

Dane County Exec Parisi: Names state Rep. Stubbs director of Dane County Human Services

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Dane County Executive Joe Parisi has selected State Representative and former longtime County Board Supervisor Shelia Stubbs to be the County's next Human Services Director.

"From her time working in community centers, tutoring kids as a special education instructor, to her extensive experience in local and state government and mentoring people in the criminal justice system, Representative Stubbs brings her depth of service to this community to the most public facing work that county government does; administering all of our services for vulnerable populations," Parisi said. "Shelia knows this community and will serve as a champion for all as the Director of Dane County Human Services."

Stubbs represented the south side of Madison on the County Board from 2006 to 2022. In that time she authored key legislation, including a resolution creating what is now known as the Dane County Behavioral Health Resource Center, a central point to help individuals and families navigate barriers to accessing mental health and addiction treatment services. She also initiated Dane County's Community Restorative Court which provides alternatives for those who commit non-violent crimes. Stubbs served five years as Chair of the County Board's Health and Human Needs Committee, the oversight body for the Department of Human Services. Stubbs also served on the County's budget writing committee as a member of Personnel and Finance.

"County government makes an impactful difference in the lives of so many and I'm honored to have the opportunity to return to what I consider 'home,'" Stubbs said.

“Dane County Human Services has a long, proud legacy in this community and I’m grateful to the County Executive for this opportunity to lead this important work.”

Stubbs was elected to represent the 77th District in the Wisconsin State Assembly in 2018. In that time she’s served as Chair of the Legislature’s Black Caucus, Co-Chair of the Speaker’s Task Force on Racial Disparities, and is currently ranking member on the Assembly Corrections Committee.

Prior to serving in elected office, Stubbs volunteered at the Bridge Lakepoint Community Center and she currently serves as President of her neighborhood association. She has Bachelors’ degrees in Criminal Justice and Political Science and a Masters in Management from Cardinal Stritch University.

A resolution authorizing Stubbs’ employment contract will be introduced to the County Board next week. Her exact start date with Dane County is contingent on review and adoption by the County Board which could come as early as late May.

Astra Iheukumere has served as Interim Human Services Director since last fall. She has served as the Department’s Deputy Director since 2019. The Dane County Human Services Department has a total annual budget of around \$242 million and comprises nearly 40% of county government’s total operating budget each year. The agency employs around 800 staff who work in tandem with dozens of community based non-profit organizations to deliver services to vulnerable citizens.

The Dane County Department of Human Services oversees popular initiatives like the neighborhood based support network known as Joining Forces for Families and Building Bridges, a partnership between the county and local high schools to support the mental health needs of young people and their families. The Department also coordinates operations at facilities like the Badger Prairie Nursing Home in Verona and the Beacon Homeless Day Resource Center in Madison.