

FAMILY POLICY BOARD

Monday, June 3, 2019

Health & Human Services Building – Basement Auditorium

12:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tita Yutuc, Kristi Arenz, Sue Mathison, Heather Quackenboss, Teresa Pierce, Tracy Puent, Jenni Loging, Ashley Santolin, Megan DeVore, Jane Klekamp, Lisa Duncanson, Stacy “Sassy” Smith, Mandy Bisek, Mary Kay Wolf, Chris Crye, Elizabeth Wright, Jason Witt, Sharon Hampson, Jodi Widuch, Robert Partarrieu, Carrie Jick, Barbara Mc Peak, Troy Harcey

GUESTS/OTHERS PRESENT

State Representative Jill Billings, State Senator Jennifer Shilling, Mary Margaret McColligon, Leisha Lucas, Mary Kessen, Kim Cable, Sarah Semrad

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Tita Yutuc called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm

Welcome and thank you to our legislators from Jason Witt

Jason provided an overview of the Family Policy Board including our purpose, areas of focus, and our strategic priorities. State Representative Jill Billings and State Senator Jennifer Shilling expressed their appreciation for the invitation because it is good for them to hear our stories, so they can share them and represent our county’s needs when they return to the capitol.

Presentations

Short presentations were made to the legislators on the needs in the areas listed below. There is a complete power point covering each of the presentations.

Home Visiting for Expecting Mothers by Jodi Widuch

Children and Family Aids by Tracy Puent

The Family Policy Board feels that this is a moral priority. Some counties of the state are on the verge of collapse in terms of providing basic services and responses to children and families in crisis. In La Crosse only 4 of the 15 social workers in the ongoing units are veteran staff. Everyone else has been here for less than one year. Every time there is turn over in a case it extends the length of time children and families will need to continue in services.

Homeless Prevention Programs by Kim Cable

One thousand people reported being homeless in La Crosse County last year. “A Hand for Homelessness” initiative, comprised of eight bills aimed at addressing homelessness in Wisconsin, is currently in front of the legislature.

School Mental Health by Troy Harcey

Two handouts provided Creating a Resilient and Trauma-Informed Community and Efforts Being Made in the School District of La Crosse.

Return of 17 Year-Olds to the Juvenile Justice System by Mandy Bisek

Most of these adolescents are already part of the La Crosse County Human Services system. They are known to Family and Children, Integrated Support and Recovery Services and Crisis so it makes sense to keep them in the current system. La Crosse County has decided not to be involved in developing a regional adolescent system because our system is working.

Other Budget or Issues of Interest to Our Members

Direct Care Workforce Funding by Mary Kessens

Handout provided – Support Budget Request to Direct Care Workforce Funding. The local median hourly wage for direct care workers is only \$10.75 and more than 50% of the time no one is even applying for open caregiver positions. One in three providers estimate that at least 10 of their staff rely on BadgerCare for insurance.

Child Care Subsidy by Jodi Widuch

Parents in La Crosse County use 25% of their income to pay for childcare which is higher than average. Currently there is no sponsor for Child Care Subsidy legislation and we are asking that our legislators be a sponsor and reach out to find a required Republican co-sponsor.

Closing

Senator Shilling and Representative Billings expressed their thanks for the succinct presentations. They complimented the La Crosse community and its providers for being successful collaborators. They also wanted to express that they are happy to hear from our agencies and our voices are being heard. Finally, they advised that in terms of our priorities we “Stick in there, don’t give up and don’t back off!”

ADJOURNMENT TO THE NEXT MEETING TO BE HELD MONDAY, JULY 1, 2019, AT NOON

Chairperson Tita Yutuc adjourned the meeting at 1:00pm.

Approved July 1, 2019, Rachel Klistai, Recorder