

**West Des Moines Human Services Advisory Board**  
139 6<sup>th</sup> Street, West Des Moines, IA 50266

Oct 20, 2020 Minutes

(Virtual Meeting via Teams)

**Members Present:** Council Member Russ Trimble, Rick Riley, Bill Solawetz, Joe Happe, Sue Wright, Kasey Tickel, Jo Helling, Janet Clarey-Jones, Tami Swenson, Doug Loots, Dan Werner

**Members Absent:** Matt McNeece, Mari Bunney, Mary Bernabe, Sean Fredregill

**Staff Present:** Althea Holcomb

**Citizen Participation:** None

**Call to Order:** The meeting started at approx 5:35.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from the Sep. meeting were approved by Joe Happe.

**Director's Report:**

Clothing closet just opened up in July - doing 5 appointments a day so it doesn't lend itself to huge numbers. Some that have appointments don't always come for the appointment. Thursday mornings, by appointment, people can bring in donations. Trying to always be consistent in all policies so that everyone knows what to expect and that exceptions are not made.

Have had some opportunities to talk to the press. Ch 5 did a report on WDMHS, specifically on providing help with rent. After the airing, WDMHS received many calls from all over asking for assistance. Also talked with the DM Register - has not yet been in the paper about holiday giving opportunities.

Worked with Legal Aid to develop "Doodly"s - "Doodlies" on how to access resources. They were prepared for landlords & tenants to give them info on what to do to access rent assistance. This was mentioned in the Business Record & on a number of websites.

Working with the library because a number of people go to the library looking for assistance. Planning to put this into the budget but does not know if that will be approved by the City.

Very busy with applications for LiHeap, Holiday, Rent assistance, etc.

Russ asked how much was left in rent assistance. WDMHS is in good shape. CDBG has some left that was earmarked for administrative costs and they don't need as much for that. \$231,000 left in CDBG funds that can be used. These are federal dollars and cannot be used for non-citizens. Non-citizens can be helped with homeless assistance funds. All organizations need to continue to try to market / continually share out ways for those in need to access funds.

Question was raised - have we ever tracked where people do find out information to access help / assistance? We do not formally track but do hear from clients about how they find out about the organization.

Additional question raised - is this a time that we look at our marketing and how we do things? Can the board offer support or ideas at this time? One option is to reach out to landlords to make sure that they know how to give info to tenants in need.

Board holiday activity - combination of gift cards & gifts was settled upon. Will adopt a family, create a list & Sue, Kasey & Jo will go shopping & wrap. Will create a signup through Signup Genius.

Doug has been very active on fundraising and has secured donations from American Equity & some other companies and is still reaching out to other ones. Althea will share a list of who has contributed so far. Sunday Supper has collected just under \$19,000. Below the usual \$50-60,000 but money is still coming in. Hy-Vee is doing a reusable bag collection starting in November with \$1 for each bag sold going to non-profits, including WDMHS. Althea is talking with ITA & WDM Waterworks about contributions and exploring other options for fundraising.

6:29 - meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Kasey Tickel