



**ROCK COUNTY
HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, May 14, 2025 – 4:30 P.M.**



Call to Order: Chair Knudson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, in the Boardroom, at the Dr. Daniel Hale Williams Rock County Resource Center, Janesville, WI.

Committee Members Present: Supervisor Brian Knudson, (Chair); Supervisor Ron Woodman (Vice Chair); Supervisor Kathy Schulz; Supervisor Barb Tillman; Supervisor April Whitledge; Citizen Representative Phil Boutwell

Virtual Committee Members: Citizen Representative Ashley Hoffman

Committee Members Absent: Supervisor Genia Stevens; YIG Representative Kinzelman

Staff Present: Kate Luster, Director; Tera O'Connor, Deputy Director; Sara Mooren, Administrative Services Manager; Ryan Trautsch, YJ Program Manager; Jillian Bauer, Business Supervisor; Shelby Puppe, CPS Lead Supervisor; Melissa Wittwer, Child Support Director

Others Present: Natalie Melendez

Virtual attendees: Hannah Ehrke, CPS; Chuck Flynn

Approval of Agenda: Supervisor Schulz moved the agenda to the floor, second by Supervisor Tillman. The agenda was unanimously approved by voice vote. Approved.

Approval of Minutes of Human Services Board Meeting April 23, 2025:

Supervisor Woodman moved the minutes to the floor, second by Supervisor Schulz. Supervisor Tillman made a motion to amend the minutes to include YIG Representative Kinzelman as present, second by Supervisor Whitledge. The amended minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote. The minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote. Approved.

Public Comment: None

Communication and Announcements from Staff and Board Members: Ms. Luster recognized Haleigh Thomas, from CPS, who was selected by the State Secretary Department of Children and Families for a 2025 "Putting Families First Award". Ms. Thomas is our safety service coordinator and was nominated by her supervisory staff. Ms. Thomas was one of four staff across the state recognized for their roles in keeping families together. This is the second year in a row that Rock County was selected for this award. Ms. Luster will share the Secretary's press release and photo with the HS Board via email.

Approval of Contracts: None

Review of Bills Paid: Ms. Bauer provided details and responded to questions.

Review and Approval of Resolutions:

Recognizing Christy Collins – Supervisor Woodman moved the resolution to the floor, second by Supervisor Schulz. Mr. Trautsch was present to recognize Ms. Collins for her more than 12 years of service with Rock County. She was a dedicated and caring professional that worked with the youth in the youth justice system. The resolution was unanimously approved by voice vote. Supervisor Stevens was absent. Approved.

Amending the 2025 Human Services Department Budget to Accept Additional Funding – Citizen Representative Boutwell moved the resolution to the floor, second by Supervisor Tillman. Ms. Luster spoke about the Urban Youth Substance Use Prevention Funds requesting to accept \$25,000, additional funds. These funds will be used toward staff and community training as well as youth prevention public awareness campaigns. Rock County will use these funds for approved evidence based/best practice prevention activities in the community. Ms. Luster responded to the questions. The resolution was unanimously approved by voice vote. Supervisor Stevens was absent. Approved.

Authorizing the Human Services Department to Contract with Advanced Care Empire, LLC for Residential Services – Supervisor Woodman moved the resolution to the floor, second by Supervisor Schulz. Ms. Mooren spoke about entering into contract with a new provider, Empire, for an individual that was previously placed with a different provider. The previous provider was not able to meet the level of care that this individual needed. The resolution was unanimously approved by voice vote. Supervisor Stevens was absent. Approved.

Review, Discussion, and Possible Action:

Setting the Date for the HS Public Hearing – Ms. Luster suggested July 9th, this was approved by the HS Board unanimously. Discussion was had to have it immediately following the HS Board meeting on that date. The date and time were unanimously approved by voice vote. Supervisor Stevens was absent. Approved.

Reports and Update:

Child Support Revenue and the Effects on the CPS Budget – Ms. O'Connor and Ms. Wittwer were present to give an update on the interface of child support and our child welfare system. When youth are placed in out-of-home care, there is a required referral to child support followed by a court hearing that the parents are required to attend. It is recognized that for a family to be able to meet the return conditions for their children, the best practice would be to remove this requirement from the parents. There is a significant amount of time spent trying to collect these balances from families as well.

The Department of Children and Families is advocating ending the practice of collecting child support from these families. There are recommendations in the Governor's budget to make statutory changes to remove this requirement along with proposed funding to help offset those costs; however, we do not know if any of this would go through. Current referrals to child support in Rock County have a \$0 balance and the parents have certain conditions that need to be made to remain at \$0. There is still revenue coming in from past arrears. The implication for this Board is to be aware that HSD may, in the 2026 budget proposal, propose to reduce the revenue from collections.

Ms. O'Connor and Ms. Wittwer responded to questions.

Committee Requests: Supervisor Tillman requested to look at vacant positions as far as budget goes. Ms. Luster will bring this back in the future once the HSD has an idea of what the budget plan looks like. Supervisor Schulz asked about how to set a budget with what is going on at the Federal level. There will be a report at the next HS Board meeting.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. – will be a hybrid meeting via Zoom and in-person at the DWRC, in the **Boardroom**, 1717 Center Avenue, Janesville, WI. If you cannot make the meeting, please email Chrissy Arambula (Christina.Arambula@co.rock.wi.us) to ensure a quorum is present.

Adjournment: Supervisor Schulz motioned to adjourn, second by Supervisor Tillman with unanimous approval at 5:00 PM.

Chrissy Arambula, Administrative Professional III

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD