

**CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
MARCH 18, 2010**

PRESENT: Diane Ripple, Raquel Mehring, James Pearson, Barb Holtz, Missy Kueht-Becker, Megan Sprager, Ed Cohen

STAFF PRESENT: Jesús Mireles, Pete Slesar, Antwayne Robertson, Eve Altizer

Diane Ripple called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Diane Ripple made a motion, seconded by James Pearson to approve the minutes of February 18, 2010.

BOARD LIAISON REPORT

There was no Board Liaison Report in Joe Vitale's absence.

SPECIAL SERVICES ADVISORY REPORT

Jesús Mireles reported on the Resource and Respite Care Family Fair, which took place on March 13. Eighty plus families attended. Missy Kueht-Becker gave kudos to Don Daniels for setting up the event. She was very pleased with the turnout. She stated that the focus was on recreational opportunities for families with children who have special needs. Attendees were given surveys to fill out and return with their comments and opinions of the Resource Fair, which Nichole and Heidi will go through and report on to this group. Jesús Mireles reported that the idea of the Resource Fair was a suggestion by the Special Needs Committee. Jesús Mireles also reported that in the last meeting of the Special Needs Committee, they talked about Birth to 3 and the lack of funding from the state. Missy Kueht-Becker indicated that families are glad to have a voice. Jesús Mireles recommended trying to get a consumer on the committee, as they have had in the past, and they could help present to the Board on the needs of the community.

Jesús Mireles introduced a new committee member, Megan Sprager, from La Casa De Esperanza, replacing Polina Makievsky. Megan had worked for the County Executive for nine years.

ISSUE SEGMENT – WAUKESHA FOOD PANTRY

Karen Tredwell presented information on the Waukesha Food Pantry. She indicated that she believes we are all aware of the situation with area families as a result of the current economy. The caseload of Food Stamp (now Food Share) program participants has increased dramatically. Criteria for poverty has not really changed since 1969. Back when the rates were first established, people spent a third of their income on food. There is a movement to re-examine and change the criteria. Antwayne Robertson reported that the application process has been updated and made easier, and there is now online access.

Karen reported on the recent debate regarding free breakfast through the Wisconsin school systems, and that Waukesha is making great strides toward providing breakfast in our schools. Previously, there was only one school with over fifty percent participation, and that has increased in 2009 to five schools.

She reported on the increased unemployment rates in Waukesha County, as well as the increase in foreclosure filings. In 2009, the Food Pantry served 74,000 units of food, a 9% increase. Participating families are economically eligible Waukesha County Residents, and can access the pantry two times per month. They help to ensure that families have access and knowledge of other resources to food, food stamps, and a variety of programs like Badgercare and school meals. The Waukesha Food Pantry is also a SHARE site, a food-buying co-op available to anybody, with no financial requirements. There is a \$15 minimum purchase and a request for two hours of volunteer service per month to be a member.

They have implemented a food recovery program. They look for donations of food that is still edible, but not sellable and would otherwise be wasted. Sometimes, it is excess from growers, bad labeling, prepared food from caterers that has not been put out for service, etc. The food is distributed to, or picked up by, agencies such as the Women's Centers, Hebron House, or other Waukesha shelters or meal programs. Ed Cohen asked about local grocery stores donating product, and Karen stated that it is something they have looked into. The grocers' fear is that people would view the grocers providing substandard food. Their food recovery person is very persistent and has gotten Target and Wal-Mart to change some of their policies, and Sentry is doing a nice job donating their dairy products. Most local food chains will only donate bread.

Karen expressed a desire to educate the community on why the people that seek their services have that need. They have seen a job profile of clients recently that they haven't seen in years (i.e. pilots, engineers). They want to help people maximize their access to services, and hope to avoid adding homelessness as an issue. Another outreach service provided on site is auto repair. With all of this recent growth, they have outgrown their current facility and they are moving to 1301 Century Drive, Waukesha. This location is still on a bus line, and about 70% of their

clients are closer to this new location than the existing one. They will about triple their square footage, and therefore increase storage space and space for container gardening. The new site also has a loading dock. She brought a number of their brochures to pass out, in Spanish and English, as well as their annual report. They have received donations/funding for printing and photography of the brochures. Jesús Mireles asked if they ask families what other agencies are involved with the family (i.e. La Casa, B-3). Karen stated that they do help families determine what other services, based on their situation, they may be eligible for. They do periodic checkups and re-evaluate their families' needs as well. They place posters in libraries, due to the increase in people using free internet service. She welcomed anyone who's interested to come and take a tour of the facility, or of the new facility.

Ed Cohen asked about what types of donations they received, as far as healthy food donations. Karen responded that they do get donations of sugary cereals, and such, which they do put out, but they attempt to purchase healthier foods. Since she started there thirteen years ago, she has seen people become more interested in fresh produce and the knowledge of how to prepare it. They are getting produce from local farmers' markets and individual farmers. More and more nurseries are donating plants. Foodpantryofwaukeshacounty.org is their website.

NEEDS PRESENTATION

Diane Ripple reported that the presentation to the Board was well received. There were comments/questions from board members about being more creative in light of continued funding cuts. Missy Kueht Becker asked specifically what they asked for. Diane reported that someone suggested they collaborate more, use technology more, with outside businesses. Barb Holtz agreed that's a great idea, but time to do that is in issue.

Jesús Mireles pointed out that one of the Power Points did highlight collaboration with other agencies. Antwayne Robertson reported that the chair did acknowledge that they understand and appreciate what they are doing, but there are the fiscal realities. Pete Slesar reported that the Board did ask for the specific dollar amount being requested, and he feels they should prepare to answer that next year. Jesús Mireles commented on the waiting lists for services from the County, and the increasing caseloads. Ed Cohen asked about staff turnover and morale in response to the difficult times and increased workload. Missy Kueht-Becker believes that people sometimes stay because they need a job and can't find work elsewhere, but they are burning out (secondary trauma). Diane Ripple believes there is increased stress and a loss of morale in these times. Pete Slesar stated it continues to be difficult to measure the effects of higher caseloads on the clients. Jesús Mireles emphasized that they need to continue to demonstrate to the Board and the taxpayers, that they are effective, and that they continue to look for new ways to service clients better. Missy Kueht-Becker and Barb Holtz stated that the committee should talk about and share specific, creative things they have done to continue providing quality services with

reduced funding. Barb Holtz suggested that in November, the information-sharing segment should include detailing some specifics in dealing with current economic situations. Pete Slesar stated this would show the Board that they took to heart what they suggested the committee do. Antwayne Robertson suggested that they explore strategies in the way they present to the Board. Further, that the Board is always looking for presenters and agenda item.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jesús Mireles reminded the committee about the Public Hearing on April 22, 2010.

Missy Kueht-Becker reported on the June 5, 2010 Bravado, a 5K run/walk, bike, kayak fundraising event. It was started ten years ago by a family when their son was born very prematurely and benefited from Birth-3 services. At the end of the event, they have awards and food is served. It takes place at Lapham Peak Park. They received a signed jersey as a kick off donation from Jeff Suppan of the Milwaukee Brewers. There is a \$35 entry fee, but they encourage larger donations. There is a webpage for the event that will be updated soon.

Parents Place programs were handed out by Raquel Mehring.

James Pearson reported that the annual meeting of the Addiction Resource Counsel is next Friday, March 26, 2010, and they will feature a speaker from the State Attorneys' Office presenting on OWI laws. Tomorrow, March 19, 2010, Ken Winters, of Drug Free Communities will speak at a forum on adolescent brain development.

NEXT MEETING

Diane Ripple advised that there would be no meeting in April because of the Public Hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

Ed Cohen motioned to adjourn, and Barb Holtz seconded the motion at 9:55 a.m.

Approved on 5-20-10
(Date)