

RESOLUTION
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisors Brian Knudson
and Stephanie Aegerter
INITIATED BY

Supervisor Brian Knudson
DRAFTED BY

Human Services Board
SUBMITTED BY



September 23, 2021
DATE DRAFTED

Authorizing an Assessment of Rock County’s Child Welfare System

1 **WHEREAS**, concerns have been expressed by foster parents and other stakeholders regarding the
2 operation of the child welfare system in Rock County, including related to staff turnover, case practice,
3 supervision, safety, time to permanency, and other performance outcomes; and
4

5 **WHEREAS**, the safety of children and families is one of the most important responsibilities of the
6 County; and
7

8 **WHEREAS**, Rock County and other child welfare agencies throughout the United States are
9 implementing new federal requirements, known as Family First, which may be contributing to concerns
10 about changes occurring in the system; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, contracting with an objective third-party with expertise in child welfare to evaluate the
13 operations and practices of Rock County’s child welfare system can help identify and bring forward for
14 public discussion all areas of concern, provide appropriate background information on the challenges of
15 operating child welfare systems, distinguish between systemic and anecdotal issues, and identify areas for
16 improvement.
17

18 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Rock County Board of Supervisors directs the
19 County Administrator to identify and develop a contract with a consultant with expert knowledge of child
20 welfare to assess Rock County’s child welfare system.
21

22 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, this assessment is to include:

- 23 • broad input from system stakeholders, including birth parents, foster parents, court personnel,
24 Rock County staff, service providers, the Department of Children and Families, and other
25 interested parties;
- 26 • a review of local and statewide data on child welfare performance and outcome indicators;
- 27 • an in-depth review of child welfare case practice, services, and supports, as well as random case
28 reviews;
- 29 • context regarding and coordination with other ongoing efforts in Rock County and the State of
30 Wisconsin regarding changes in child welfare standards, practice, policies, and laws, as well as
31 changes that are being required by the federal government; and
- 32 • recommendations for system improvement.
33

Authorizing a Third-part Assessment of Rock County’s Child Welfare System

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Respectfully submitted,

HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

/s/Brian Knudson
Brian Knudson, Chair

/s/J. Russell Podzilni
J. Russell Podzilni

/s/Sally Jean Weaver-Landers
Sally Jean Weaver-Landers, Vice-Chair

/s/Angelina Reyes
Angelina Reyes

/s/Pam Bostwick
Pam Bostwick

/s/Kathy Schulz
Kathy Schulz

/s/Ashley Hoffman
Ashley Hoffman

/s/Shirley Williams
Shirley Williams

/s/Stephanie Aegerter
Stephanie Aegerter

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended. Regardless of concerns recently expressed, bringing in an objective third-party consultant with expertise in child welfare is an excellent opportunity to improve practice and the provision of services to the children and families we serve. I am hopeful that such an effort could identify areas for improvement, dispel misconceptions about the operation of the County’s child welfare system, and create a shared understanding and framework for moving forward together as a community.

/s/Josh Smith

Josh Smith
County Administrator

LEGAL NOTE:

The County Board is authorized to take to take this action pursuant to Wis. Stat. §§ 59.03(1), 59.51, and 46.23(3).

/s/Richard Greenlee

Richard Greenlee
Corporation Counsel

FISCAL NOTE:

Once the cost of the assessment is determined, a funding source will need to be identified and a budget amendment completed.

/s/Sherry Oja

Sherry Oja
Finance Director