

**ADRC/Social Services Joint COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
June 22, 2020**

ADRC COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Steven Schreier, Ted Cushing, Russ Fisher, Carol Pederson, Dr. Walt Gager, Joan Hauer, Dawn Winquist, and Nancy Watry

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Alan VanRaalte, Jim Winkler, Robert Thome, Jr., and Stephanie Sowatzka

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Joel Gottsacker, Dawn Johnson, Mary Rideout, Heidi Chavez, Beth Hoerchler

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa Charbarneau Human Services Director and Dianne Jacobson, citizen

ADRC and Social Services Committee

Call to order: Chairperson Steven Schreier called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on the second floor in the County Board Room- Oneida County Courthouse 1 S Oneida Ave, Rhinelander, WI. The meeting has been properly posted in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and the facility is handicap accessible.

Alan VanRaalte, Chairperson called Social Services committee jointly with the ADRC and Social Services at 10:02 AM. Social Services will be represented by Alan VanRaalte, Stephanie Sowatzka, Jim Winkler, and Robert Thome Jr.

Approval of agenda: Motion by Cushing/Winquist for the ADRC and Winkler/ Thome for Social Services to approve today's agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

Public comment/communications: Steven Schreier reported that Ed Hammer passed away Wednesday June 17th he was 71 years old. Ed was a former ADRC Committee Citizen member and on the Northwoods Transit Commission.

ADRC/Social Services Alliance: Mary Rideout referred to the information in the packet that she and Gottsacker put together. Rideout and Gottsacker had multiple meetings discussing the proposed ADRC/DSS alliance since early in the year. Meetings were suspended when the coronavirus pandemic occurred.

A joint meeting is necessary at this juncture for the committees to review the proposal to decide if the committees want staff to continue pursuing the idea given the time and effort involved.

Rideout briefly described the services that the ADRC and DSS have commonalities and possible areas of duplication (e.g., intake activities). She further described areas of potential efficiency like making the ADRC the single point of intake for adult services and submitting single reports to DHS and other funders. Other benefits could include reducing information barriers.

Savings could be realized at Social Services by not filling a social worker vacancy and using qualified ADRC staff as back up for Adult Protective Services. Additional savings could be realized by claiming AMSO (Agency Management, Supervision, and Oversight) costs, offsetting county levy.

Gottsacker stated that moving forward with the process requires work directly related to the County Aging Unit – public input, public hearing, aging plan amendment and approval. He anticipated that would take approximately four months to accomplish. 2021 work would be to integrate budgets and workflows for full merger in 2022.

Cushing stated that Oneida County has merged departments in the past and that it has worked out fine despite misgivings of staff and the community. Cushing stated his support of a merger as it makes common sense if services can be maintained.

Watry and Pederson questioned the financial savings of the proposed merger, expressing doubt that savings could be sustained. Pederson questioned how the reduction of a 0.6 LTE ADRC Specialist is not a reduction in services. Gottsacker clarified that the 0.6 LTE was needed primarily for Family Care entitlement and the necessity of the position will continue to be evaluated.

Pederson stated that both the Social Services committee and the ADRC committee considered a merger in the recent past and rejected the idea.

VanRaalte referenced the Funding Opportunities Committee and the necessity for the county to consider efficiencies that will save money and ideally improve services.

Winqvist stated that there is a negative public perception and a stigma attached to Social Services. Winqvist stated that having worked at Social Services, she knows that Social Services doesn't deserve that reputation, but acknowledges it. Gager echoed this sentiment.

Rideout responded that decisions cannot be made on perception. She stated that the public would likely not see any changes, as the proposal only has internal implications.

VanRaalte suggested that the Social Services and ADRC committees could continue as they are now. That was done with Planning & Zoning and Land and Water. He stated he could not support this alliance unless the ADRC committee operates as it does now.

Watry repeated that she believes the savings presented are not long-term and that the eliminated staff will have to be replaced down the line. She stated that some of the efficiencies can be accomplished without the ADRC going under the umbrella of Social Services. Watry further stated that the ADRC committee voted and voiced that it did not support pursuing this, but that has fallen on deaf ears. The voice of the committee is not being heard as representative of older adults and persons with disabilities.

Rideout responded that the numbers presented are estimates and all that can be done now is show what we believe we can save.

Winkler stated that he has worked in counties with departments arranged as proposed and it worked. He is in favor of moving forward.

Schreier inquired into the differences in the departments budgets citing how Social Services often has to forecast a deficit while the ADRC does not. Gottsacker responded that the ADRC budgets to the allocations of the different grants it receives. The ADRC does not have mandated services in the way Social Services does, for example, out-of-home placements. If a major issue arose like food costs increasing dramatically in the nutrition program, then it could be possible to reduce services or seek remedy from the county. Eliminating a position in the ADRC grant does not create a savings because we would not claim costs against the grant.

Rideout reiterated that this is a proposal and at the early stages. VanRaalte stated that a realistic plan would be for 2022.

Schreier called the question. VanRaalte noted that each committee should have a motion and vote separately.

For Social Services, motion made by Winkler/Thome to move forward and to direct Mary Rideout and Joel Gottsacker to put together a detailed budget and a plan if we were to accommodate a possible alliance for 2022. 4 ayes and 0 nays, motion carried.

For the ADRC, motion made by Gager/Pederson that the ADRC go no further investigating an alliance. 7 ayes and 0 nays motion carried.

VanRaalte stated that in his opinion that we do not proceed.

VanRaalte adjourned the Social Services committee at 11:30am.

ADRC Committee Only:

Minutes of May 20, 2020: Motion by Warty/Winquist to approve the May 20, 2020 ADRC Committee minutes. All ayes; motion carried.

Date/time/location of next meeting: The next meeting will be Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. on the first floor of the Health & ADRC building.

RSVP grant update: Gottsacker reported that LRES did approve the RSVP position but questions arose after the fact and is being called back to that committee. Informational only no action taken.

Safer at Home Order and ADRC Response: Staff is having a few clients come in for appointments on a limited basis. Informational only, no action taken.

FFCRA and Cares Act grant update: Gottsacker proposing to move CARES Act and Older American Act grant dollars under the IIIB to allow for more flexibility in providing services. Request has to be into GWAAR by Friday of this week. Motion made by Watry/Thome to approve moving grant monies to IIIB services. All ayes motion carried.

Northwoods Transit Connections Update : Schreier reported that there was an executive committee meeting recently held to discuss revision for the charter and by-laws. The commission is considering changing the number of commissioners from 7 to 8. Informational only, no action taken.

Vouchers, purchase orders and line item transfers:

Motion made by Watry/Hauer to approve the vouchers, purchase orders and line item transfers as presented. All ayes, motion carried.

Monthly Reports: Staff and program reports including ADRC unmet needs:

Gottsacker requested this topic be deferred until the next meeting. Informational only no action taken.

Legislative Update: There have been more of the same looking at more funding for older adults in the proposed HEROES act. Informational only, no action taken.

Future Agenda topics: Monthly reports, transit, RSVP, appointment of ADRC Director

Public comment/communications: none

Adjournment: 11:52am

Dawn Johnson

Committee Chairman

Committee Secretary