

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
December 5, 2023, at 6 pm
Kenosha County Administration Building

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Stock, Stocker, Kubicki, Gentz, Geertsen and Yuhas

Committee Members Excused: Supervisor Nedweski

Youth-In-Governance Present: Madison Tongco

Staff Present: John Jansen, Kari Foss, Lori Plahmer, Jennifer Blasi, Patty Merrill and Rebecca Dutter

Others Present: Supervisor Bashaw

1. **Call to order / Roll Call.** The meeting was called to order at 6 pm by Chairman Stock. Roll call was taken.
2. **Citizens Comments:** Donald Diehl, 5602 35th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53144.
Donald was there in support of the appointment of Jennifer Blasi as the Veterans Services Director. He had many accolades about Jennifer and how hard of a worker she is and dedicated to the veterans.
3. **Chairman's / Committee Members / Supervisors / YIG comments:** Chairman Stock may cancel the January 2, 2024, meeting as right now there are no action items. Supervisor Geertsen reminded Chairman Stock that he had emailed ideas on future presentations he would like to hear. Please watch your email for information.
4. **Approval of Minutes – October 3, 2023** - Supervisor Geertsen made a motion to accept the minutes from October 3, 2023. Supervisor Stocker seconded. All in Favor. **Motion carried unanimously.**
5. **Approval of Joint Budget Meeting Minutes – October 18, 2023** - Supervisor Yuhas made a motion to accept the minutes from the joint budget meeting on October 18, 2023. Supervisor Stocker seconded. All in Favor. **Motion carried unanimously.**
6. **Resolution to approve the reappointment of Eula Payne-Williams to serve on the Commission of Aging and Disability Services** - John Jansen introduced the resolution. Supervisor Gentz made a motion to approve the appointment, Supervisor Kubicki seconded. All in favor. **Motion carried unanimously.**
7. **Resolution to approve the reappointment of Jim Schmidt to serve on the Veterans Service Commission** - John Jansen introduced the resolution. Supervisor Gentz made a motion to approve the appointment, Supervisor Geertsen seconded. All in favor. **Motion carried unanimously.**
8. **Resolution to approve the appointment of Jennifer Blasi to serve as the Director of Veterans Services** – John Jansen introduced the resolution. Jennifer gave an overview of her background and what she has accomplished at Veterans Services.

Supervisor Stock asked about tracking the number of contacts they have in the office for help as was asked at the joint budget meeting. Jennifer stated that they can start tracking those numbers.

Supervisor Kubicki made a motion to approve the appointment, Supervisor Gentz seconded. All in favor. **Motion carried unanimously.**

9. **Resolution to approve the appointment of Lori Plahmer to serve as the Director of Division of Health Services** – John Jansen introduced the resolution. Lori Plahmer gave an overview of her background and what she has done within Public Health since being with Kenosha County.

Supervisor Stocker had emailed a list of questions to Lori to be answered at this meeting. He wanted the committee to know that he did give her the list of questions. He asked her if she was required to follow the CDC regulations by law. Lori stated no, but as a health officer she is held to standards that she has to investigate all communicable

diseases. If there is CDC recommendations turned into a federal law and came to the state level, she would have to follow that.

Supervisor Stocker asked if the handling of COVID led to distrust. Lori stated yes it did. He asked what can be done to help that. Lori stated that she sits in on many meetings at the state level and COVID is not being talked about. The concentration on their work now through the community health assessment, and on services that can be provided to the community.

Supervisor Stock asked Lori from her point of view what does she see her role as. Lori stated that there are statutory requirements to investigate communicable disease. She does not have the authority to close schools or businesses. Supervisor Stock said he was pleased to hear that. Supervisor said education is important to the community. Supervisor Stock asked Lori what her goals were for the department. Lori stated that she has concentrated on all the programs and services the Public Health provides. There are over 60 programs provided and she regulates that they are doing what is necessary to continue the work.

Supervisor Stocker asked Lori why her answers this evening were a little softer compared to when he met with her prior to the meeting. Lori asked for an example. Supervisor Stocker said masks. You did not seem to feel that they gave a lot of protection. Lori apologized for giving that impression because she felt that masks gave protection. Supervisor Stocker said he meant scientifically. Lori stated that yes, she did. He asked her if she still felt that it gave protection. Lori stated that yes, she did.

Supervisor Geertsen made a motion to approve the appointment, Supervisor Yuhas seconded. Ayes – Supervisors Stock, Geertsen, Kubicki, Gentz, Yuhas. Nay – Supervisor Stocker. Excused Supervisor Nedweski. **Motion carried.**

- 10. Discussion on potential impact the Casino may have on the Human Services Department** – John Jansen went through what we thought our needs would be if the casino opens. One FTE in environmental health, one FTE for a public health nurse, one FTE for an economic support worker. More help in the crisis unit that we contract with KHDS. It will all be a process as time goes on. There will be money for a half time Adult Protective Services worker, money for emergency housing and food, money for institutes. On the upside there is \$2.6 million for the new Human Services building. Supervisor Stocker asked what the likelihood of needing all of this. John stated he cannot predict.

Supervisor Gentz had many questions relating to the funding as outlined in the IGA. Patty Merrill went over some financials that have to do with the casino. Supervisor Geertsen offered up meetings to any who would like to get more information and would be happy to meet with anyone.

Much discussion was had on different areas.

- 11. Any other business as authorized by law:** None.

- 12. Adjournment:** Supervisor Kubicki made a motion to Adjourn. Supervisor Geertsen seconded. All in Favor. **Motion carried unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Full audio of the meeting is available at <https://www.kenoshacounty.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/6990>

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Duberstine, Senior Administrative Assistant
Department of Human Services - Office of the Director