

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY
AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC) COMMITTEE**

MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: Monday, August 8, 2022

TIME OF MEETING: 3:00 p.m.

PLACE OF MEETING: VIRTUAL

Members Present: Paul F Janty, Jan Olson, Tamar Mathwig, Claire Steger, Elizabeth Jones, Kate Pfaendtner, Karena Jolin, Michael Norton, Rob Paterson, Pete Christianson, Harold Singstock

Members Excused: Fritz Rudy and Michael Robinson

Staff Present: Beth Roberts, Nicole Davis-Dawald, Alisa Richetti, Brian Nagler, Alana Erickson, Karena Jolin

Paul Janty called the meeting to order at 3:07 PM.

1. **Public Comments** – no public comments.
2. **Approval of June 13, 2022 minutes** – **Elizabeth Jones** commented that in the area of the June meeting minutes discussing the survey of caregivers reads "on average the agencies turn away 10.5 clients per month" and suggested the clarification be made that the number signifies 10.5 per agency rather than a grand total between all agencies. **Mike Norton** made a motion to approve the amended June meeting notes followed by all committee members in attendance approving as amended.
3. **Housing Study Presentation September 6** – **Mike Norton** – Mike reported that the senior housing study will be presented to the Winnebago County Board in September and ADRC committee members are welcome to attend. The goal is to get some movement on increasing the number of senior units in the next ten years. The board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 6, 2022 in the Winnebago County Courthouse on the fourth floor beginning at 6:00 PM and the presentation will be 15-20 minutes. **Paul Jantry** added that the board meetings are also televised and a one-page document of key points is being provided by UW-Oshkosh which Beth will share with ADRC committee members beforehand.
4. **Open House August 16** – **Nicole Davis Dawald** – Nicole stated that there is an open house on Tuesday, August 16th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM to welcome the public. This zero-budget event features: 1) presentations by ADRC and Veterans at 11:00, 12:00, and 1:00. 2) berry themed treats provided by presenters with voting occurring on the best one, 3) raffle baskets with all items donated by staff, and 4) a food truck from Brewing Futures onsite selling berry-themed products. The event is posted on the ADRC's Facebook page and Beth will be sending out fliers to committee members.
5. **Dementia Care Updates** – **Alisa Richetti** – Alisa reported having acquired a two-year license to the Virtual Dementia Tour which simulates what it feels like to have dementia. Alisa and Nicole are facilitators and are recruiting team members to hold events and dementia awareness trainings in the community to provide awareness and to experience what having dementia feels like. During the event, a behavioral specialist documents the behaviors exhibited during simulation experiences. Given the knowledge gained during simulations, this is followed by talking about what can be done differently when caretaking for someone with dementia.

Beth Roberts and Alisa are writing up a list of events where volunteers are needed along with details and will be sharing this with United Way to post on their website.

Alisa reported that the state is looking for assistance with putting out a survey to get communities' input about existing dementia programs and services. This input will be used as a factor in the upcoming state plan in development for 2024-2028. The state has made up toolkits for counties to put out paper and online surveys that can be set up so there can be community conversations through the end of the year. Input is being sought on what people would like to see in the dementia programs, what is working, and additional programs that would be beneficial.

Alisa stated that law enforcement is provided with crisis response training related to dementia and adult protective services. Alisa and Beth are working to start a coalition for dementia in Winnebago County in order to have more of a presence in the community and build awareness along with community partners. Committee members can help by identifying other partners who might want to join the coalition. Suggestions were made to reach out to neighborhood associations, church groups, clergy staff, and to report back on who has been reached out to along with their feedback. Claire Steger commented that this information could also be very beneficial for in-home caregivers.

6. **Committee Member Terms Ending – Beth Roberts** – The Aging Commission statutes allow individuals to only serve for two consecutive three-year terms. Beth shared acknowledgement statements with **Pete Christianson** and **Claire Steger** that their terms are done as both are on their third term. Both are welcome to join meetings as non-committee members who cannot vote. Two new committee members will be appointed by the County Executive. Pete and Claire were thanked for the valuable contributions they have made to the committee.

Mike Norton asked 1) whether the County Exec has two nominees ready to take the place of the exiting members and 2) what the status is of those members who have not shown up for meetings for several months. **Beth Roberts** responded that 1) she is not aware of anyone being ready to be appointed next Tuesday to the committee and 2) there has been no contact from either of those members who have not been in attendance.

Rob Paterson recalled this same situation having occurred several years back; however, at that time the statutes were unclear and members returned back to the committee after several months. **Beth Roberts** stated that the state statutes do not dictate how long individuals need to remain off the committee; however, the new County Exec's interpretation of being "off the committee" differs from the past as his interpretation is that the member should remain off for a term. **Mike Norton** stated he is willing to contact the County Exec to correct this as there are two people who want to serve and there is no one ready for nomination. Beth will provide an update at the next meeting regarding if there are any new nominations and about the two individuals who have not been in attendance.

Pete Christianson shared that he will no longer be serving as a committee member and will find out if someone from the Lion's Club would be willing to serve. **Mike Norton** stated that Claire and Pete have both served as members from the rural parts of the County, which is lacking in a number of county committees. So, if a no one from Pete's organization can serve, then perhaps an individual from Winneconne, Omro, or Larsen would serve as a replacement. **Beth Roberts** stated that there are currently three members who live west of Highway 41 and had asked that the County Exec try to maintain similar demographics on the committee.

7. **Committee Priorities – All – Beth Roberts** stated that the Committee continually learns about a lot of areas such as: dementia care updates (every three months), caregiver support updates (next month), legislators were in attendance, etc. A few months back, the importance of setting priorities was brought up in order to determine "focus areas"; areas that the Committee wants to have an influence on. Beth stated her first priority at this point is addressing the caregiver crisis brought on by the significant caregiver shortage. This has impacted both the individuals needing care as well as families not having the support to continue caring for their loved one. **Mike Norton** agreed this topic needs to continue to be a prioritized as there are statewide and national crises and that pressure needs

to continue to be put on the State agencies including WCA. Beth stated that the State is working on assisting with the hiring process of county staff so when contacting the State about staff shortages, it will be necessary to clarify what type of caregivers you are advocating for whether it be social work staff, direct caregiver agencies, or caregiver supports.

Kate Pfaendtner stated that the caregiver crisis comes down to offering competitive wages as area manufacturers are offering \$22/hour. Beth stated care facilities are now offering starting wages of \$17-\$18 with a \$500 three-month sign-on bonus yet still are unable to get staff, have resorted to hiring someone to do recruiting, and businesses are closing because of staffing shortages. The housing study revealed a shortage of assisted living beds and no companies will open new facilities given staff shortages in existing facilities. Beth stated it is necessary to get creative about increasing wages and elevating caregiving to be considered a desired career choice. Kate stated that educating the public about this issue could help. **Elizabeth Jones** stated that many cultures around the world elevate those who caretake for elderly or disabled, so consideration should be given towards welcoming people from other cultures for these jobs. Beth Roberts stated another potential is for positions to be offered as part-time to attract individuals in the final stages of their working careers.

Applicable to this topic, **Beth Roberts** shared that the State is offering a home and community-based service grant for children and adult services. The grant entails a two-year project with sustainability into how to build a workforce. Lakeland Care District (care management organization) and Covey (provider) are being partnered with and are working with ERN USA to enhance the workforce through development of peer mentoring and a case manager for staff.

Kate Pfaendstner raised the question of whether high school students are being informed that caregiving is an honorable career choice. Beth replied that there is a program with a location in Little Chute called Pathways in which high school students gain experience in different career fields including healthcare. High schools had difficulty giving students in-person experiences once COVID occurred; however, are starting to move back into that. The Little Chute Pathways has expressed interest in focusing on the aging and/or dementia population. Note that **Alisa Richetti** provided information during her next update about an upcoming statewide program that helps kids learn more about dementia and exposes caregiving career choices to them.

Pete Christianson expressed concerns that every time additional positions are created to combat the caregiver crisis it seems the new positions are not on a caretaking level (social workers, supervisory positions, hiring coordinators, etc.) and that still does not help the actual caretaking positions to become filled. Members discussed the caregiving crisis occurring on many levels.

Tamar Mathwig stated that before becoming a nurse, there was a requirement to work as a CNA for a given amount of time. Tamar up suggested that the CNA requirement be extended to other professions who will be working with people such as physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, etc. in order to open caregiving time to more healthcare workers.

Jan Olson shared that her three granddaughters who are all in their 20s started by obtaining their CNA in high school and worked as CNAs in long-term care/assisted living facilities. Doing so gives workers in the age range of approximately 17-22 several years in the caregiving workforce. Beth Roberts added that unfortunately one of the negative impacts is that places like Parkview will cause burn out by calling part-time high school students in to work at 4:00 AM and then expecting them to stay an extra hours when day staff do not show up or are being called to work on their weekends off.

Paul Janty stated that United Way Director Sue Panek used to convene a group of individuals from different agencies to talk about issues such as combining food pantries, dealing with immigration, challenges citizens are facing and asked if there is a regionally based clearing house that meets with providers. **Beth Roberts** replied that one of the prongs of the grant she has been talking about will convene people together as a provider system.

Pete Christianson stated that another issue that does not appear to be addressed is that caregiver jobs are physically demanding. Over time, caretakers have to stop doing that work because of not being able to lift people any longer. **Rob Paterson** stated that in addition to the physical problems, there is also mental and emotional strain.

Beth Roberts stated that recently one of the contracted agencies increased their rate in order to bring on a much-needed position of a care manager for staff who processes how incidents impact staff and looks out for the wellbeing of staff.

In future meetings, the committee will continue to discuss the issue of the caregiver crisis. A starting point is to discuss what the committee specifically wants to do or see happen with some of the ideas that had been brought up in this meeting such as: 1) looking at specific populations of people who are here as a workforce, 2) looking at what the feeder sources are into this, and 3) things that adversely affect caregivers.

8. Reports:

a. Committee Member Updates

Brian Nagler:

- Brian reported that Kayla Ross has filled the position of ADRC Specialist vacated due to the recent retirement of Beth Biesinger. Kayla's previous position role of APS / ADRC assistant has been difficult to backfill.
- Brian reported that 35 packets were approved to go to Family Care and IRIS and there are 128 charted functional screen documentations. Brian stated that he is looking at time spent on housing and the considerable increase in the number of clients who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. For the month of July, there were 122 different charted calls for 31 unduplicated customers regarding housing issues. There were 58 documented calls in the category of homeless or at risk of homelessness for 8 different customers – which is double from the prior month. Numbers are up considerably for referrals to financial help programs. **Mike Norton** asked for clarification on financial help and housing costs. Brian replied that most of the financial need calls have predominately stemmed from evictions. Additionally, there have been rent increases, homelessness, and the decrease in apartments as market costs for home sales are high causing an increase in individuals selling homes and taking up residence in apartment complexes.

Nicole Davis Dawald:

- Nicole reported that two interns finished up last week and two new interns will start next month who will begin on projects right away. One intern wants to work only with elderly and will be focusing on a housing project to build relationships with landlords who may be willing to make home adjustments which will allow people who prefer to age in place to live there longer. Interns will be looking for places who will rent to people with past evictions and will learn how to do all the different types of paperwork. Nicole stated that people who have financial issues often lack the ability to follow through. **Brian Nagler** commented that these internships are in the lines of what Jan had suggested for CNAs. Rethinking of internships should be done with the thought in mind that those individuals are not only interviewing for the internship, but that "we are interviewing for them." **Mike Norton** added that after cultivating individuals through internship positions, those individuals could be hired on within the County.

Alana Erickson:

- Alana reported that the healthy aging program class numbers have picked up; however, after COVID there are few leaders due to excessive training recertification requirements. After advertising in a local paper, there has been more interest in volunteer leaders. The plan for 2023 is to reestablish the Wellness Coalition which needs more structure and needs to meet formally; however, has been keeping up the management of paperwork. **Beth Roberts** stated that there are some efforts through the age-friendly community

designation which are attempting to combine area committees such as Oshkosh Committee on Aging, Neenah Committee on Aging, and Healthy Living.

- Nurses have resumed taking referrals for home visits. There have also been a lot of requests from schools for pediatric COVID vaccinations and more satellite sites. This requires a lot of planning; however, offers convenience for the public to get vaccinations. Parent resource hours have started in Oshkosh and Neenah for those parents of young children who really only need a phone or video call to talk through issues and questions rather than needing a home visit.
- The first monkey pox case in Winnebago County was announced today. This is not a major threat as most of the population should not be overly concerned as very close contact is required to transmit monkey pox. However, anyone with a "weird" rash should have it checked out as monkey pox can result in some pain and scarring.
- The Finding Balance Together Coalition utilized grant monies to purchase fall kits which will be handed out at upcoming classes and at the ADRC open house.

Beth Roberts

- The 2023 Resource Directory is being sent to printing this week.
- Details regarding the APS/ADRC position opening are available on the Winnebago County website under Employment Opportunities.

Harold Singstock had no updates to report.

Rob Paterson gave the reminder that voting is tomorrow.

Pete Christenson reported a tremendous increase in the amount of equipment going out including 42 items last Saturday. Pete attributed these increases to being post-COVID, that people can now get surgeries done and are not as afraid to go in. Additionally, there are problems with insurances and Medicare covering less. Pete reported a tremendous number of hospital referrals being received that fail to include necessary information including how to contact the person in need. Shortages are being experienced in equipment that never had shortages before. Another 16-foot trailer was sent to Grain Train which mostly contained supplies for Ukraine which brings the total to five this year (which is the equivalent of two railroad cars). Pete reported staffing continues to be great and recommended that members tour the medical locker before he exits the Committee.

Claire Steger stated that it has been an honor to work with the members of the Committee and thanked members for all the work being done to better the community.

Jan Olson had no updates to report.

Kate Pfaendtner had no updates to report.

Elizabeth Jones had no updates to report.

Mike Norton:

- Mike attended a presentation by Mick Ebeling at the NACo Conference. Mick spoke about how he solved problems that people have (i.e. helping a handicapped artist paint with their eyes, created an artificial hand for African war victims, created a way to make sound be felt, eliminated shaking in Parkinsons patients). The inspiration from this speaker is not saying to him what cannot be done, rather he finds a way to do it. Mike shared that the book this speaker wrote is entitled *Not Impossible: The Art and Joy of Doing What Couldn't Be Done*.
- Mike received a tour of Adams County, CO which has an amazing, modern Human Services building with onsite workout space, a cafeteria, and a thrift shop in the basement.
- Mike will introduce an amendment at the County Board meeting Wednesday to standardize Committee rules so that members attending meetings via virtual means are allowed to vote.

