

## **FAMILY POLICY BOARD**

Monday, November 4, 2019

Health & Human Services Building – Basement Auditorium

12:00 p.m.

## **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Tita Yutuc, Kristi Arenz, Sue Mathison, Heather Quackenboss, Tracy Puent, Jenni Loging, Heidi Odegaard, Megan DeVore, Jane Klekamp, Lisa Duncanson, Isaac Hoffman, Catherine Kolkmeier, Chris Crye, Elizabeth Wright, Jason Witt, Sharon Hampson, Vie Matty, Hetti Brown, Liz Evans, Karolee Behringer, Roberto Partarrieu, Barbara Mc Peak, Carrie Jick

## **GUESTS/OTHERS PRESENT**

Todd Antony – Superintendent of Onalaska Schools

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Tita Yutuc called the meeting to order at 12:00pm

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Sharon Hampson and Hetti Brown to approve the October 7, 2019 minutes as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## **HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND BOARD UPDATES**

### **HHS Board Update: Sharon Hampson**

The County Board is currently working on the budget for 2020. Sharon shared that investments made last year in Child Protective Services appear to be having a positive impact.

### **HS Director Update: Jason Witt**

Jason reported that he, Mandy Biseck (Justice Support Services Manager) and David Steinberg (County Youth Facilities Superintendent) recently attended an event in Madison convened by “Youth Justice Wisconsin.” This newly formed group is bringing stakeholders together in an attempt to build a Wisconsin model of youth justice. Legislation relating to the closure of the currently State-run youth correctional facilities calls for a comprehensive model of youth justice, but has few specifics. Youth Justice Wisconsin hopes to influence the emerging model and emphasizes a community-based approach. In 2020, we’ll be thinking about the future direction of La Crosse County youth justice as our youth facilities are aging and in need of upgrading.

Reminder for the Voices of Men Breakfast Call to Action Tuesday, November 12 at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse Student Union.

**No updates from the Family and Children’s Section.**

### **PRESENTATION: Kids Forward presented by Tamarine Cornelius, Kids Forward Research Analyst**

The Mission of Kids Forward is to inspire action and promote access to opportunity for every kid, every family and every community in Wisconsin. For detailed information on their history, agency vision and values, as well as current research and steps you can do to help take action please visit their website at <http://kidsforward.net/#>. Tamarine

joined us from Madison to present on improving family economic well-being particularly through Wisconsin tax policies.

The Wisconsin tax system falls heavier on lower income families. What that means is tax policy makes it harder for families of lower income to just put food on the table. This leaves a hollowing out in the middle effect where higher income families can retain more of their money and middle- and lower-income families lose a larger percentage of their income to taxes. Many states have this structure, but it is possible for state tax structure and policies to be done differently. Wisconsin's middle class has shrunk more than any other state. Please visit <http://www.wisconsinbudgetproject.org/> for all of the information that Tamarine used to draw from for her power point presentation. In particular she spoke about bringing shared prosperity by creating a more equitable tax code.

Tax specific recommendations from Kids Forward include:

- Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit for families. One estimator shows that over \$400,000 would stay in the hands of low-income working families in La Crosse County alone and pump \$27 million back into Wisconsin communities.
- Make the Earned Income Tax Credit available to low-wage, childless workers. Currently it is only available to low—wage workers with dependent children.
- Reduce taxes for low- and middle-income workers
- Increase taxes for higher wage earners
- Increase targeted property tax relief

Other recommendations from Kids Forward include:

- Raising the minimum wage
- Drivers licenses for all. This is recommended because making one small error, like having an auto headlight out while driving to school, work, or church, can cause a chain of events that can negatively affect children.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Chris Crye formerly of the Neighborhood City Church has started the Next Chapter La Crosse. Next Chapter assists men recently released from incarceration to gain an understanding of the Christian doctrine, rebuild family relationships, discover their gifts and become rooted in a church community.

### **ADJOURNMENT TO THE NEXT MEETING TO BE HELD MONDAY, December 2, 2019, AT NOON**

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

**Approved** December 2, 2019, Rachel Klistai, Recorder