MINUTES

Human Services and Veterans Services Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 20, 2026-9:30am

Erlandson Building 1st Floor Conference Room or remote via Microsoft Teams

---

1. **Call to Order**
   - Meeting called to order by Jill Bender at 9:30 am.

   Bender stated that a new Chairperson needed to be elected. Motion made by Alycann Taylor to nominate David Strudthoff for Chairperson. Second by Patrick Sullivan. There were no other nominations. All voting in favor, motion carried.

   David Strudthoff called for nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Motion made by Kay Stanek to nominate Scott Champion. Second by Greg Lawton. There were no other nominations. All Voting in Favor, Motion Carried.

   - 9:34am Scott Champion entered meeting

2. **Affirmation of Proper Public Notice & Disclaimer**
   - Jill Bender stated there was proper public notice
3. **Attendance**
   - Committee Members Present: Kay Stanek, Jean Klousia, Kathleen Sullivan, Alycann Taylor, Patrick Sullivan, David Strudthoff, Jody Schroeder, Greg Lawton, Trisha Lepke, Scott Champion
   - Committee Members Not able to attend:
   - Visitors: Charles Jacobson
   - Others present: Jill Bender, Ashley Bean, Brenda Anderson, Brenda Olson, Theresa Berger, Brook Strangstalien, Marsha Everson, Jeri Lynn Lindner, Crystal Jones
4. **Approve of Minutes: April 15, 2026**
   - Motion made by-Patrick Sullivan Seconded by-Kay Stanek
5. **Audience to Visitors-**none
6. **Regular Business**
   - **A.** Veterans Services

Crystal Knoll gave the report.

Office Bills:
VetPro Software – yearly renewal 3 licenses -- $1, 560.00
US Cellular Bill – Last one $133

Office Numbers – See attached sheet. Working 272 Veterans claims down from 282.

Office Notes:

- Incident on Wednesday May 13th, 2026, involving a Veteran and our office.

- What do we do as VSO's

- State Spring Conference.

Able to set up recurring meetings with new regional office director.

Leddia is back yet not quite back as the military has a mandatory 90 day stop loss once a unit returns from deployment. We have been able to get her working on getting her accreditation re-activated by having her in a part-time capacity so once she is fully allowed to come back there will be now delay and she can begin working right away.

- Cemetery Markers

Due to budget constraints, we could not purchase the markers used to hold the cemetery flags. I usually utilize part of my state grant as these costs close to $5,000 to get enough for all the cemeteries for replacement of old markers and for new Veteran burials.

- Budget Issues

I only have 1 part time front office person on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays so to give us the desperately needed help on Tuesdays and Wednesdays I am currently employing Sandi Rochen and she is being paid through the state grant which uses the grant up completely and we have no budget left for advertising or community outreach.

B. Human Services-Unit and Program Reports

Western Region of Economic Assistance- Director

Bender gave the WREA report.

Total recipients for Vernon County were 5,460, Health Care only was 4,841, Caretaker Supplement Recipients 11. FoodShare Recipients 2,533. FS Benefit Issuance $349,402.00. WI Shares Child Care Families Served 24. WI Shared Child Care Children Served 38. WI Shares Child Care Subsidy Benefit Issuance $33,340.22.

The total number of recipients for the WREA Consortium was 55,009 for the month of April. Health Care only was 48,296 Caretaker Supplement Recipients 156. Health Care with FoodShare was 26,069, WREA FoodShare Benefits issuance was $3,942,369.70. WI Shares Child Care Families Served 345. WI Shared Child Care Children Served 530, and WREA Child Care Subsidy Benefit Issuance totaled $422,771.88.

Clerical/Administration/Energy Assistance- Brenda Anderson

Anderson gave the report.

Clerical/Front Office: Call stats for March total were 628.

Economic Support:

Administration/Salvation Army:

Salvation Army Vouchers for April: Rent 1, Lodging 5, Utilities 6.

YTD Salvation Army Vouchers: Gas 1, Rent 4, Lodging 22, Disaster/Fire 1, Food 1, Utilities 16.

WHEAP:

Shari McCauley resigned from her WHEAP position effective 5/8 and took a position with Child Support.

Application deadline was May 15. Consumers can still apply but will not be eligible for a regular benefit. Crisis and program services remain available including HVAC and Water Conservation.

Season Stats: Total Households Applied for Energy Assistance: 985, Total Households paid for Energy Assistance 866, Total Households paid a Heat Benefit 863, Total Households paid a Non-heating Electric Benefit 858, Total Households paid a Crisis Benefit 95, Total Households paid an HVAC Benefit 61, Total Households paid a Water Conservation Benefit 12.

Child Support- Brook Strangstalien

Strangstalien gave the report.

Performance for April. Caseload: 895; Court ordered performance: 92.07%; Paternity establishment: 101.64%; Current support collection: 82.74%; Arrears collection: 76.89%; Current Child Support Due in Vernon County in April $190,033.81 – CSA Collected $161,016.40.

Family & Children's Services- Theresa Berger

Berger gave the report.

Berger reports there were 8 CPS reports screened in, and 14 reports were screened out. CPS Maltreatment was 5 for physical abuse, 3 for neglect, 5 for sexual abuse, 1 for emotional abuse and 0 for unborn child abuse. Berger reported that there were 11 alleged victims screened in, 22 allegedly screened out. 0 had a response same day, 0 had a response time of 24-48 hours, while 8 were within 5 business. There were 6 screened in-service reports for child welfare and 0 screened out. Screened in by service type Services intake Child Welfare 4 and Kinship 2. For youth referrals there were 0 JIPS referrals, 0 delinquency referrals, and 0 Truancy. Berger reported that there are 29 kids in Foster Care, 27 in Kinship Care, 2 in a Group Home and 4 in Residential Care.

Berger stated there were 5 kids in Targeted Safety Support Funds and 12 in Coordinated Services Team. Berger stated the caseload total was 66. Berger stated that there were 14 total assessments approved in April. 2 assessments were open and 12 assessments were closed.

-At 10:25am Patrick Sullivan excused himself from the meeting

Long Term Support/Mental Health- Jeri Lynn Lindner

Lindner gave the report.

Lindner stated that in April: 36 children were receiving services in the Birth to 3 Program, 130 in the Children's Long-Term Support Waiver Program and 47 in the Children's Community Options Program. Lindner reported in April: 2 Emergency Detentions, 12 Court Committed consumers, 6 MH Placements, 75 Comprehensive Community Services consumers and 42 Community Support Program consumers. Reported by Lindner 124 Adult Protective calls for information and resources, 9 Adult Protective Service investigations, 1 Guardianship

referrals and 0 Emergency Protective Placements. There are 1 consumer in AODA Treatment and 84 Protective Placement annual reviews.

Aging and Disability Resource Center of Vernon County

Olson gave the report.

The ADRC had 794 telephone calls and 104 walk-ins during the month of April.

The Dementia Care Specialist provided services to 4 individuals and case Management/Information to 15 others. Teresa facilitates 8 support groups monthly and has other events such as Outreach, Boost Your Brain in Memory Class and Book Discussions. There were 42 participants in April to these groups and events.

The Disability Benefit Specialist had 8 new clients this month as well as 58 current cases and 26 appeals. Lynette had 2 new applicants this month for SSI or SSDI. Cases are taking longer to be assigned to a worker and to make a determination. Lynette's monthly financial impact is $125,565.00.

The Elder Benefit Specialist had 36 monthly contacts and has 1 open disability application pending. There was 1 case approved this past month. Katie has begun her outreach programs in May and has 7 events scheduled each month from May through August. Her monthly financial impact was $263,700.00.

The transportation program provided 113 one-way rides by the volunteer drivers, 50 by the minibus and 100 by the handicap accessible minivan for a total of 263 rides. There were 3 vouchers provided to individuals in April. The ADRC had 6,801 loaded miles and 286 hours of transportation this month. The special trip for May is to Wisconsin Dells, and the June Special trip is to the Wisconsin Big Cat Rescue in Rock Springs. We currently are utilizing 1 handicap accessible minivan.

The nutrition program provided 1,172 congregate meals and 2,733 home delivered meals for a combined total of 3,905 meals. A driver was hired for the Viroqua route and will start June 1. In May, we had a congregate meal site as well as the caterer give a 60-day notice. The Bright Spot LLC will end their contract with the ADRC on June 30, 2026. We are currently looking at other options for the caterer as well as the meal site.

The Social Workers had 88 new referrals, 49 face to face visits, administered 11 functional screens, assisted with 10 Medicaid applications, and completed 13 enrollments. They visited 12 different communities and worked with individuals in 6 facilities.

The 33 volunteers with the ADRC were recognized during volunteer appreciation week and an event was held at the Viroqua Fire station acknowledging their time and commitment and offering training to the staff.

Senior Fair was held on May 6. There were 53 vendor booths and 401 attendees. We were able to incorporate a Pop-Up Dining Site into the event (part of the Aging Plan for 2025-2027) and served approximately 250 individuals.

Financial- Marsha Everson

Everson gave the report.

2026 Everson presented the Fund 80 at 32.06%, Aging Programs are at 27.65%, ADRC 28.58%, Mental Health Court Committed at 20.34% and State Mental Health Facilities are at 31.26%.

C. Human Services- General Report

Review Human Services Voucher/Internal Transfers

Bender presented Internal Transfers in the total amount of $112.32. Bender reviewed department expenses with the committee. Questions on vouchers were answered. The monthly vouchers for Human Services for the month of April $638,695.19.

Review Human Services Service Contracts and Amendments

Bender presented amended 2026 Purchase of Services Contracts for STRIVE CCS. Total amount of change $110,000.

Human Services Director's Report, Updates, and Announcements

Bender discussed budget process with the committee. Bender gave new committee members an orientation packet with department information in it for their review.

D. **Review and Approve Department Policies-** None
E. **Approval of Resolution for Human Services Budget Amendment for Replacement Vehicle**

Motion made by- Alycann Taylor Seconded by- Greg Lawton

All Voting in Favor, Motion Carried

F. **Approval for Request for Proposal for Senior Nutrition Program for 2026 for Desoto/Stoddard Area**

Motion made by- Kay Stanek Seconded by- Kathleen Sullivan

All Voting in Favor, Motion Carried

G. **Approval for Request for Proposal for Senior Nutrition Program for 2027.**

- Amendment made to include one year contract

Motion made by- Greg Lawton Seconded by- Scott Champion

All Voting in Favor, Motion Carried

Amended: Approval for Request for Proposal for Senior Nutrition Program for 2027 for 1 year contract.

Motion made by- Greg Lawton Seconded by- Scott Champion

All Voting in Favor, Motion Carried

7. **Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

8. **Confirm Next Meeting Date**
   - Scheduled for June 17, 2026
9. **Adjourn**

Motion made by-Alycann Taylor Seconded by-Greg Lawton

Submitted by,
Ashley Bean
Administrative Assistant