

**JOINT MEETING:
ROCK COUNTY AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC) and COUNCIL ON
AGING (COA) ADVISORY BOARD
April 01, 2019**

Call to Order and Introductions: Chairperson Terry Thomas called the joint meeting of the Rock County Aging and Disability Center and Council on Aging to order @ 8:59 am.

Roll Call: Mr. Thomas initiated introductions of everyone in attendance.

Committee Members Present: ADRC members: Terry Thomas, Rob Wilkinson, Gregg Schneider, Tom Moe, Paula Garecht. COA Members: Janet Smith, Robert Borremans, Norvain Pleasant, Jean Boyle, Vicki Gobel, Mark Richardson, Patricia Burhans, Sherril Gilbertson, Chuck Wilson, and Janice Turner.

Committee Members Absent: ADRC members: Tom McCool, Carrie Glover, Harold Luther. COA Members: Cherie Scholz-Baker, Johnny Owens, Pam Strom, and Suzanne Rassmussen.

Staff Members Present: Jennifer Thompson, Steve Hare, Darcy Toberman, Jamie Dix, Vicky O'Donnell, Cori Marsh, Lachel Fowler, Michelle Muth, Jennifer Anselmi, Tera O'Connor, Jennifer McIlhone, and Jill Hrycay.

Others Present: Josh Smith: County Administrator, Randy Terronez: Assistant to the County Administrator, Phil Owens: Supervisor of District #16, Neal Minogue: BADR State of WI Office on Aging, and Christine See: DHS-ORCD-BADR.

Approval of Agenda: Mr. Wilkinson moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Jean Boyle. APPROVED

Review and Approval of March 18, 2019 Joint Meeting Minutes: Gregg Schneider moved to accept minutes from March 18, 2019 joint meeting after corrections of minor grammatical and spelling errors are completed. This was seconded by Rob Wilkinson.

Citizen Participation: Lachel Fowler distributed "Wednesday Walks" brochures.

New Business:

1. Discussion on ADRC – COA integration

A. Review and Discussion of Concerns expressed on integration (Josh Smith)

- Josh Smith addresses concerns in an email that Joyce Lubben sent out. Mr. Smith said he felt it was important to "get everything on the table," to have transparency in order to give perspective, and to have a conversation about it. Mr. Smith wants to make sure that the topic does not seem adversarial in any way, but also wants to ensure that there isn't any incorrect information being spread about what the situation is or has been. Mr. Smith states he appreciates the opportunity to discuss it. Mr. Smith states he wanted to discuss the fact that there is an implication in the email that this decision has already been made and the county is only going through this process so that they can show that there has been "due diligence" but that is not the case. If integration does go forward it would be a decision made by the county board. Mr. Smith states that he is certainly capable of making recommendations to the county board, but ultimately that will go through the committee. Mr. Smith went through the email point, by point, and addressed each concern; this included: representation of aging issues at the county board, employee engagement, concerns that Human Services might be too big to adequately provide service to the community, the value of the Council on Aging, how collocation could be an advantage,

and how resources could be shared. He said we will continue to be committed to no waiting lists for the Home Delivered Meals program, eligibility information, and ancillary services provided by the Council on Aging: such as the Rock County Senior Fair and AFCSP. He mentions that there is a portion of Joyce Lubben's email that states, "if it's not broke, don't fix it." Mr. Smith states that just because something is working, doesn't mean that it couldn't work better, or be better. Mr. Smith wants it noted that one of the reasons that the Human Services Department is so "big," is due to the overlapping services that it provides to the community. Mr. Smith poses the question "While we are providing services to elders: are we providing the elderly services in siloes in a way that could be improved if we integrated somehow?" Mr. Smith mentions there is overlap in the Dementia Care programing that Cori Marsh from the ADRC does as well as the work that Julie Seeman does for the community such as AFCSP and NFCSP. The AFCSP used to be in the ADRC, but now Julie Seeman does all of it, which is an indicator to Mr. Smith that there is overlap and that it's appropriate to have these discussions about integration. Mr. Smith made an announcement that the Council on Aging Director position will need to be filled permanently.

- Terra O'Connor, Deputy Director of Human Services, is in attendance on Kate Luster's behalf. She hands out a memo written by Kate Luster that is in response to Joyce Lubben's email.
- Mr. Richardson says that Josh Smith mentioned that just because something is working doesn't mean that it couldn't work better. He states that he agrees that is a very valid observation. Mr. Richardson is curious as to how services would be better after integration. Josh Smith states that he couldn't answer that question at this time. Mr. Smith states that he doesn't think that we have a comprehensive list of what those improvements would be, but thinks that will come out of this discussion.
- Mr. Moe states that he has some concerns that we do not have enough resources to do what we need to do and that we need to have these discussions as to how we can better accomplish these things. Mr. Moe also states that sometimes when you're fractured your committee gets lost even further. Instead, if you go as a united group to the county board, you may get a better hearing than you would as a small group.
- Mr. Owens states one question he has is if there is a major financial benefit or difference for making a change at this particular point; and if so, what would those financial benefits be for that decision to be made? Mr. Smith replies that he doesn't know that there are specifically any financial benefits and defers that question to Jennifer Thompson. Ms. Thompson states the staff record their daily time and submit to the state. Depending on what their daily activities are and what they do each day determines how much revenue ADRC earns back. We receive a higher return when Medicaid services are discussed. Mr. Smith states that scenario is the only thing that he is aware of. Mr. Owens states that is just an accounting condition which could easily be balanced out with the Financial Director without too much of a problem. Mr. Owens states that he doesn't see that as neither a major impediment, nor a reason to make the change. Mr. Owens states that he is trying to find some valid reason to recommend a change to integration. Mr. Smith states that that's why these discussion are being held: that if there is a valid reason for or against integration it should come up in these discussions.
- Mr. Wilkinson mentions that the Older Americans Act requires advocacy on the part of any agency that receives funding and that's one of the requirements of the Council on Aging. Mr. Wilkinson states that he doesn't think the Council on Aging has been doing an

adequate job on that for years. He states that due to the location he doesn't feel that the Council on Aging is easily accessible or "service friendly."

- Mr. Richardson states that he thinks collocation is necessary and thanks Mr. Wilkinson for sharing GWAAR information with the committee on a regular basis.
 - Ms. Garecht states at the least: collocation would provide better customer service and an ease of getting people the things that they need. Integration would give the population the best customer service. Ms. Garecht states that integration would make an already difficult experience for clients a bit easier, but at the very least she feels that collocation is quite important.
 - Ms. Turner states that as a consumer of Medicare Part D the EBS is an invaluable service. Ms. Turner states it is her opinion that the Council on Aging needs a bigger budget for P.R. She goes on to state that she thinks that the Council on Aging should also be elsewhere. She wants it noted that there is more to Rock County than Beloit and Janesville, and other locations could be beneficial. Ms. Turner states that she is an advocate of the Council on Aging services and has experience as a consumer from ADRC. She states she thinks there is some overlap, but she is unsure if integration would help facilitate that overlapping need for service.
 - Mr. Borremans states that at the end of the last meeting he thought the committee was in a pretty good position, we had two services that we thought were doing a good job, and as we had this discussion we could build on that to improve not only service levels, but also efficiency. Mr. Borremans states that he felt that Ms. Lubben's email was disruptive to what we hoped to accomplish. He is hoping that some of the emotion could be taken out of this decision and that it could be evaluated and discussed objectively in hopes that we could see improvement. He states that he thought we could be open minded and objective. Mr. Borremans says that he is open to hearing what others have done to help evaluate integration as objectively as possible, so that it benefits the population we are all here to serve.
 - Mr. Thomas states that he thinks Mr. Borremans has a good point. The point of having these discussions is that we get a chance to go over everything, but everything can't be discussed in one meeting, nor can it be discussed in one month. He wants to know if we're ready to "pare down" this committee to see what the pros and cons of integration are so that we can decide if it's the right way to go. He states he is thankful there have been good, open discussions, and he's hoping that trend will continue.
 - Mr. Moe states that he is an advocate and he appreciates Mr. Owen's question which was, "Could you show us a financial reason that we should do it?" He says he thinks that would be the most important way to add to the discussion.
 - Mr. Schneider states that his understanding was that we're meeting together to discuss and to figure out what's going to happen in the future, and that the quality of what comes out of this meeting depends on everybody's willingness to openly discuss this. He states it all comes down to willingness to discuss the things you're each concerned about, because it's only when we all do that that we can move forward with a quality decision at the end. The quality of what comes out of this in the end depends on that discussion.
 - Mr. Owens states that he agrees with Mr. Schneider, and expounds on this. He states in order to make an informed decision and adequately represent his constituents he needs to have facts and figures to present to them, but at this point he feels like he doesn't have that.
- B. Update on COA La Crosse County Information (Lachel Fowler & Jennifer Thompson)

- Lachel Fowler hands out a printed conversation she had with Noreen Kuroski, retired Council on Aging Director of La Crosse County. She states Ms. Kuroski said she did not have a good experience with integration and chose not to be a part of the integration process and chose retirement instead. She goes on to state Ms. Kuroski stated integration could be a positive thing if it were done correctly, but Ms. Kuroski felt the only positive thing from her experience in La Crosse County was collocation. Ms. Fowler states that a lot of the questions she wanted to ask Ms. Kuroski could not be answered because Ms. Kuroski retired before integration started. Ms. Kuroski also gave Ms. Fowler some positive and negative feedback about integration. Ms. Kuroski told Ms. Fowler that positive aspects of integration was that staff became much more knowledgeable about disability resources and aging resources, integration increased team resources, and it aided in the visibility of the agencies to the public. Ms. Fowler reports Ms. Kuroski stated the negative impacts of integration were agencies grew and changed very quickly which required a great deal of Change Management Training and a name change. This caused some confusion initially. Ms. Kuroski told Ms. Fowler she felt that if handled correctly, like it was in Portage County, integration could be quite advantageous for clients and the state.
- Ms. Thompson states she recently spoke with La Crosse County again about staff and program loss. Ms. Thompson states she was told after Ms. Kuroski retired La Crosse County gained a new supervisor. There was also a support staff member who left on her own accord prior to integration. Ms. Thompson states a “Caregiver Coach” position, which was grant funded, ended just before integration began. That person was offered the chance to keep a position in the ADRC after integration but declined. There were no positions lost in La Crosse County after integration. Though some programs were lost after integration, that was not due to integration. La Crosse County had an equipment loan closet closed due to liability issues. The Ensure Delivery Program ended because the contract with Abbot Laboratories (the company that makes Ensure Nutrition Shakes,) ended. The Emergency Response Program (i.e. Lifeline,) ended because it had untrained people who were more expensive and less effective than people from another organization. For each of these, there were alternatives in that community that were just as effective and came at a lower cost. Ms. Thompson states La Crosse County gained a Dementia Care Specialist, additional funding for private services for clients, and a clerk in the aging department was able to go from part time to full time. Ms. Thompson did want it noted that La Crosse ADRC and Aging department were regionalized. La Crosse County had multiple ADRCs and Aging units therefore they had to reorganize to make the operation more efficient.
- Mr. Richardson mentions what Ms. Kuroski told Ms. Fowler about ridership declining and asks if there is a way to gauge what the expected participation would be as opposed to what it is now? Mr. Smith responds to Mr. Richardson by stating that it says in the interview with Ms. Kuroski that transportation had been contracted out, so ridership would be based more on contracting out the service and less on the integration aspect of it. Mr. Richardson asks if paperwork could be distributed at the next meeting that would reflect that one way or the other. Mr. Smith affirms, but states that he doesn’t feel it will be necessary as he is under the impression that Rock County would still offer the same services to the community, and clarifies services to the public would not change in Rock County after integration.
- Ms. Garecht requests a copy of the email between Jennifer Thompson and the supervisor of La Crosse County. Ms. Thompson states she can provide that. Mr. Moe requests it be

made available by the next meeting. Ms. Thompson agrees to provide copies of the email by then.

C. Review of Jefferson & Winnebago Counties Integration (Jennifer Thompson)

- Ms. Thompson states she spoke with Sharon Olson, the supervisor of Jefferson County. Ms. Thompson states their situation is different than Rock County's because the ADRC was created with the Aging Department right away, therefore they were never separate entities. Since integration has occurred they've gained a mobility manager, so transportation has improved. Ms. Olson also told Ms. Thompson that having the two departments together fosters the Aging Department and the ADRC working collectively to give clients the best assistance and information possible. Ms. Thompson said that Ms. Olson referred to it as "having a nice flow to it," that "You're not telling people to go here or there," and "We work better together; we aren't sending people to other departments." Ms. Thompson goes on to say Ms. Olson told her they have large staff meetings quarterly as a whole group, have a potlucks together regularly to get to know each other, have training together, which helps to facilitate a joint vision and working relationship for the two groups. Ms. Thompson also looked at the map of the counties in Wisconsin to see which had gone through integration and randomly picked a county that had recently made the transition to integration, and was more comparable to Rock County. Ms., Thompson picked Winnebago County. Ms. Thompson called and spoke to the ADRC director who states she was not there during the act of integration, but the Aging director was, so she gave Ms. Thompson the Aging director of Winnebago County's contact information. The Aging Director of Winnebago County's name is Mark Weisensel and he is still in the operation. Ms. Thompson states she spoke with Mr. Weisensel, and he stated Winnebago County integrated in January of 2010 as part of the Human Services Department, which also includes Adult Protective Services. Ms. Thompson states that Mr. Weisensel stated the following throughout their conversation, "It's been a win-win," "It's been really good," that he "Highly recommends it," that he's "Still one-hundred percent in favor of it," and that "It's been the best thing." Mr. Weisensel told Ms. Thompson that outreach has improved a lot since integration occurred, and that all of the staff from all of the programs can reach out to the community. Mr. Weisensel also stated that the ADRC funds have been great for marketing materials, which made him feel "thrilled." He stated in the past during a promotional activity rather than have money spent on 2 separate tables, the money and resources could be pooled together for the same activity and more staff could be available to help with community outreach activities. Mr. Weisensel also told Ms. Thompson the prevention and wellness cooperation has been "awesome." Ms. Thompson stated we currently partner with others for a lot of our prevention programs. Mr. Weisensel told Ms. Thompson Winnebago County had no health promotion program at their aging department prior to integration, but after integration they were able to hire a fulltime position to fill that role. Mr. Weisensel also told Ms. Thompson after integration occurred: the Health Department saw that there was a larger need and the aging department was able to receive more money to support those needs: since they were seen as a larger group with a larger focus. That money was used to support staff and outreach-programs which made the department even more "robust." Mr. Weisensel told Ms. Thompson he wasn't bothered by the fact that he was no longer the director of the Aging Department, because he felt integration helped them to be more service oriented in reference to customer service for the elderly of his community. Ms. Thompson said she asked Mr. Weisensel if he noticed any changes to the advocacy aspect of their roles. Mr. Weisensel stated that was a concern

of his initially, but if anything, advocacy had improved. Ms. Thompson said Mr. Weisensel responded by saying “There’s more outreach to the elders of the community by the staff. Also, when you hear issues brought to you by your staff or your board: as a supervisor and a manager it’s up to you to bring them forward. You make them known. You advocate for them. As a manager in that role, I advocate for them strongly. You need a supervisor with confidence and a desire to advocate for elders.” Ms. Thompson also found out during her interview that Winnebago gained a Disability Benefits Specialist and a fulltime Volunteer Coordinator. She asked Mr. Weisensel if there was any negative aspect of integration he perceived. Mr. Weisensel told Ms. Thompson the only downside to integration he encountered (which he described as a quirk) was the fact the ADRC Board Members do not have term limits, they can stay on the ADRC Committee indefinitely, but the Aging Department had a limit of something close to two, three year terms.

- Ms. Smith asks about the map from the last meeting. Ms. Smith is curious if any counties on the map had gone through the process, but decided not to integrate. Neal Minogue stated that to the best of his knowledge: no counties on the map have considered integration, and then decided against it.

D. Employee Feedback/Input (Josh Smith)

- Ms. Thompson introduces Jamie Dix to the board. Ms. Thompson states that Ms. Dix is the Lead Information and Assistant Specialist at the ADRC and Ms. Dix was asked to speak to everyone employed by the ADRC and ask them how they felt about integration. Ms. Dix states the ADRC as a whole is very focused on consumers. Ms. Dix states most of the staff feels that integration, for the most part, would be very beneficial for their clients, because of the benefits of collocation. Something that happens often is there are times where a client is working with the Council on Aging, but thinks they are working with the ADRC, and vice-versa, which can be confusing for individual clients. Integration would help educate our clients more on what the different roles are in the ADRC and the COA which would help maximize referrals to give consumers a better experience. Integration would help with continuity for clients. Something the ADRC already does with clients is that an Information and Assistance Specialist can meet with a client, then have a Dementia Care Specialist or Disability Specialist take over in person. When this occurs the I&A is able to give the DCS or DBS a little bit of background so that the client doesn’t have to repeat themselves often, and it helps with ease of service. It gives the experience more of a “warm transfer” feel and makes it less confusing and/or frustrating for the client. Ms. Dix states that right now the ADRC does this the best they can whether it’s with the Council on Aging by helping a client call Ms. Fowler, helping them call the meal program, or transferring them over for transportation. Ms. Dix states it would be a smoother transition for the client if instead of making all those different calls they could, for example, bring Ms. Fowler into the meeting. When people are going down Center Avenue they come in and say for example, “I saw your sign. I need help with Medicare.” Ms. Dix states it’s hard for an ADRC worker to tell them, “That person is on the other side of town.” Ms. Dix says that rather than send a client over to the COA, they typically try to call, because Ms. Fowler does a lot of outreach and home visits, so she’s not in the office all the time. Ms. Dix also states the Dementia Care Specialist would be more accessible for both programs. The Caregiver Programs could potentially reach a broader range. Ms. Dix stated the staff also said integration makes sense since both departments work with the same population. Integration would help with continuity for clients when they’ve been working with a Disability Specialist and then turned sixty. The way the rules are now if a client has been working with a Disability

Specialist, after the age of sixty they transition to an Elder Benefits Specialist. Staff thought it would be nice to make that transition in person. Integration would help with coordination of outreach programs that would make sure that there are not duplications, or events scheduled at the same time. Ms. Dix states that the ADRC staff asked Ms. Dix to request an outline of how integration would work from the board. In closing Ms. Dix states that ultimately the staff collectively think integration would benefit consumers, but whether integration occurs or not: COA, ADRC, and APS will all continue to work together to provide the best service to their clients.

- Mr. Owens asks if improvements can be made in how the three departments are sharing information. Josh Smith replies that sharing information isn't the issue. He states, that as Ms. Dix explained, the three departments are sharing information in a "warm transfer" kind of way, but there may be some major ways to improve this for clients. Ms. Thompson states that things are going the best they can with what the three departments have to work with, but she thinks there is room for improvement, though she doesn't think it's the "sharing of information" that's the problem. Ms. Thompson states that she thinks the employees do a great job in relaying information to each other appropriately, but that where they see the most issues are budgets and continuity for clients. Mr. Thomas states he thinks collocation would be good for our community, that it would be nice for clients to not have to drive across town for similar assistance. Ms. Thompson says it would be nice, for example if clients were coming to see Ms. Fowler, even if she wasn't in they would still know, "This is the building that I go to." Mr. Owens states that is understandable, because most people don't understand their government, so if they get help, that's where they want to continue to go if they're getting the help they need.
 - Mr. Richardson states it sounds like collocation is important. Mr. Richardson says that he feels like that idea has already been resolved, that everyone seems to be in agreement about collocation. Mr. Richardson states that the question still exists as to how services are going to be better provided by integration, and if they are, he wants to know how.
 - Chuck Wilson asks if we have looked into a location for collocation. Josh Smith responds that he thinks that the Job Center makes sense, however they are currently going through their facilities master plan with the county, and looking at moving Human Services out of the location it's in now, which somewhat overlaps that goal.
- E. Review of State Correspondence on Integration Funding
- Ms. Thompson explains there is an opportunity to request funds for ADRC projects; one of which could be the use of a facilitator to assist us in determining if integration is beneficial. Ms. Thompson mentions the funds could be used for a variety of things such as funding for a facilitator, to help host community listening sessions, for pulling surveys together, updating our outreach and marketing materials to reflect the changes, (including a name and logo change,) website updates, but it could not be used for capital improvements. Ms. See states there is no requirement by the state that the departments become integrated at the end of these discussions to receive the funding. Ms. See states she wants to add a little bit about the state's perspective and her own perspective regarding integration. Ms. See says she worked in Columbia County for twenty years as the Director in Waiver Programs, and then she went to the Columbia ADRC during integration. She states in her opinion the integrated programs worked very well. Ms. See says the state is not requiring or even recommending integration, but does support the idea of integration. Ms. See says it's been her experience as a state employee seeing integration in different areas that customer satisfaction and efficiency have improved, and though each department

isn't necessarily making more money, there is more fiscal efficiency in the sense that each department is able to save more money when it comes to overlap of the same outreach, marketing, and assistance goals for elders in each integrated county. Mr. Minogue states he wants to add he often hears concerns about money being less available for aging programs, which is not true. All of the current programs available through each department and all of the current funding of such will still be available to each department. Mr. Minogue mentions he also hears concerns about a "loss of identity" for the different departments after integration, but if marketing is done correctly before and after integration, the public will still know both departments exist and are here for the community. Mr. Minogue states the he is an advocate of integration due to his own experiences with it at the state and county levels. Mr. Minogue states he agrees with what Mr. Smith said about the current system not being broken, but the possibility that it could be better.

F. Other

- Chairperson Thomas suggests scaling back these integration discussion meetings to once a month rather than every other week, as he feels the number of meetings being held might be making it difficult to get appropriate information in time, and might be interfering with the jobs that members have.
- Chairperson Thomas reminds all in attendance that the ADRC Committee meeting is a week from Wednesday (April 10th, 2019) at 1:00 p.m. at the Job Center in room D/E.

2. Next Steps and Additional Information

- Josh Smith mentions that if we do want to ask for a project facilitator that we would have to make an application for that soon and is curious if that is the direction the members would like to go? Ms. Garecht asks how they would go about that? Ms. See states that Ms. Thompson and Ms. Fowler would have to put together a proposal requesting the funds and explaining what the funds would be used for. The minimum amount that could be requested would be \$5,000.00. Ms. Thompson states that the request would be due by April 22, 2019.
- Mr. Borremans makes a motion to request state funding for a facilitator. Mr. Wilkinson seconds the motion. Chairperson Thomas asks if there is anyone who would like to discuss it, but no one responds. The motion is put to a vote, and passes unopposed.

Next Meeting:

- May 1, 2019. 9:00 a.m. at the Job Center-Room K, July 10, 2019 and October 9, 2019.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m. on a motion by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Borremans. Motion CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Sage Dorsey, Administrative Assistant

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