



**AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER OF CENTRAL WISCONSIN BOARD MEETING
2600 Stewart Ave Suite 25
Wausau, WI 54401**

**Thursday, April 11th 2024
9:30 A.M.**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order
 - a. Meeting called to order at 9:30 by Norbert Ashbeck

2. Roll Call Attendance
 - a. Board Members Present: Norbert Ashbeck, Carol Bardo, Bill Clendenning, Chris Dickinson, Mike Feirer, Jim Hampton, William Hascall, Ann Lemmer, Kathleen Meyer, Tony Omernik, Maria Pregler, and Greta Rusch
 - b. Board Members Excused: Robert Benishek and Adam Fischer
 - c. Staff Present: Mike Rhea, Erin Wells, Kit Ruesch, Ronda James, Steve Prell, Traci Zernicke, Molly Morris, Barb Hartwig, and Holly Thompson
 - d. Others Present: Danielle Ley and Penny Hurlbert

3. Board Comments
 - a. Carol Bardo announced that, due to the recent elections, the April ADRC-CW board meeting will be her last meeting.
 - b. Mike Rhea expressed appreciation for Carol's perspective and participation on the ADRC-CW board.
 - c. Mike Rhea shared that, as a result of the election, the ADRC-CW will have two new board members from Langlade County, one new board member from Lincoln County, and one new board member from Wood County.

4. Public Comments
 - a. No public comments

5. Approval of Minutes – 3/14/24
 - a. Motion to approve by Bill Clendenning, seconded by Greta Rusch
 - b. Motion carried, minutes approved

6. Discussion/possible action: Finance committee update

- a. Fiscal report provided in board packet.
- b. Steve Prell reviewed the 2024 finance information and explained that the finance team is still working on closing out 2023. Due to the transition to Workday, closing out the year has been a challenge, but progress is being made. Steve then shared that the finance committee discussed starting the process of requesting county levy increases.
- c. Mike Rhea explained that the ADRC-CW has not requested an increase in county levy in the history of his career or Steve Prell's career with the organization. ARPA dollars have filled a big hole in funding for the ADRC-CW over the last couple of years, but that funding source will no longer be available by September 2024. Mike stated the intent is to hold meetings with the county administrators of Langlade County, Lincoln County, Marathon County, and Wood County in order to inform them on the state of the ADRC-CW and to begin conversations pertaining to requesting a county levy increase.
- d. Tony Omernik questioned how much the demographic in need of services has increased since the last time the ADRC-CW requested county levy increases. He then shared that his experiences volunteering to deliver Meals on Wheels has provided insight to the impact the ADRC-CW's services have on the recipients' ability to live independently.
- e. Mike Rhea agreed and expressed, "It is more than a meal to the consumers." Mike added that regionalization has helped the organization not have the need to request levy increases until now.
- f. Jim Hampton inquired as to when the last county levy increase took place.
- g. Mike Rhea reported the last increase to take place in 2006 involving Wood County and Marathon County. Mike conveyed how these will be new conversations for the ADRC-CW while the organization's counterparts tend to request levy increases on an annual basis.
- h. Steve Prell elaborated that the goal of starting the conversations now is to help the ADRC-CW fully understand the process and know what to expect in the future.
- i. Mike Feirer described how, if all the counties had to run their own aging committee, they would have spent a lot more money over the years.
- j. Tony Omernik added that data shows that the senior population is struggling with food security.
- k. Ann Lemmer shared that she has signed up to go to the Aging Advocacy Day, and she encouraged the board members to register by April 29, 2024 in order to participate on May 14, 2024.
- l. Chris Dickinson provided insight into the county levy process, and he shared the importance of undergoing the process on an annual or bi-annual basis.
- m. Moving forward with the process of requesting a county levy increase in Langlade County, Lincoln County, Marathon County, and Wood County supported by the board.

7. Discussion/possible action: Quarterly data report

- a. Quarterly data report provided in board packet.



- b. Kit Ruesch highlighted the implementation of regional calls among the Resource Specialist team in May 2023. Since regionalization, the team has had a 95% answer rate. Callers are reaching a specialist directly more often leading to a lot less phone tag. “An efficiency was certainly created.” Kit also shared how congregate meal numbers are improving, and the Benefit Specialist team has had a huge jump in contacts.
 - c. Tony Omernik inquired as to what percentage of the Benefit Specialist contacts are related to Medicare education services
 - d. Kit Ruesch stated he would look into the data and provide information on the next quarterly report.
 - e. Mike echoed how the efficiency created with regionalization have led to huge improvements in how the ADRC-CW connects with customers. Mike also mentioned how the Stepping On program has ballooned.
 - f. Kit Ruesch explained that the limitations of the current operating system do not allow all the data to be broken down by county of the customer served. Kit shared he will be looking into the capabilities of the anticipated new system and its potential to pull county specific data.
 - g. Traci Zernicke shared that the Family Care enrollment details provided in the report are county specific.
 - h. Jim Hampton suggested notating the data that is not county specific with an asterisk in future reports.
 - i. Kit Ruesch and several members agreed with the suggestion.
8. Recognition of members leaving the board
 - a. Ann Lemmer offered congratulations to the members that were recently elected to the board.
 - b. Mike Rhea shared that Greta Rusch, Bob Benishek, Carol Bardo, and Adam Fischer will be leaving their positions on the ADRC-CW board and expressed appreciation for their participation.
 - c. Greta Rusch expressed how she really enjoyed being on the ADRC-CW board as well as working with everyone involved.
9. Education Item: Long Term Care Programs
 - a. Mike Rhea provided a presentation on the Long Term Care (LTC) program detailing the differences between Family Care and IRIS. Mike shared insight into the processes that the Resource Specialists complete when assisting with LTC options counseling, eligibility determination, and enrollment/disenrollment.
 - b. Board members shared personal insight and experiences with the Long Term Care program.
 - c. Mike expressed how the Long Term Care program is very complex and plays a role in reducing the amount of individuals going into nursing homes prematurely and/or exhausting their financial resources.

- d. Discussion among the board members expressed concern regarding how the functional screen for the Long Term Care program is catered to health conditions over mental disabilities. Concern was also shared over the fact that the companies providing the Long Term Care services are becoming private, for profit organizations. Members agreed advocacy is needed.

10. Operations Report

- a. Operations report provided in board packet.
- b. Mike Rhea reviewed the operations report and highlighted the work being done to create the upcoming Aging Plan, the exploration of meals sites in Marathon County, and the increase in the ADRC base contract funding.

11. Closing Board discussion or comments

- a. Jim Hampton inquired about the status of potential new board member, Joel Zalewski.
- b. Mike Rhea reported that Joel's application has been approved in 3 out of 4 counties so far, so he will likely be official in May 2024.
- c. Steve Prell announced that he will not be available on May 9, 2024; therefore, Mike Rhea or Michele Osterbrink will direct the upcoming finance committee meeting.

12. Future Agenda Items

- a. Suggestion for the Advisory Committee to provide a report at an upcoming board meeting.
- b. Reminder: May 9, 2024 board meeting to be held at the Wisconsin Rapids ADRC office.

13. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn by Norbert Ashbeck, seconded by Tony Omernik
- b. Meeting adjourned at 11:01am