

**POLK COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING  
AGENDA**

**Public Welcome to Attend**

***Tuesday April 23, 2013***

*8:30 a.m., Lower Level Conference Room  
Polk County Government Center  
100 Polk County Plaza  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810*

***Department Mission Statement:***

*Our mission is to assist, empower, and build upon the strengths of the children, youth, and adults in Polk County to achieve positive outcomes.*

1. Call to Order/Note Attendance
2. Consideration of Agenda (Agenda not necessarily presented in this order)
3. Consideration of March 26, 2013 Meeting Minutes
4. Public Comment
5. Organizational items
  - A. Establish Date/Time/Refreshments of Next Meeting (see below)
  - B. Review Committee Calendar
    - Committee Calendar for May*
      - *Orientation for new committee members (even year only)*
      - *Review of evaluation results*
      - *Finalize policy direction for following year's budget submission, including identification of strategic issues*
      - *Policy revisions for County Board action, related resolutions or other items requiring committee action (as needed)*
6. Report and Discussion Items
  - A. Polk County Finance Department Quarterly Report
  - B. Veterans Office
    - i. Quarterly Report and Budget
    - ii. Annual Report
    - iii. Access for Service/Processing Claims Timeline Discussion
  - B. Human Services
    - i. Standard Monthly Reports
    - ii. Annual Report/ County Prioritization Discussion
7. Presentation—Economic Support
8. Human Services Board Member Observations
9. Adjourn

George Stroebel, Chair  
Gene Phillips, Director

**Tentative Meeting Dates**

**Refreshments**

April 23, 2013	April	Bill
May 28, 2013	May	Tim
June 25, 2013	June	Russ
July 23, 2013	July	Kris
August 27, 2013	August	Staff
September 24, 2013	September	Staff
October 22, 2013	October	Brian
November 26, 2013	November	Staff
December 17, 2013 (3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)	December	Marvin

***This meeting is open to the public according to Wisconsin State Statute 19.83. Persons with disabilities wishing to attend and/or participate are asked to notify the County Clerk's office (715-485-9226) at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting time so all reasonable accommodations can be made. Requests are confidential.***

***Polk County Human Services Department  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Date: April 23, 2013***

***Present:*** George Stroebel  
Marvin Caspersen  
Kris Hartung  
David Markert  
Tim Strohbusch  
William Alleva  
John Gyllen  
Brian Masters

***Absent:*** Russell Arcand

***Also:*** Gene Phillips  
Pat Kirkwood  
Kay Confer  
Felecia Kallevang  
Diana Peterson  
Linda Neely  
Nancy Anderson

***Press:*** Gregg Westigard

Chairperson Stroebel called the meeting to order at 8:33a.m.

***Consideration of Agenda***

Motion to approve the April 23, 2013 agenda was made by Mr. Caspersen, seconded by Mr. Masters. All in favor. Motion carried.

***Approval of Minutes***

Motion to approve the March 26, 2013 Meeting Minutes made by Mr. Masters , seconded by Dr. Markert. All in favor. Motion carried.

***Public Comments***

No comments offered.

**Organizational Items**

***Establish Date & Time of Next Meeting***

The next HS Board Meeting will be held May 28, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.

**Review Committee Calendar**

No actions needed.

**Reports**

***Veterans Office***

***Quarterly Report and Budget-*** Mr. Gates handed out his reports to the board members. He summarized the first quarter of 2013 as good. He has processed 53 claims so far this year, so he is right on track if looking at overall numbers for 2012. St Croix County has a bigger program than Polk County, but Polk County receives more benefits than St. Croix County. Mr. Gates said it seems the baby boomers are now at the stage of their life where they are coming in to his office. He gets a lot of questions from the Veteran's on Obama Care and how it will affect them. There will not be a change for the Vets. They will not be penalized for not having insurance if they are on the VA medical program. Mr. Gates stated that it is getting harder to get on the pension program, especially for the widows pension. Every year fewer qualify. There has been a jump in education benefits. There seems to be young people from Iraq & Afghanistan that are using it for the 1<sup>st</sup> time. There are also older vets who have lost their jobs, so they are going back to school to gain new skills. In Wisconsin, if you are active you can get 128 credits for free towards your education. There is no time limit to use this benefit.

***Annual Report-*** Mr. Gates stated that there was \$1.7 million new benefit money awarded to Polk County in 2012. This number does not include the state education benefit. Mr. Gates explained that he does not have his annual report completed due to the Feds not having their numbers ready yet. He will have them ready for the next meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Everything looks good, they had a great year. He did use 98.22% of his budget for 2012, even with the \$1500 cut that his office had he stayed within his allotted budget.

***Access for Service/Processing Claims Timeline Discussion-*** Mr. Gates briefed the board on how much of a process it is to help get a veteran benefits. He said it could take 1 year to receive pension benefits, 1-1 ½ years for new benefits, and up to 3 years for the appeals process. All people involved are trying to make it better. Starting May 1<sup>st</sup> the electronic claims will start. Hopefully this will help in getting this processed quicker. Mr. Gates reminded the board that his department went paperless with his new Vetraspec system. He has gone through 3 filing cabinets so far.

***Human Services***

***Finance Department Quarterly Report-*** Ms. Kirkwood handed out the report and stated that it looked good for now, but that it can be deceiving. She then asked Mr. Phillips to speak on that behalf. Mr. Phillips said this is a cash flow report, and the bottom line

show \$3 million to the good. We finalized 2012 at \$270,000 in the red. That trend from last year is continuing so we need to make a change. When it comes to the budget there is two different types of expenses, regular and volatile. Regular expenses are employee related, overhead, etc. Volatile expenses are placements. We were over by \$400,000 in 2012 in that area. Why are they up? Some of it is just part of the business. Obviously the highway department is spending more money on plowing this year. Juvenile placements are especially high with 2 of our placements in 2012 totaling \$260,000. It can be 2-5 placements that can make this affect on our annual budget. Mr. Phillips stated this is a trend throughout the state, especially with the juveniles. Some of this is due to the foster homes not taking them due to them not being available, so they become institutionalized. The difference in where they are placed is about \$100 per day. This is a continuous pattern with this agency going over for years, but it can only be offset by the regular budget items for so long. Mr. Phillips said that collections/revenue is a big part of the budget. Mr. Stroebel asked what we can do to get more foster homes available. Mr. Phillips said a possibility would be to offer them a higher rate than foster care instead of putting them in residential care. Mr. Alleva asked how much does it cost to place a kid at a foster home, Rawhide, and also Lincoln Hills. Ms. Kirkwood responded with some estimates of \$25-50 per day for the foster homes, \$275-300 a day for residential, and \$800-900 a day to be placed at Lincoln Hills. Mr. Alleva said he has had the experience of a child doing very good in residential care but if they screw up, they go back to court, and then the court will send the child to Lincoln Hills on a court order, which costs the county more money. Mr. Phillips agreed and stated that it can be just a few of these cases that can make a difference in a good budget and a bad budget outcome.

***Standard Monthly Reports-*** No actions needed.

***Annual Report/County Prioritization Discussion-*** Mr. Phillips had a handout for the board showing the service flow chart for the Human Services Department. He said that the clerical staff is very important and that he hasn't been filling positions. We currently have a fiscal and receptionist position available and that it does affect staff by leaving them vacant. Economic Support is mandated and strictly regulated. You will hear more about it today with the presentation. Ms. Kirkwood wanted to share some information about the ES staff. They have implemented benefits which brought in \$41 million to Polk County in 2012. She didn't have the 2012 information, but the food share program brought in \$6.6 million in 2011. Mr. Phillips then spoke about the Behavioral Health unit and how we are hoping to bring in more revenue. This specific unit deals with psychotic behavior, addictions, violence, domestic abuse, etc. They are very crucial services. Mr. Stroebel asked Mr. Phillips what is the lowest priority program in HSD? Mr. Phillips stated he can't say. Everything is mandated and important. Mr. Masters said we need to prioritize for tonight's county board meeting. Mrs. Hartung said she would like to look at the most important program first, which she feels it is the juvenile programs. If we don't deal with them when they are young it just continues. Mr. Strobusch said that Mr. Frey is pushing for the logical framework to be completed. He feels that the director needs to come up with the information for the board to measure. He said the board members all

have their own priorities and what they personally feel is important. We need to set standards and measures. He wants Mr. Phillips to give them more information to evaluate. Obviously money is high priority when looking at them. Mr. Phillips agrees and said we need to use this information to get us there. Mrs. Hartung said we do have some information on each program, but not enough information to make these decisions. Mr. Stroebusch agreed. Mr. Stroebel stated it is very complex and hard to measure but we were told to go over prioritization by the county administrator. He can't just go to the county board and tell them that all of HSD programs are high priority. He is looking for fuel/ammunition to bring to the county board. Mr. Stroebusch said it is the director's job to go through them, rank them and prioritize them. The board needs to look at cost saving measures and possibly do some outsourcing. The board needs the info on prioritization. Mr. Alleva said numbers don't always speak well. We are comparing subjective vs objective measures. Dr. Markert stated he feels that we are comparing apples to oranges. Anything that is discussed seems to be high priority at that moment of the discussion. How do we compare these? It is hard to do and not all these programs are comparable with one another. Mr. Phillips said he has struggled with this since he was getting his masters degree in Montana. Wisconsin had quality of life measure for a certain dollar amount which ended up being invalid. He has tried outcome measures too. Mr. Stroebel knows it is hard to measure but we are directed to prioritize. We need to participate in the process. We should use either 1,2,3,4,5 or high, high, high, low when evaluating the programs and agree on why. Dr. Markert said there has to be a basic level of service and then we can set priorities up from there. He said obviously the highway department has to clear the roads, but do they have to clear all the alleys? Mr. Phillips said we can look down the road 20 years to see how the turnouts are. We are focusing on revenues, and also have looked at outsourcing. Most of that work already seems to be done, but we can look at it again. Mr. Stroebusch stated that we need the information today, not in 20 years. Mr. Masters said that the members of the county board received a package from Mr. Frey. It goes over each program, and at least it is a starting point. Mr. Stroebel asked if anyone had any helpful questions/comments for tonight's board meeting. He thinks it is the best interest to inform the county board members on priority. Dr. Markert commented that the state sets priorities also and they affect us. Mrs. Hartung said the statistics stay about the same every month and asked if we are treating the same people? Mr. Caspersen stated that we will always have a percentage of the population needing services. Some are going off the program, and others are coming on. Mr. Stroebel stated that tonight's county board meeting discussion on this topic is preliminary. He is looking for more input from the department head.

***Presentation-Economic Support-*** Mr. Phillips said that it is ES week in the state of Wisconsin and that it was set by the governor. ES workers are very important to each county. The state sets a standard for each consortium to reach a goal, which is at 95%. Only 2 consortiums out of 10 reached that goal. Our consortium did not meet that goal. Within our consortium only 2 counties met that goal. Polk County is one of them. Congratulations and great job! Mr. Phillips asked the staff to introduce themselves and tell how long they have been employed at Polk County. Diana Peterson 24 years, Nancy

Anderson 33 years, and Linda Neely 35 years attended the meeting to represent the Economic Support unit, specifically the EBD unit. EBD stands for Elderly, Blind, and Disabled. Mrs. Peterson went over 3 different daily scenarios that this staff processes. In the EBD unit MA still uses assets as a factor, it is not just income based like the other programs. The EBD unit of 3 employees serves over 2,400 cases. The total caseload for Polk County is just less than 5,000. There will be changes to some of the programs with the health care exchange coming soon. Mrs. Peterson stated that the Great Rivers consortium is trying to become a real consortium model by this fall. Mr. Caspersen asked if their technology is up to date. Mrs. Peterson answered yes, and they are going to be getting new software by October 1, 2013 to accommodate the affordable care act changes that are coming. Mrs. Hartung asked how the HSD new computer software relates to this. Ms. Kirkwood stated that they don't talk, they have separate functions. Mrs. Peterson agreed and said that the ES unit works on state systems directly.

#### **Human Services Board Member Observations**

Mr. Stroebel asked Mr. Phillips on an update on the HSD computer system. Mr. Phillips said he has a core team on the project. They are getting timelines in order and that Mr. Demars is working on the details. July 23 Defran will be on site to start creating the system. Mr. Stroebel asked if a January 1, 2014 date of implementation will happen. Mr. Phillips said it should be before that. Mr. Gyllen asked if the county is looking to make cuts. Mr. Stroebel said they are told no increases. Mr. Caspersen stated this is a very complex organization, and he likes the minutes he receives when he is absent. Mrs. Hartung made an announcement that she is the director of the Tri County Life Care Center. They are having a 24 hour online donation program that started at midnight last night. There is a \$10 minimum donation and she has a sheet with information if anyone is interested.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 am was made by Mr. Alleva seconded by Mr. Masters. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Alleva,  
Secretary