

MINUTES
RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
JULY 14, 2005

The Public Hearing meeting of the Richland County Health and Human Services Board was called to order at 6 p.m. July 14, 2005 by Dr. Richard Edwards in the Main Conference Room of the Community Services Building, 221 West Seminary Street, Richland Center, Wisconsin.

Members Present: Ariel Ferguson, Daniel Carroll, Dr. Richard Edwards, Gaylord Deets, Glenn Ferguson, Jarrett McDonald, and William Seep.

Members Absent: Ann Greenheck and Janet Parr.

Others Present: Bob Smith, Marianne Stanek, Patrick Metz, Randy Jacquet, and Angie Rizner.

Approval of Agenda and Posting: Motion by Jarrett McDonald, seconded by Daniel Carroll to approve the agenda and proper posting. Motion carried.

Introductions and Review Purpose of the Public Hearing: Bob Smith introduced himself to the Board, and noted that he sits on the Commission on Aging Board and Transportation Committee.

Randy Jacquet stated that the State requires agencies to conduct a Public Hearing prior to finalizing their upcoming annual budget. The Public Hearing offers Richland County citizens the opportunity to voice their views on next years budget.

Citizen Comments about the 2006 Budget and Services: Bob Smith reported that he attended a Commission on Aging Board meeting earlier in the week where the Health, Aging, and Disability Resource Center reorganization proposal was discussed. During the meeting, AgeAdvantAge, Inc. shared a letter with the Board that explained their position of disapproval. Bob Smith stated that AgeAdvantAge, Inc. had two major requirements:

1. Full time Aging Director and no sharing of duties.
2. ½ time Nutritionist.

Bob Smith stated that it seemed impossible to negotiate AgeAdvantAge, Inc.'s requirements. They insisted on #1, but #2 may be negotiable with a ¼ time Nutritionist. Bob Smith noted that these issues need to be resolved.

Bob Smith stated that Aging staff have been reduced in the past to cover anticipated budget shortfalls, such as the Home Chore Program. Bob Smith stated, "Richland County must find a way to provide these services to elderly. The elderly trend is increasing and services keep being cut one slice at a time." Bob Smith noted that he

would like to see elderly services be provided and taxes raised or something else cut, as these needs will not go away.

Dr. Richard Edwards questioned if Bob Smith knew of any specific elderly individuals that are not receiving adequate services. Bob Smith replied that he did not know of any specifically, but the elimination of the Home Chore Program and constant transportation issues are of concern. Patrick Metz noted that there are no other resources easily available to the elderly and 59 people were utilizing the Home Chore Program at the time it was eliminated.

Gaylord Deets reported that last February/March there was a potential solution to the elderly transportation problem, but the Transportation Committee ran into an obstacle. Bob Smith questioned the use of the 14 county vans that are available throughout the county. Discussion was held regarding the current use and location of the vans and their under utilization. It was noted that the main problem is determining who pays for the staff person to drive the van. Discussion was held regarding the 53.11 Shared Ride Taxi Grants that are available for the City, but the City must apply. Bob Smith recommended that Health & Human Services build into their 2006 budget funds to pay for a van driver to transport elderly around the county. Discussion was held regarding the question of how many vans would need to be utilized and drivers hired in order to meet the needs of elderly citizens countywide.

Daniel Carroll stated that he utilized the Home Chore Program and when it closed down he was able to secure services through House Calls at the same donation rate he was paying Health & Human Services. Bob Smith stated, "there's not much left, as services keep being cut for the elderly." Patrick Metz commented that more and more elderly people are being removed from nursing homes and placed back into their private homes at less cost.

Randy Jacquet questioned Bob Smith, if we are able to convince the State and AgeAdvantAge, Inc. that the reorganization of the Health, Aging, and Disability Resource Center will work, would you remain against the proposal? Bob Smith stated that he would not be against the proposal and he is simply concerned that the aging programs could lose their funding. Patrick Metz clarified Health & Human Services' reasoning behind challenging the two AgeAdvantAge, Inc. requirements.

Glenn Ferguson stated that Health & Human Services should find an economical way to provide transportation to the elderly of the community. "Don't take no for an answer." Patrick Metz noted that the elderly of our community should rally together, join forces, and demand money for these services at the State level. It was noted that signatures are great, but bodies are more powerful.

The Board thanked Bob Smith for his attendance and comments.

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Adjourn: Motion by Ariel Ferguson, seconded by Gaylord Deets to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angie Rizner
Confidential Administrative Assistant