establish years of service for purpose of a longevity bonus.
2. A break in service as a result of time off on an approved FMLA, Military, County Medical, Personal or Workers' Compensation Leave will not reduce eligibility or unqualify an employee to receive a longevity bonus. If an employee is on an approved leave when the annual bonus is paid, they are not eligible to be paid the longevity bonus until the second paycheck upon return from leave.

3. In the event an employee transfers to another department, the longevity bonus will be charged to the account in the department that the employee is working and paid from on the date the longevity bonus is paid.
4. In the event an eligible employee retires (as defined in the Separation section of the Personnel Handbook) prior to \*\*\*\*\*anniversary calculation date\*\*\*\*\* or May 1 and they reached a milestone year, they will be eligible to receive the applicable longevity bonus on their last paycheck. This does not apply to those resigning (as defined in the Separation section of the Personnel Handbook).

Considerations:

Eligibility-All fulltime and part time employees  
County-wide impact-TBD

## Veterans Services HHS Board Report 4/1/2024 – 5/24/2024

### Forms and Reporting:

- Total Federal VA Forms filed for veterans (April 1, 2024 – May 24, 2024) = 153; 104+ 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 \$8,960 received easing the financial burden of veteran's funeral and internment for the grieving families.
- Coordinated mental health treatment for 1 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 1 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 2 qualifying veterans (or surviving spouses) ensuring 100% reimbursement of CY2023 primary residence property taxes (home + 1 acre).
  - Update on Bill AB 102/SB 102 slated to lower the Disabled Veteran Property Tax Credit from the current 100% service connection down to 70%. Bill failed this time in the State Senate due to political non-monetary issues.

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

Earned benefits and pensioned dollars totaling \$115,960 received and 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:

- Previously filed Congressional request expedited a retired civil-service veteran's claim through the Dept of the Air Force. Data provided to the DoD Civilian Retirement Section resulted in approval of concurrent federal service vs. calculating federal retirement pay.
- 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.
- Received multiple donations from two organizations 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 multiple Memorial Day services for county service organizations. Relayed multiple agendas through various media outlets.
  - Coordinated issuance of grave site flags for the many cemeteries throughout the county. Multiple follow-ups with the various cemetery custodians for actual placement.
- Fiduciary filing and coordinating of 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.
- Attended 2024 Spring CVSO conference (Green Bay). Training encompassed to date VBA/VHA policy and procedures on new submission procedures. Continue to relay pertinent learned policy and programs to our county veterans through the multiple VSO contacts and media sources. Mandatory continuing education credits received and relayed to the National Assoc of County Veterans Service Officers ensuring Accredited Representation remains active.
- Assisted multiple veteran families with gaining military service data and awards for numerous mural paintings (Bruce and L-Smith).
- 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, this report was accomplished approximately 2 weeks early due to a scheduled medical procedure I have and therefor the data/metrics are representative of that decreased timeframe.

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

**May 2024 Board Report**

	May Referrals	2024	2023	2022	2021
CPS reports	17	79	210	217	194
Services reports	9	33	82	105	90
Delinquency/JIPS	3	32	52	58	61
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Children in Out-of-Home Care		19			
Children in-home on caseload		18			
Youth Justice cases		32			
Interstate Compact Case		0			
Courtesy cases (assisting another county)		2			
Placements		9 children placed with relatives			
		1 child placed in Rusk County foster home			
		4 children placed in relative foster care			
		5 children placed in private agency home			

**Child Protection:** 4 of the 19 children are in out of home care due to physical abuse and neglect. The remaining 15 are in out of home care due to neglect stemming from parental drug use.

**Youth Justice:** Rich is our solo YJ worker at this time until a new worker is hired.

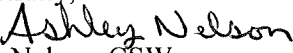
**Kinship Care:** We are currently providing kinship for 13 voluntary cases, 3 long-term cases and 6 court-ordered cases.

**Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS):** We are currently serving 91 children under this program. 36 of these children are also enrolled in CCS. 18 children are in the process of being screened for eligibility. Brittany Pasanen has come back to Rusk County and is our newest CLTS worker. We are excited to have her on board!

In May we welcomed our newest worker Baiely Engelstad to our Children and Family Services team. We are happy to have her on board as well.

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 June2024

May and June are our final months of post-public health emergency renewals.

May was also the first month for which premiums were charged for Badger Care children with income over 201% of Federal Poverty level. But remember, they do not lose health care if the premiums do not get paid. Yes, they are sending letter that they have premiums but do not have to pay them.

Premiums for MAPP members will be reinstated starting in August 2024. It is expected to have increased calls to the Consortium in July and Aug due to this. Policy changed just before COVID but then was placed on hold through the pandemic. It was suggested at that time that a lot more people would have a premium but the hope is that they would be smaller than the prior programs premiums. The premiums have a minimum of \$25 and has an increasing range upward based on MAPP eligibility budget. Members have to pay the premium BEFORE MAPP program can be opened up. The initial premium has to be paid at the county local office. We are expecting more local calls and in person local traffic to make payments. Possibly more disgruntle members as they have not had to make premium payments for about 3 years now and some people have never had them before.

New Economic Support worker, Michael Lueck starts June 10<sup>th</sup>.

Consortium call center is switching software in July. Training is scheduled for all consortium workers mid- June and July.

### FOODSHARE – April 2024 numbers

#### Rusk County

FS Cases- 1,238  
FS Recipients- 2,255  
Total FS Benefits Paid- \$309,691

#### Northern Consortium Cases

Consortium FS Cases- 16,337  
Consortium FS Recipients- 29,889  
Consortium FS Benefits- \$ 4,204,446

#### Health Care

Badger Care – 1,517  
EBD Medicaid- 640  
Long Term Care - 200

Badger Care- 21,360  
EBD Medicaid -7,406  
Long Term Care -3,081

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

Rusk County- 2024 Heating Season started October 1st: 1100 applications, 1008 Households received Energy Assistance totaling \$637,842. There were also 40 households that received HVAC repairs or replacements totaling \$111,085.