

**AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER OF THE NORTHWOODS  
JOINT EXECUTIVE/PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEES  
Thursday, November 03, 2016 – 3:00 P.M.  
100 West Keenan Street, Rhinelander, WI 54451**

**Members Present:** Bix, Cushing (3:02 P.M.), Kressin, Krug, Millan, Troyk (via telephone at 3:00 P.M.), Tuckwell

**Members Absent:** Mary Platner (excused) (NOTE: There is one vacancy on the Executive/Personnel Committee and one on the Finance Committee.)

**Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Millan called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M. Also present were Janell Schroeder, Regional Manager, Aging & Disability Resource Center of the Northwoods (ADRC-NW); Kris McMurry, ADRC Specialist – Medford Satellite Office; Laura Javenkoski & Jennifer Sackett, ADRC Specialists – Rhinelander Satellite Office; Julie Boettge, ADRC Specialist – Eagle River Satellite Office; Janet Weber & Jody Jensen, ADRC Specialists – Crandon Satellite Office; Dianne Jacobson, Director, Oneida County, Department on Aging. Attorney Andy Phillips joined the meeting via telephone at 3:00 P.M.

**Approval of Agenda:** Bix moved to approve the agenda with seven items; Krug seconded. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

**Public Comment & Introductions:** Introductions were made. Comments follow:

**Jensen:** The big thing is supervision and consistency. Supervisors currently do not have access to the SAMS program or functional screens for review; so the supervisors cannot check to make sure input and screens are being done correctly and consistently. Who do we contact with our problems - the local supervisor or Janell? It would be nice if there were only one supervisor instead of five.

**Weber:** We don't have a lot of quality assurance in the current situation. The staff is trained by the State. However, the staff needs someone who is able to make sure that the training is being interpreted in a consistent manner. If we had one supervisor, that person would be able to focus on the ADRC and the ADRC only. Our current supervisors are really only part-time because they have other duties in their other departments. Weber is the functional screen lead, but it would be nice to have someone who can go into SAMS and the time reports and make sure everything is done correctly. There would be only one person, not the five that are there now. We need a single supervisor who knows the whole job we are doing and not just pieces of it.

**Boettge:** There is no quality assurance now - except for the functional screen. Janet (Weber) does that. Our supervisors are aging department staff, and they know the aging business very well but have no real knowledge of the ADRC business – the benefits counseling, resident relocation, adult protective services, youth transitions, advocacy, and all that. These are not necessarily aging functions, and the supervisors from the aging departments do not understand them. Two of the five supervisors don't even attend the monthly supervisor meetings. One of the supervisors actually said, "I don't know what they (the staff) do." That's not good. The supervisors do some things well – time cards, vacation scheduling, etc. – but these are not ADRC functions. Recently Boettge went to her supervisor with a complicated case, and the supervisor looked at her like a deer in the headlights because she had no experience in this at all. I can go to Janell for help when I need it, but she is out of the office a lot.

**McMurry:** She is already an ADRC-NW employee whose direct supervisor was Pam and is now Janell. She likes that she goes right to the top person because that way there is no confusion. Having just one manager for the entire staff would be very good because it would eliminate getting different instructions from different supervisors. Janet (Weber) and Jody (Jensen) handle the functional screens, but they are horizontal employees and not supervisors. Sometimes people are reluctant to take their advice. Also, the ADRC Specialists work a lot with the consortium, and having someone who is familiar with the consortium would be beneficial. Also knowledge of ADRC functions would be beneficial.

**Javenkoski:** All of us have different degrees with different majors. This sometimes makes it difficult to get everyone on the same page because of this difference in education and our different work experiences. If we had one supervisor, that person could standardize all our work. At the present time, no one provides orientation to new staff because we all work for different employers. Luckily we haven't had much turnover or this would be a real problem. New employees need standardized orientation to get them up to speed. This orientation must come from someone who really knows how I&A works, knows the forms, knows the programs. That is not the case now with the supervisors.

**Sackett:** Supervision for Oneida County staff is good – I don't have any issues with our supervision. Consistency across the district is the issue. I feel we can always talk with Sue (Piazza), and she does have experience necessary to help us, the social work experience. We are fortunate. However, across the district there are issues with supervision and consistency.

**Boettge:** We have also run across issues with internal policies between offices. There is no one in charge. There are lots of leaders but no one with the final say. Decisions really come down to individual supervisors, so nothing gets decided. We have individual supervisors, individual boards, all of which make for different approval processes. What's good in one county isn't good in another. Even our work hours are different.

**Jensen:** The various offices are open different times, different days. Vilas County employees work until 4:00 P.M. The tribes work until 5:00 P.M. Some holidays are different too.

**McMurry:** She is the lead for client tracking and on how to enter notes. Janet (Weber) is the lead for functional screens with help from Jody (Jensen). However, they are not supervisors, so they can't really check on quality assurance.

**Weber:** If there is a problem with a functional screen, she advises the Specialist on how to handle it. She feels there is sometimes some animosity because of her horizontal situation. She is not the supervisor, only the lead. We can all get the same training, but sometimes we hear something differently. So we need direction from a supervisor and standardization of oversight.

**Boettge:** To be perfectly honest, the wage scale is OK. She is not in this for the money. She has never disclosed her hourly wage to anyone. She feels the concern is not so much the hourly wage but more in terms of overall benefits – you have to look at everything, the whole package. There's always going to be differences based on education and experience, but there should be one scale for all. There are huge discrepancies in the amount of vacation time and health care benefits. This should be the same for all.

**Weber:** All the counties get federal and state drawdown money based on our work and that goes into the county budgets. We don't get compensated for what we produce based on our work.

**Boettge:** There is no consistency on benefits or work rules throughout the district. In some offices people can work weekends, work late, work flex time. Some can bank these hours for six months, other have to use them within the week or they lose them. Some can work at home; this has some benefits in that there are no customers coming in and no phones to answer. More paper work can be done. The problem is the differences in the different counties. If you don't have one person running the whole show, making consistent rules, the team doesn't look like a team anymore. This has created angst among team members. This is more than about who is getting what per hour. We have different benefit packages, different training, different supervision, different rules for work. These are real issues to us.

**Regional Manager Schroeder:** The State has said we have to give up the work we do on some committees because this keeps us from customer work.

**Jensen:** With Family Care coming, we have to give up our work with Community Options meetings, Stepping On, Living Well with Chronic Disease, all these good programs that we work with. These are things we have to give up.

**Committee Member Kressin:** Thank you all for your input. It has been very enlightening. I was under the impression that the supervisors in the aging departments knew everything about the ADRC. Obviously, that's not true. This makes a big difference to me; it changes my opinion. I wasn't sure that one supervisor for the entire district was necessary because all the supervisors knew what they were doing. But that is not the case. Some people may be happy with consistency and some may not, but it is very important to have.

**Committee Member Krug:** To me, this just reinforces the need to move forward with this. We have policies. But they don't apply to the employees that are employed by the counties; they only apply to ADRC-NW employees. Part of what I hear consists of management issues. Basically Janell (Schroeder) is our Regional Manager, but she does not have much control over anyone but the few ADRC employees. That doesn't work.

**McMurry:** The functional screen is very important. Some people have lost their jobs because they couldn't pass the test for functional screens. I have been doing them for years, but some others have not. This is very important. It helps if the supervisor knows about that stuff so if you have questions, there is someone to go to for help.

**Boettge:** We have to pass the test every two years.

**Weber:** All our ADRC Specialists have passed it. I am the functional screen liaison, and Jody (Jensen) is the backup.

**Jensen:** The supervisors may know what we do in general, but they don't know the actual work or the processes. The SAMS program is on our (ADRC Specialist) computers, but our supervisors don't have that access. ADRC work is not their primary job because they don't have enough time with their other duties, such as working in the department of aging.

**Boettge:** I'm happy you have taken the time to sit down and listen to us. Thank you.

**Jensen:** There is going to be resistance to this because lots of people have trouble with change.

**Weber:** When there was a big discrepancy in wages, we were told to advocate for raises to make it more even. The ADRC said it is the county's job to determine wage scales, and the counties said the ADRC must determine wage scales. Then the ADRC said they would provide more money to the county for wages, but the county said that wouldn't work because that wouldn't be fair to their other employees who weren't getting raises. The problem is we are county employees but we don't do the same work as other county employees. The counties don't pay for our salaries or our benefits. The money comes from the ADRC, but the ADRC doesn't have any say in how much we get. This should be consistent across the district. We do the same work; we should get the same wage.

**Boettge:** There may be a financial outlay of extra funds for the ADRC to make a move like this, but I think they will find that it is a question of "pay me now or pay me later". If everyone is working together with the same supervision and polices, it will benefit the ADRC in the long run, and that can't be bad. Afterwards, if we just hand over excess rents and other expense money to the counties, that doesn't work either.

**ADRC Employer of Record Structure:** Attorney Phillips gave a little background on the reason why this change is being proposed. The initial conversation started when Governor Walker presented his biennial budget with a proviso that would eliminate all long-term care (LTC) districts. This was not directed at the ADRC-NW which is the only long-term care district ADRC in the State, but rather at the Managed Care Organizations. However, this provision of his budget did not pass; and apparently the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services has no desire to eliminate the LTC District. Everyone knows that the only constant with the State is change.

Then the issue became whether or not there would be a benefit to the ADRC-NW to have common supervision, common policies and procedures, common wages and benefits.

Some issues that have been raised have now been resolved. A long-term care district can be the employer-of-record. ADRCs organized under 66.03.01 cannot be, but long-term care districts can. The ADRC-NW is listed as an employer with the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS), so there is no problem with adding employees to our pension plan with them.

After consideration, it was felt that this change would put the ADRC-NW in the best position to react to changing situations as they arise. The change would not change the functions of the ADRC, only the internal structure. There are certain things that need to be done in order for this to happen, and these are being worked on at this time.

**Committee Member Kressin:** I need a little clarification on this employer-of-record change. Most of the ADRC people work for the counties, but six work for the ADRC. So, the change would be that everyone would work for the ADRC? **Answer:** Yes.

**Tuckwell:** And all the employees would stay in their counties to maintain a local presence? **Answer:** Yes.

**Economic Impact:** If the ADRC-NW makes this change, there will be a loss of funding to the counties: \$23,119 to Oneida County for supervising three employees, \$21,517 to Vilas County for supervising two employees, and \$6,000 to Forest County for four employees. We pay rent to all the counties except Oneida where we pay for indirect costs. Schroeder met with three people from the State, and all three

said they feel confident that there would be no problem with the counties continuing to get Elder Benefit Specialist drawdown. They are apparently willing to put that in writing. We are still working with getting this for Taylor County, but Taylor County also needs to step up and work on this also. Anne Olson of the Office of Resource Center Development feels this is definitely possible.

**Sackett:** The different counties don't allow us to use the same encryption software, so we have to fax information from one office to another rather than just emailing it. This increases cost. We have no common calendar that all ADRC employees can see for scheduling. Oneida County uses Outlook and Outlook Calendar, so we can schedule for each other in Oneida County but not for the people in other counties. This decreases efficiency. Now that Jason (Kirker) and Ann (Erforth) are ADRC employees, we can no longer communicate directly with them since they are not Oneida County employees.

**Committee Member Krug:** We need to work on getting AMSO standardized also.

**Committee Member Krug:** The ADRC is working wonderfully well in Taylor County, and Taylor County should be able to get EBS drawdown money. Attorney Phillips doesn't know why they don't. There may need to be some sort of a contractual relationship, and he will look into what may be lacking.

**Committee Member Kressin:** Do you (the staff present at the meeting) have a feeling for what the other staff members who are not here want in this issue? **Answer from staff present:** Those who have been here for a time all seem to want the change. There is one new employee, and she does not have an opinion yet.

**Sackett:** What change would this cause in the ADRC Board Structure? **Answer:** None.

**Jensen & Weber:** Why don't we have more representation on the Board from Forest County? **Answer:** No many people from Forest County applied for the Board when we got started.

**McMurry:** I just want to say that I really like having Dave and Miki stop by and tell us what's happening in the ADRC and ask about any concerns we have.

**Partner Meeting Questions/Concerns:** The Committees reviewed the "2017 County, Tribe Original Budget Request – ADRC of the Northwoods" form, the Pros list, the Cons list. All these documents need modifications, and Schroeder will make the changes before forwarding this information to Board Members and Partners prior the next Board Meeting in November. (NOTE: The November Board Meeting was cancelled, and the information will be forwarded before the Board Meeting in December.) Schroeder is asking clarification from Schuelke concerning an email Schuelke sent regarding the structure of the various ADRCs in the state of Wisconsin. It should be noted that the ADRC-NW is not receiving any monies from the various counties or tribes.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, Bix moved to adjourn; Cushing seconded. All Ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 P.M.

**Handouts:** Draft Pros (110316); Draft Cons (110316), 2017 County, Tribe Original Budget Request – ADRC - of the Northwoods; Email from Sherry Schuelke entitled "structure".