

**WAUKESHA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD
SPRING PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
APRIL 3, 2019**

Attendance and Introductions

Chair Larry Nelson called the hearing to order. The panel introduced themselves as County Supervisor and Health and Human Services Board Chair Larry Nelson, County Executive Paul Farrow, County Supervisor and Health and Human Services Committee Chair Christine Howard, County Supervisor Duane Paulson, Health and Human Services Board Citizen Member Laurie Schwartz, County Supervisor and Health and Human Services Committee Member Joel Gaughan, Health and Human Services Board Citizen Member Dr. Adel Korkor, Health and Human Services Board Citizen Member Bob Menefee, and Health and Human Services Director Antwayne Robertson.

Supervisor Nelson announced that the panel's job this evening was to listen to input by constituents as to what is working, not working, and any concerns. The Health and Human Services Board will consider the public input when meeting later this month with the County Executive, as over the summer he creates a proposed 2020 county budget. He reminded those in attendance that there is a 3-minute limit on public comment.

Donna Ferguson is the Public Hearing Coordinator and a Social Worker at Waukesha County Health and Human Services, and she began to call forward the evening's speakers.

Below are summaries of each speaker's comments:

SPEAKER #1 Sara, Associate Executive Director, Wisconsin Community Services (WCS). She is proud to have with her this evening three former participants of services WCS offers in Waukesha County who will share their stories about the quality services they received and the outstanding outcomes. One of the speakers is a graduate of the Alcohol Treatment Court program. In 2018, 98% of the graduates did not recidivate by picking up another impaired or drunk driving charge. The court service programs offered saved over 16,000 jail days. WCS is committed to continuing to provide quality cost effective services.

SPEAKER #2 Jeff participated in the Day Reporting Center program on the suggestion of his probation agent. The drug testing line forced him not to use and made him aware of what to do to stay out of trouble. The workers are helpful with counseling and advice. The program made him re-assess his life's goals and to take a look at the things he had been doing wrong. He figured out ways to improve himself, prevent himself from 'messing up' again and to take responsibility for his actions.

SPEAKER #3 Cassy is a successful graduate of the Alcohol Treatment Program. Cassy explained the alcohol tolerance level she had built up over years of heavy drinking. She described the eight years of turmoil and heartbreak her drinking caused her family and friends, her employment and her health, being hospitalized several times. Her children's, parents', husband's, and friends' tearful pleas could not stop her from drinking. Just prior to her 3rd OWI, her attorney mentioned Alcohol Treatment Court (ATC), stating the program was designed just for her - "high risk, high need". Cassy knew the requirements were strict, but was desperate for a breakthrough, change, and life. She began ATC in February, 2018. Unfortunately she drank after one month in the program, and

had the SCRAM bracelet (a continuous alcohol monitoring system) placed back on to her ankle. Through persistent support and encouragement from the program, Cassy followed the guidelines, trusting in the team, and took advantage of all they offered, including a peer mentor. While in ATC, she found employment, is still employed at the same place, doing well. She is becoming close again with her daughters and husband. Through the ATC program accountability and encouragement, she has more than a year of sobriety. She has her life back and is very grateful. Cassy feels compelled to give back and is currently being trained to be a mentor in Drug Court. There are many others in the community that need the benefit of the WCS programs.

SPEAKER #4, Lance, Drug Treatment Court Program graduate, began by explaining that he was born with a medical condition that caused severe pain every day. At age 16 or 17 he was treated for it with Vicodin, unaware at the time how that would have a negative impact on his life. Over time, medication did not work as prescribed and Lance doubled his dose without the doctor's knowledge. He eventually was taking prescription medication off the street. This affected his employment and he stole from people to get drugs. In 2017 Lance was accepted into the Drug Treatment Court Program, which eventually saved his life. Lance is a better person; he believes in himself, his dreams and goals. It is a second chance at life. He is currently a student at WCTC in the automation program, on the board of directors at the Waukesha Al-Anon (a sober club), working part time, and most importantly has regained the trust of his family.

SPEAKER #5, Marie, has been a member of the Clubhouse for nine years. She sets goals and is successful. The Clubhouse changed Marie's life, giving her security, structure, confidence, skills in culinary and clerical, and gives her a sense of dignity. She learned the importance of recovery. The community would not be the same without the Spring City Corner Clubhouse.

SPEAKER #6, Tracy, is a 37 year-old single mother of two daughters. She is a consumer of mental health services in Waukesha County, in the mental health outpatient programs for two plus years, currently working with Terry, a Peer Specialist at Friendships Unlimited. Tracy recalled the day she began the group, she was a nervous wreck due to social anxiety. It was the best choice she ever made. She has learned to respect herself and continues to see Terry, her Peer Specialist once per week. Friendships Unlimited is Tracy's second home and family, a place she can rely on to feel safe with her peers, knowing she is not alone in this journey of recovery. Tracy thanked the HHS Board for the opportunity to speak.

SPEAKER #7, Lucas, has been a member of Clubhouse for over five years. In 2013 he was diagnosed with anxiety and depression, with panic attacks. He learned about Clubhouse from a friend and became a member gradually. Over the years he spends more time there and has become more social, which helped him outside of Clubhouse as well. Clubhouse makes Lucas feel like a valued colleague by giving him meaningful tasks to do and helping him build valuable relationships. He enjoys participating in NAMI walks each year and participating in coalition meetings with other clubhouses across the state. Clubhouse helped him gain employment, by listing his time at Clubhouse as volunteer work and using them as a reference. The staff also helped him with his resume and performing mock interviews. Thanks partly to Clubhouse, he no longer is depressed or having panic attacks. He finds joy in his culinary work and helping out. He continues to come to Clubhouse to improve himself, to help with the current Clubhouse changes occurring and to implement many national clubhouse standards.

SPEAKER #8, Bruce, represented Lake Area Club, a non-profit agency. He is a recovering alcoholic with eleven years sobriety. He has been involved with the Lake Area Club for the last 10

years. In response to the growing opioid epidemic, about four years ago they started a program called Drug Education. Through the Oconomowoc Foundation, they were able to get funding to provide literature to teenagers and young adults. They have opened up their facility to Narcan training through Your Choice. The Oconomowoc Foundation funding was available just to get them started, and they need funding now to continue. Their Narcotics Anonymous meetings' attendance has doubled, they have Alateen and Al-Anon, and an open speakers meeting. They are there to help the people with any and all kinds of addictions and need funding to buy literature to distribute.

SPEAKER #9, Jim, as a member of Stewards of Prophetic Hopeful Intentional Action (SOPHIA), spoke to continue support of treatment alternatives to incarceration. In his capacity as a Lutheran pastor, he has met many people who have struggled with addictions, as well as dealt with people who have been in prison. He has seen the effects of that on the families and individuals. He referred to the three previous speakers who shared their very powerful stories of recovery through treatment alternatives. As a community organization, SOPHIA thinks about the individuals, as well as the entire community being safer because people have received treatment rather than incarceration. There is a growing prison population of individuals who are not dangerous, but have addictions. The taxpayers are paying a lot for the incarceration while gaining little ground with the addiction problem of the individual. Past experience with treatment alternatives to incarceration shows that the taxpayers save almost \$2 for every \$1 the state has invested in treatment alternatives. Jim thanked Waukesha County for being a leader in this. The investment gives hope to hundreds of individuals. He urges the continuation of strong funding and new funding for treatment alternatives.

SPEAKER #10, Marge, President of Elmbrook Senior Taxi, one of the six shared-fare taxis in the county. One of the budget line items in the 2019 budget was to remove about \$50,000 of support from the operating assistance for the six shared-fare taxis. She is asking to reinstate that in the 2020 budget. Secondly, she asked to consider keeping the shared fare taxi program whole, or at a minimum to increase them in the same way as all of the other programs. Ridership in the last two years has increased 44%. The demand/need is there. Elmbrook Senior Taxi services seniors that are still living in their homes but can no longer drive, as well as disabled adults. If not for the taxi service, there are a number of people who would have to keep taking off of work to provide transportation. In addition to ridership increasing, maintenance costs and gas costs have increased, as well as office time to manage the increases. They have worked diligently to be as efficient as possible, installing software two years ago to help ensure they get people where they need to be. At the same time, subsidies over the last two years have gone down. The net effect resulted in the need to increase the cost of a ride to the customer, depending on how far they are going, between \$3 and \$5. This may not sound like a lot, but to some seniors/families, it really adds up. Marge fears that they may be faced with imposing another increase or capping the number of rides.

SPEAKER #11, Sandy, is a thirteen year member of Spring City Clubhouse, which helped her come out of her shell. She finds all of the people at the Clubhouse helpful and it gives her something to look forward to.

SPEAKER #12, Josh; his seven years as a member of Spring City Clubhouse has been uplifting, going to Clubhouse at least four times per week. He has an associate's degree in computers/IT and shares those skills to help his colleagues. In return he learns other things from them. Intelligence is not defined by mental health issues. People are not defined by labels. There are many Clubhouses across the country helping people nationally. The Clubhouse generates positive energy and saved

his life. Josh has gained confidence and learned patience. He hopes that Waukesha County continues to fund this program, as it helps a lot of people.

SPEAKER #13, Karen has been a member of Spring City Clubhouse for one very good year. All of her life she suffered from depression and tried to get through it on her own. As an adult, after her second child, she was having a terrible time and was alone. She was taking a lot of anti-depressants, became psychotic and was hospitalized. After many years, she found a class to learn about mental health called Peer to Peer. In the folder she was given, there was a pamphlet about a place called Spring City Corner Clubhouse. She eventually stepped out of her comfort zone, called and took a tour. The staff and colleagues were very accepting. The Clubhouse changed her life because she had a place to go, feeling accepted and validated. She is no longer alone dealing with the pain of her illness. She has made wonderful friends and wants to continue to attend the Clubhouse, helping and working with others in cooking, listening, and clerical, having feelings of purpose and accomplishment. Karen talked about attending camp and learning about Clubhouses throughout the state.

SPEAKER #14, Paula became aware of Clubhouse through her involvement in Friendships Unlimited. She joined Clubhouse to be more social and to help her with job skills. It has had a positive impact on her life; she feels safe and supported, has made friends and makes good use of her talents. She asked the HHS Board to continue to support Clubhouse. The people there are great!

SPEAKER #15, Betty, represents Stewards of Prophetic Hopeful Intentional Action (SOPHIA). She referred to the earlier strong testimonies. She spoke on behalf of the drug treatment court, since it looks like we will face a challenge to find funding to continue the program at the level it has been at, since the federal grant money ends in September, 2020. These programs are very effective in terms of changing lives and saving money in the community. We can invest in prevention or spend money later in the jail system, which includes other damage throughout that process. Betty commended Waukesha County for intentionally looking at evidence based programming. SOPHIA members will continue to advocate for funding to sustain and expand treatment and diversion programs at the state and county levels.

SPEAKER #16, Kurt is a proud resident of Waukesha County and expressed his desire to volunteer. He respects Waukesha County's budget process and acknowledges there are tough decisions in government. As a citizen, he yearns to grow his contribution from a citizen level. Kurt would like to volunteer in Public Health, but realizes there is confidentiality, liabilities and risk. He questions where he can complement and supplement the county's work, using his experience as an EMT and prior member of the Wisconsin Council on Disabilities. He offers his heart and soul to contribute his capabilities, and asked that while planning the 2020 budget, the HHS Board consider where he can supplement the work of Health and Human Services.

Supervisor Nelson thanked all of the sixteen speakers for their time and input to the budget process. He acknowledged the hard work of the Waukesha County Health and Human Services staff. He asked HHS staff in attendance to introduce themselves.

Hearing adjourned at 8:02 p.m.