

# West Des Moines Human Services Advisory Board

139 6<sup>th</sup> Street, West Des Moines IA 50265

## July 20, 2021 Minutes

**Members Present:** Rick Riley, Bill Solawetz, Tami Swenson, Wes Franklin, Doug Loots, Joe Happe, Janet Clary-Jones, Mary Bernabe, Sheila Nelson, Mike Frandsen, Victor Dutchuk, Jr.

**Members Absent:** Jo Helling, Kasey Tickel, Jamie Schnoebelen, Dan Werner

**City Council Member Liaison Present:** None

**Staff Present:** Althea Holcomb

**Citizen Participation:** None

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Bill Solawetz at 5:32.

**Minutes:** Rick Riley moved for approval of the June meeting minutes; Doug Loots seconded. The motion carried and the minutes from the June meeting were approved. Human Services staff member, Mindy Hotovec agreed to act as board secretary for the meeting and to take minutes in Kasey's absence.

### **Director's Report:**

Althea spoke briefly about client activity numbers. She explained that neither last year nor this year have been representative of average numbers. Services have been online for much of the past 15 months. Food Pantry numbers are down because there are many other food options available due to Covid. Staff member, Larry Stanley, mentioned that the Anytime Food Program serves approximately 40 to 60 individuals each day - those numbers aren't included in the report. This coming year should be a much stronger year in terms of numbers served. The slow start has worked well though in terms of staff, volunteers and visitors being able to maintain their personal health and safety. Tami suggested that a 2019 column be added to the client numbers report for a better comparison.

In-person ELL classes are scheduled to resume in September. This usually brings an influx of people to our building. The classes are free and Human Services will be paying for the workbooks going forward. Free transportation through Dart is also available to WDM residents, and childcare will also be offered.

The recap report is in the process of being revised. Beginning with the July report, numbers will be drawn directly from the "New World" Finance software. In the past, numbers have been manually pulled from various spreadsheets and other documents.

Althea thanked board members for walking in the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade despite the extreme heat.

The Valley Junction Free Medical Clinic in the HS building held a vaccination clinic in June which resulted in four individuals getting vaccinated. It is not known at this time if there will be additional clinics. Human Services now has free at-home Covid-19 test kits available and is distributing those at the front desk. Althea reminded board members that we are not inquiring as to whether a client is vaccinated or not. Althea will see if the Hy-Vee mobile clinic can be available during our backpack distribution.

Staff performance reviews were all submitted in a timely manner.

*(continued)*

The school supply distribution will take place on August 18<sup>th</sup>. Backpacks and supplies will be distributed curbside again. We served 224 kids in 2020 and 463 in 2019. Althea has contacted WDM Schools and will also call Waukee. Victor asked if volunteers were needed, and Mindy said she would email the volunteer sign-up link. Doug asked which items we are most in need of, and Althea mentioned scientific calculators.

Invites were mailed to Sunday Supper sponsor prospects in early July. The invite to individuals will go out in mid-August. The deadline for sponsor logos on the individual invite is August 1<sup>st</sup>. Pledges and payments to date amount to \$7,900. The Sunday Supper call list was circulated again and is also available on Google Drive – Mindy will send the link again. Althea asked board members to email any additional names (sponsors or individual) to Mindy. Doug expressed that he was having some difficulty reaching contacts for sponsorships.

The approval of the Alice Fuhrman Funds expenditure was discussed. This annual credit is applied directly to the energy bills of seniors who were approved for LIHEAP in the previous year. In 2020, each person received \$250. Victor suggested increasing the amount this year, and Doug suggested \$300. Victor moved that \$300 be approved for 2021; Doug seconded. The motion carried. Mindy mentioned that at \$300 per household, the funds would be depleted within three years. Althea said this is okay because the goal is to spend the money on those in need and not have it sit idle. Tami suggested that more long-term solutions be considered going forward (e.g., home energy audits).

Bill Solawetz, our incoming chair, would like to resume the strategic planning process. Althea mentioned beginning this process sometime in the fall with a Saturday morning session.

Joe Happe moved that the meeting be adjourned; Doug Loots seconded. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 with board members then meeting one on one with Human Services staff members to learn more about their jobs.

Respectfully submitted,

Mindy Hotovec as Acting Secretary