

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**DATE:** Wednesday, June 20, 2012

**LOCATION:** Neenah Human Services Building

**TIME:** 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jerry Finch, Jim Koziczkowski, Ron Kuehl, Larry Lautenschlager Donna Lohry, Rob Paterson, Harold Singstock and Tom Widener

**BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Mike Norton

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ellen Shute, Tom Saari, Mary Krueger, Leo Podoski, Ann Kriegel, and Dorothy De Grace

Tom Widener, vice-chair of the Department of Human Services Board, opened the hearing at 6:00 p.m. by welcoming those present in the audience and explaining that the intent of the public hearing is to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on programs funded by the Department of Human Services for residents of Winnebago County who are affected by developmental disabilities, chemical dependency or mental illness, and on the financial and social service programs available through the Department. Tom reviewed the guidelines for the hearing.

The following information is testimony given:

**Testimony given by Ruth Sires:**

Ruth represents Friendship Place in Neenah. She thanked the Board for continuing to help keep their facility open for people with disabilities.

**Testimony given by Barb Diermeier:** Barb said it is nice to be able to go to Friendship Place, and she thanked everyone for their support.

**Testimony given by Lori Hill:** Lori is the Executive Director of Friendship Place, a drop-in center for adults with chronic, severe, and persistent mental illness. She said they provide a safe place for individuals to spend time rather than staying at home. She thanked the Board and asked for continued support of their facility.

**Testimony given by Caitlin Busha:** Caitlin is the Mental Health Coordinator at Friendship Place. She thanked the Board for its continuing support.

**Testimony given by Rich Burns:** Rich frequents Friendship Place. He thanked Board members for their support. He said Friendship Place turned his life around; he couldn't have come as far as he did without it.

**Testimony given by Paul Eisen:** Paul is a Winnebago County Supervisor. Paul said he is a strong advocate for interdepartmental cooperation, and he encouraged the Human Services Department and its Board to continue to fund and expand treatment, alternatives to incarceration, and diversion from the justice system flow. He encouraged the enhancement of the partnership between Human Services and the Sheriff's Department, District Attorney, Public Defender, and the Courts. Paul asked the Board to explore the potential to enhance Park View's future and relieve the taxpayers of the burden of supporting the nursing home. He suggested that if the \$1.5 million budgeted for inpatient and institutional care could be spent for Park View, it could become a magnet for other counties and add to the department's fund reserves. He urged the Board to learn more about the Wisconsin Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, as this vehicle has the potential to realize improvement to the Criminal Justice System and reduce recidivism.

**Testimony given by Terri Stern:** Terri is the Director of the Winnebago County Nutrition Program. She expressed what a good job the Board is doing in funding and supporting such wonderful programs in the county. She said because of the funds Advocap gets from the county, they serve over 1,200 people every year through the meal program. They provide the meals at meal sites and to the homebound elderly.

With no further testimonies offered, the hearing was closed at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Dorothy De Grace, Secretary  
Winnebago County Department of Human Services