WACOSA Board of Directors Meeting
August 25, 2025
5:30 P.M.

Members Present:
Ron Brandenburg
Matthew DesJardins
Curt Gainsforth
Jennifer Johnson
Laura Krueger
Dennis Meemken
Thad Olsen
Joe Perske
Lindsey Rennie
Sandie Westergren

Staff Present:
Nancy Betts
Traci McKinnon
Meggan Thole
Lynn Welle
Mary Rothstein
Julie Haag

Members Absent:
Peggy Bayer
Mollie Garden

1. **BOARD TRAINING:**
   Stephanie Schaefer presented a 15-minute presentation for board training on Person Centered Thinking & Planning. WACOSA considers not only what is important for our clients, but what is important to our clients for their success. We listen, are honest, and act on what we hear from them. Since working with person centered planning, our rate of physical aggressive incident reports has dropped to almost none. We create one-page profiles for clients that aid staff in learning about our clients and what is important to them. This fulfills our mission to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to work and live in their community.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**
   Motion by Thad O., seconded by Ron B., to approve the agenda. A vote was taken and motion passed.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
   Motion by Joe P., seconded by Lindsey R., to approve May 19, 2025, minutes as presented. A vote was taken and motion passed.

4. **FINANCE COMMITTEE**
   Traci M. reported the June 2025 financials.

Our program revenue is under budget by $5K. Vocational revenue is over by approximately $82K, due to the steady influx of work both in-house and community crews. Our public support is under budget due to the timing of 2-5310 grants, designated donations, and endowment funds that we haven't received.
With the market doing well, our investments are over by about $56K.

For expenses, staff wages are under by about $335K, due to open positions to fill and expected additional benefits. Client wages are over by about $23K, which correlates to the increases in production revenues. Program and office supplies are under budget and building and equipment costs are as expected. Transportation is under by about $20K, which is in line with last year at this time. Upcoming expenses include our scheduled CARF survey, which will be 13K, shredder blade replacement at approximately 35-40K and various building repairs.

At the end of June, the financials reflect a positive $912K for the year. If you take out investments, designated donations, and endowment, we are at positive $864K.

Motion to approve the June financials by Curt G., seconded by Ron B., A vote was taken and motion passed.

5. FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Traci M. reported on the BASH financial results. Last year we had a net result of $39,692; this year it was $41,811. We had increased sponsorships dollars with a year over year increase of 3K. Our event activities of discounted Grab-N-Go gift cards, the silent auction and the box raffle last year were $9,691, this year was $6,122.00. Attendance was pretty close to last year, with fewer food tickets sold, and our expenses were lower this year.
Nancy B. reported we received lots of compliments, and the addition of the photo booth got a lot of attention. The Moose Lodge is very invested in our event, and we will have a recap meeting to discuss next year's event.

June 27th was the Rox game – 56 tickets sold, which is about the same as last year. While this does not garner many funds, it is a good community-facing activity that our clients enjoy. The Pizza Ranch fundraiser brought in around $600 and we will continue to schedule this popular event.

August 6th was the APH Friends of WACOSA event. This is put on for their suppliers and WACOSA benefits from the net proceeds from the event. This is the 13th year, and suppliers come from all over the U.S. This year they came to WACOSA for a picnic lunch and then were offered tours of our programs, including our shred operation. We worked with the Great Theatre Company and presented our Argggh play at their venue down the street. We included audience members as part of the cast, had a couple surprise suppliers in the play with our clients and developed a few theater activities to participate in throughout the afternoon. We also had K.B., our client, for the opening act. She is non-verbal and uses a wheelchair and worked up a comedy routine with Heather M. for months to put together a 10-minute comedy routine that was her iPad communication device. We received great feedback and APH remains committed to WACOSA. $482K gross was raised on behalf of WACOSA.

WACOSA was accepted as a Target Circle non-profit beneficiary. When you purchase items from Target and use Target Circle between October 1st-December 31st, you can vote and give points to WACOSA. This is the first time we were able to get into Target's philanthropic arm, and the least amount of donations WACOSA will receive is $500.

6. PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Lynn W. reported. There were a lot of activities with the play, the BASH, the reception at Whitney last week with Dan Mondloch for the mural installation in the library and dining space. The mural is a beautiful depiction of the fountain at Munsinger Gardens and the client's artwork was also showcased on a different wall with approximately 20 paintings. We renewed our 14C certificate in June, with no issues.

Client and stakeholder survey results were similar to past years. Stakeholders were very satisfied with the services we provide and complimentary of staff. Client survey is the same year after year, reflecting the activities and what they like, and what they'd like us to start doing.

1st Ave update. Lynn reported that a sudden and serious staffing emergency caused us to provide 1st Ave services at the North program for 2 weeks, so we could staff the program as necessary for our clients. The program is back to their home base and staffing needs are slowly coming back to service levels. Admin, job coach and any other available staff pulled together to provide the needed supports for the program.

Stearns County Grant: After responding to an RFP grant opportunity, we were awarded a grant to help clients with competitive employment in the community. We put in a proposal to partner with Career Force for career tracking courses and learning hands-on skills in various professions. The grant provides staffing and training costs for staff as well as client participation in the established employment-seeking activities that Career Force offers. If Stearns County meets their milestones for the first year, which they have, then year two is getting people employed in the community.

Jennifer brought up 1st Ave is needing approximately one million in updates and repairs, including the roof. With our current clientele, the setup is not ideal and updates would help the staff and client population with all the medically fragile cares needed. The discussion included possibility of moving the program to a new space that is closer to the staff needed to support them. As we move into our strategic planning project, this scenario should be looked at and Nancy will work on getting an appraisal for the building.

7. **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**
Meggan T. reported. The Human Resources committee talked about the KPI's related to recruiting and retention. In the last quarter when Meggan joined WACOSA, an employment offer took 4 days, now we have gotten it to same day or within 24 hours. In addition, we are focusing on the new hire turnover percentage, which has been averaging about 53%. We are also looking at onboarding and orientation, conducting stay interviews and evaluating ways to keep applicants engaged throughout the onboarding process.

We completed the employee engagement survey with a 68% response rate, up 12% from last year. As expected, hourly pay was the main concern. Most feel the work is meaningful, they have confidence in leadership, which increased by 27 percent. With an increase of 22% with WACOSA being a good place to work and recommend and Nice healthcare is a popular benefit.

She reported about our upcoming benefits renewal. With MN PFML we are moving forward with the equivalent plan through Guardian, who we are currently working with for STD, vision and dental, they will also manage our leave process.
The referral bonus program has been updated so that they receive $100 after 30 days of employment and then an additional $400 after 6 months of employment. We have had one referral already.

8. **MARKETING COMMITTEE**
Laura K. reported. Everything has been uploaded to the portal. The committee started doing the KPI's gathered and looked at Q1 to Q2. The biggest increase in touch points is Google and Facebook postings with the July numbers because of the BASH and promotions. Our video efforts have seen a significant increase. The highlight of videos getting to a broader audience helps bring new awareness to WACOSA. Each video reaches 90% plus of non-followers, so we will continue to do and promote for next year.
Customer satisfaction surveys for Thrift, DocuShred, and in-house were completed. These are on the portal and reflect good stable scores for all areas of WACOSA.

9. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**
Nancy B. reported.
Earlier this year WACOSA applied for a MN DHS retention grant that would pay staff members one-time payments for working in our field. We did receive our final award notice indicating WACOSA will get $60K to pass on to our employees. FT employees will receive $770, part time $335.

We got two vehicle grant awards for our MN DOT 5310 grants, including a minivan with wheelchair capacity. We are not sure when the vehicles will be delivered, as this is a new project for MnDOT.

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Strategic Plan Process is beginning with Bruce Myles as our consultant. He will be sending out a survey in the next couple of weeks or so with questions for our stakeholders. We will start work on in-person sessions at the next board meeting on October 6th. Please give feedback on the electronic survey and/or in person that day. Once the October 6th

meeting is done, we will take data, condense it down to area, themes, goals to present to the board at the December meeting for final approval. We ask that, if at all possible, board members be present at the October meeting.

We started a new venture with ThriftWorks and Chad O'Brien, a past employee, and his vintage and antique store O'Brien's Dry Goods downtown. He does consignment and our store staff put aside potentially high value items that he will sell on our behalf. We retain 60%, minus credit card fees, and he retains 40%, leaving us with approximately 1000.00 profit since we started a couple months ago. If this takes off, we secured the domain name – Oldevibes.com – as a potential booth name. So far it has been going smoothly, and we are learning what items are marketable in our geographic area.

Legislatively not a whole lot going on, however there is a legislative emphasis on waste, fraud and abuse in terms of state vendors and nonprofits. With this heightened awareness, Nancy and staff will attend the MOHR conference to learn of legislative talking points for the coming session.

Joe shared that Senator John Hoffman gave a speech today and will remain in the senate. He has been a strong advocate for individuals with disabilities, as has Senator Jim Abeler. They are usually the primary authors for major legislation that positively affects WACOSA.

Board Openings
Nancy and Sandie will be reaching out to board members that are at the end of their 1st and 2nd terms. Ron B. will be at the end of his final 3-year term and will be here through the end of the year.

10. ADJOURN THE BOARD MEETING.
Motion by Thad O., seconded by Curt G., to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken and motion passed.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 6, 2025

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Matthew DesJardins, Board Secretary Date