

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
Minutes of Meeting  
December 1, 2009  
Kenosha County Administration Building

Committee Members Present: Ed Kubicki, Terry Rose, Jeff Gentz, Dick Kessler, Jennifer Jackson, Alice Wei

Committee Members Absent: Ali Khaleel (unexcused)

Staff Present: John Jansen, Ron Rogers, Adelene Greene

Others Present: Father Carroll, Gary Brown  
Joe Potente, Kenosha News

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Ed Kubicki.

2. Citizen's Comments

A number of students from the Bradford Key Club appeared. They had been contacted by Jo Wynn of Walkin' in My Shoes about a possible homeless shelter site for teens. They were appearing before this committee to express their interest and support in using the old Brookside building for a homeless shelter for teens. They thought it would be a great building for this purpose. If it was turned into a home for teens, the cost to do this would be fairly nominal. It just needs a few touch-ups, otherwise it's up to code.

Ed Kubicki explained to the Key Club members that the old Brookside building is not up to code. The power is shut down. Everything that was in storage there has been removed. It is not a good environment. Your cause is a great cause, but that structure is not a good place to put anybody.

Jennifer Jackson added that Jo Wynn was here prior to this meeting. This was something to take to the Building & Grounds Committee since they are working with that building. She suggested contacting Jennie Tunkieicz in the County Executive's office about other possible properties for this purpose. John Jansen stated that Jo Wynn comes into our office a lot and we will discuss this issue with her.

A number of students in the group know someone who has been affected by homelessness. It's detrimental to their education and to their life. They can't participate in extracurricular activities.

Alice Wei commented that she is a member of the Tremper Key Club. She stated that there is a really sizeable number of teens on the streets by themselves. Mr. Jansen said that Kenosha Unified does keep track of these numbers. These kids are actually floating from place to place, not living with parents. Adelene Greene thought the number was around 500 homeless kids but not all were teens. Ron Rogers added that DCFS gets calls often and we work with those cases. KHDS works with older adults, age 18-19, through their Transitional Living Program.

3. Approval of Minutes - 11/3/09

MOTION to approve minutes by Dick Kessler, seconded by Jennifer Jackson. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Update on Kenosha County Child Care Task Force

Ron Rogers explained that the State pays the child care providers. Kenosha County has about 220 child care providers, half of which are licensed by the State, and half certified by the County. The State providers are generally larger facilities and take more children. We have always monitored safety issues of children in all homes. The focus now is fraud. We formed an internal workgroup to more aggressively look for fraud and billing problems. Included on this workgroup are representatives from DCFS, DWD, Fiscal, Goodwill, CIP, Sheriff's Dept., DA, and the State DCF. The State can highlight potential problems. We have identified problems with 18 providers in Kenosha County, and 12 of them have been revoked or suspended. The other 6 are still being investigated. The State has a website listing providers they have suspended. There are over 90 Milwaukee providers. The bulk of fraud is in Milwaukee County.

Jeff Gentz asked how we find red flags. Mr. Rogers replied that not everyone is inspected. There are more structured rules for foster care than day care. Adelene Greene added that providers have to submit records every 2 weeks to DWD. If a sheet shows 8 kids and the provider is only authorized to take care of 6 kids, a red flag goes up. If there is a charge for a holiday - red flag. Mr. Jansen said that detailed records are to be kept by the providers for 3 years and produced when they are requested.

Mr. Rogers said that we have asked the State for extra funding to investigate the fraud. The State just recently passed legislation concerning background checks for day care providers. Our background checks were always thorough, so that is not an issue with us. We have had no investigations for criminal behavior yet.

5. Discussion on Out-of-Wedlock Births

John Jansen explained that this Committee requested this agenda item in response to a recent newspaper article. He clarified that the article was not about "teen" births.

Gary Brown, Director of Kenosha Area Family & Aging Services, continued that for about the last 10 years, he has been looking at data about teen births and other births out of wedlock. He distributed data obtained from websites. The first page shows that since about 2001, the number of out-of-wedlock births increased faster than marriages. The second page shows that the number of abortions went down. This is good news. Teen mothers are those under age 20. In 1990, teens accounted for half of the out-of-wedlock births. In 2008, it dropped down to 256 out of 1,007 total out-of-wedlock births. We are seeing more births in women ages 20 - 30 years. Page 3 is a Rutgers report on a national marriage project. This report states that children raised in homes of marriage do better than in homes of co-habitation.

Mr. Brown said we charge people to get married in this county. It's \$80. Maybe we could find a way to "not" charge people for doing something good for society. This could be done at the county level. He felt that couples should go through pre-marital counseling.

John Jansen stated that we do have programs in DCFS such as the Strengthening Families Program, Fathering Program, Effective Black Parenting Program, and Healthy Birth Initiative.

Terry Rose thanked Gary Brown for his report and asked if the trend was so strong that we are not relevant any longer. These children will more likely live in poverty, have less education, have lesser jobs, and be involved in crimes as adults. Our education level is declining in Wisconsin. He sees this on a daily level in the courts. Is it worth forming a community committee? He asked Jennie Tunkieicz to take this up with the County Executive to organize and talk about this with community leaders, stating that this needs to be discussed more thoroughly in the community.

Mr. Brown stated that this is happening all over. The number of births under age 18 has dropped greatly in the last 10 years. He questioned if there was more we could do to encourage marriage.

Cindy Johnson said that at the end of the Life Course Initiative for Healthy Families grant, which the Health Division will be receiving next year, they will have an MCH collaboration looking at improving the infant mortality rate of African-Americans and will identify areas of needs.

6. Such Other Business as Authorized by Law

Sharon Davis distributed a listing of the 2010 meeting dates. As requested by Terry Rose at the 11/3/09 meeting, Ms. Davis also distributed copies of the 2009 Budget Policy Resolution highlighting the portions giving the County Executive budgetary latitude to make operational and personnel changes to improve the operations of Brookside Care Center.

7. Committee Members Comments - None

8. Adjournment

It was moved to adjourn by Jennifer Jackson, seconded by Dick Kessler. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Davis  
KCDHS Secretary

F:Sharon/HSCmin 12-1-09