

Director's Report  
to DHHS Board

To: DHHS Board  
From: Ted Phernetton, Director  
Date: November 2020

---

**Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview of operations of the Waupaca County DHHS as well as a primer for the monthly board meeting.

**Agenda Highlights**

**Presentation**

There will be a presentation on the department's CCS program at this month's meeting. The Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) is a program that helps individuals of all ages live their best life by providing supports that address their unique needs related to mental health and substance use. As part of the presentation a family will share their positive experiences.

**Action Items**

One resolution will be presented with a request for motion and vote to approve. That resolution relates to donations to the department from the S.O.W. Foundation which is the foundation of the Jared Abbrederis Family. The donations from this fund are used to assist families in need and help respond to issues that cannot typically be covered by other funding sources. In this past year, the fund has helped with a variety of issues such as transportation, housing, auto repairs, etc.

- Resolution No. 35 (2020-2021) Donation Acceptance

In addition to the above resolutions, there will be a request for motion and vote on approval of the 85.21 Transportation Grant so that can be submitted. That grant has made its way through the proper advisory committees.

- 85.21 Transportation Grant Approval

**Staffing Issues**

It appears that the exodus has slowed and hopefully the emerging stability that we are seeing will continue. We have not seen any resignations in October and in November (as of this writing). It is anticipated that we will soon be fully staffed in the management area yet in December and in all areas by mid-January.

It will be shared that Crystal Farrell has been selected as the new “Ongoing Services Manager” in our Children and Family Services area. Crystal has been employed as a social worker with us for the past 4 years and will do a wonderful job for us in a management role. Her steady hand, professional expertise, and calm nature will provide a lot of positive and professional support to those she will be supervising. She will be a fine member of the management team.

It is noted that staff continue to be concerned about COVID-19 and an ability to remain safe and healthy in the work place. The “A/B” schedule is working fairly well and staff are adjusting, but there is still concern.

### **Client Complaints**

There continue to be a couple of client complaints working their way through the system. These complaints relate to some of the typical issues that often generate dissatisfaction. Each complaint received provides an opportunity to examine operations and services to ensure that we are providing the best that service and response to individual and community need that we can. The complaint that was received by board members several weeks back continues to make its way through the formal grievance process.

### **Finances**

At this point there continues to be nothing out of the ordinary as it relates to the financial position of the department. It has been very pleasing to observe how management staff take the department’s finances seriously and while being good stewards of the dollars that they oversee, they do not let finances be the driving factor of services to Waupaca citizens that are truly needed. As has been stated before there are always things related to finances that are beyond the control of the department. The cost of emergency and ongoing hospitalizations and other residential programming being the biggest ticket items.

### **Structural and Operational Adjustments Within the Department**

As reported earlier, there have been no major shifts or operational adjustments in the department, less the Deputy Director position that will remain open. However, we will be looking at some of the structural and operational alignments over the next months to ensure community responsiveness, effectiveness, and efficiency. A couple of those things include a review of the supervisory and oversight structure currently in place, a review of the allocation of workload among staff, determining if there is capacity or a need to adjust the service array, a review of training needs of certain program areas, and an audit of space needs and current usage.

There were some adjustments made to the purchase of services contract that have been reviewed by the Corporation Counsel. The two primary adjustments were in the area of contract termination language and in the way in which a

vendor's financial reserves are determined. Some vendors are "pooling" their revenue and reserves, which could lead to payments from Waupaca County actually covering costs of another county. In the future, a discussion will take place as to whether or not the allowed reserves that may be held by a vendor is to be the maximum of 5% or whether it should be reduced. This particular issue relating to the allowed reserves a vendor can hold would be an issue for board approval if it were to be pursued.

### **General Update**

All in all, as stated this past month, the department continues to do pretty well given the world we live in right now with COVID-19 seemingly out of control in our area of the country. The pandemic has made the delivery of services challenging at times...incredibly challenging. The need to protect our workforce and those we serve is paramount, while working diligently to deliver the services that we are asked or required to provide. Staff are working hard. It must be stated that the work being provided by our Health Services is beyond words as they continue to work nearly nonstop and have been for months.