



**AITKIN COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 23, 2019**

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 23rd day of April, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. as the Aitkin County Health & Human Services Board, with the following members present: Commissioners Anne Marcotte, J. Mark Wedel, Laurie Westerlund, Don Niemi, and Bill Pratt. Others present included: County Administrator Jessica Seibert, Cynthia Bennett ACH&HS Director, Accounting Supervisor Carli Goble, Children's Social Services Supervisor Jessi Schultz, Adult Social Services Supervisor Kim Larson, Public Health Supervisor Erin Melz, Child Support Supervisor Ruth Sundermeyer, Social Worker Reina Irvine, Assistant to the County Administrator Sue Bingham, Shawn Speed, H&HS Executive Assistant, and Guests: Kari Paulsen/H&HS Advisory Committee Member, Cindy Chuhanic/H&HS Advisory Committee Member, Bob Harworth, Barb Carr/Aitkin County Growth, and Brielle Bredsten/Aitkin Independent Age.

Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the March 26, 2019 Health & Human Services Board agenda with the change.

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Niemi, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the March 26, 2019 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

Bills

Carli Goble noted that there were no notable changes in the bills this past month.

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members voting yes to approve the bills.

Health & Human Services Director Report, Cynthia Bennett, ACH&HS Director

Cynthia began by seeking approval of a resolution supporting the Mental Health Re-Entry Program. This resolution specifically gives the Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI) the authority to seek additional funding, to identify gaps in services, develop and implement programs and to develop a tracking system so they may evaluate and continually improve the services.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Wedel and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Mental Health Resolution.

Second she asked for approval of a resolution supporting continuation of the Health Care Access Fund which will be sent to our legislative representatives.

Motion by Commissioner Pratt, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Health Care Access Fund Resolution.

Third, she went on to thank and congratulate Ruth Sundermeyer, Child Support Supervisor, on her 39 years of faithful service to Aitkin County and Child Support.

Commissioner Marcotte noted how Ruth has made such a great impact to the citizens of Aitkin County and how well know she is within the County and State. Individuals Ruth works with trust and believe in her.

Cynthia moved into some legislative updates as follows-

We are nearing the end of the session following a two week break and there remains much work to do. The Republican controlled Senate and the Democratic controlled House do not agree on much however there have been two bills brought forth by both sides which the Governor signed.

One is the Hands Free Bill which prohibits any use of a cellular device while operating a motor vehicle.

The second bill that was passed and signed was the support for children's residential treatment payments that covers the gap for two months at the end of the State fiscal year. This gap was due to the federal government enactment of the Family's First Act. As such the federal funding ended 2 months prior to the end of the State fiscal year. There also is a bill proposal that will allow continued State financial support for this service as there will be no more federal funding for this purpose.

Health Care Access fund was not extended in the budget proposals submitted by Senator Abeler or Senator Benson. Senator Benson's did, however, include that the money that is currently in the Health Care Access Fund be moved into the General Fund to support SHIP and in addition there is a proposal to allow the SHIP funds to be more flexible in their use.

SF 92 was also discussed. This bill repeals the Child Care Assistance Program, the basic sliding fee, and Minnesota Families Investment Program Child Care, just the child care portion. The recent fraud incident brought to light that there are not many fraud controls within this program area and the intention is to put a freeze on the program until they are able to redesign it. The problem with that is that this will impact our low-income families who depend on this assistance. There are 25 families within Aitkin County, which benefit from this that would no longer have that support available to them. Members from MACSSA and AMC testified to the legislators about concerns for how this might impact our low-income families and it has been noted that this could create a barrier to working.

Commissioner Niemi spoke that Tony Sertich, from the Northland Foundation, mentioned that there are 4600 children in the 7 county area who do not have access to child care and that there should be a requirement that if you do a school bond that it must include child care. Also said that there are communities that have an abundance of child care and that that is affecting whether or not new businesses move into the area more than anything else now.

Commissioner Wedel mentioned the Aitkin Health Services is starting a child care service that will be open to shift workers due to the hours available to parents.

Other legislative points of interest include: MACSSA continues to meet with the legislatures to support the appeals process for Regional Treatment Centers and is continuing to advocate for clarification related to competency restoration.

Commissioner Niemi asked if there was any room for compromising on the Health Care Access Fund and the 2% Provider tax and Cynthia said that she believes there would be but did not know if anyone has pursued that avenue yet.

Commissioner Marcotte added that she is dealing with the syringe access initiative and that Grand Rapids is getting involved more than they had before and asked whether we are involved with that at all. Erin Melz talked that it is more prevalent in the Duluth and Virginia area and that she has not heard of any need for it here but that we will look into it more. Erin added that they

are transitioning from the old don't do drugs messaging to more of an if you are going to do drugs, to follow safe medical practices when doing so.

Review Approval of Contracts/Agreements/Appointments/Policies

Approve POS agreement between Aitkin County and the McGregor School District for Transportation of Children and Youth in Foster Care Placement.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the POS for Transportation of Children and Youth in Foster Care Placement.

Adult Social Services Report, Kim Larson

Kim gave an update on the Clubhouse project that is underway through Northland Counseling and that they are now looking at a house in Aitkin, as opposed to the upstairs area of Riverwood's log building. Commissioners asked about the reason for the change of plan and it was noted that it was not fiscally realistic, as the renovation costs were higher than expected as well as rental costs associated with that building. There will be some renovations required of the house as it will need to be handicap accessible and the cost for heating and cooling may be high. In the meantime Northland is in discussions with the Aitkin Methodist Church and were meeting soon with them.

She went on to give an update on the Vitals program and this APP will be available to put on cell phones for all of the Aitkin County Sheriff's Department deputies and Aitkin Police Department officers to help responders know when they are approaching an individual who has emergent information. This is dependent on the individual registering their information and wearing a fob that will ping the responders phone app if information regarding this person is available.

Next she shared that on March 1st Reina Irvine received a certificate of appreciation from the Department of Human Services Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Unit and that she had never seen this happen before from DHS and that acknowledgments from them is very rare. It just speaks to the quality of work that Reina does and the stellar employees within our county.

Lastly Kim talked about the upcoming Mental Health Event on May 14th from 5-7pm at Maryhill Manor and the focus this year is on self-care. There will be presentations on healthy shopping, food demonstration, and a presentation on yoga and its benefits.

Financial Reports, Carli Goble

Carli began by talking about out of home placement costs and to wrap up 2018 we were at about 50% of where we ended in 2017.

In quarter 1 in 2019 we had \$58,680 in foster care charges and that compared to that same time in 2018 we had \$101,000.

Regional treatment center costs for quarter 1 was \$77,000 for six clients compared to \$92,000 in 2018 for the same amount of clients although one, at that time, was being paid for by us at the 100% rate.

We currently have no one at the Anoka Regional Treatment Center, however we have that recurring payment to them for a client who is now deceased.

At the Minnesota Sex Offender Program we have 4 clients there at varying levels of county responsibility that was in affect at the time of their placement there.

In St. Peter we currently have two clients and that cost for them is \$23,000 for the first quarter of 2019.

She ended her financial report by noting that we currently should be at a 25% for expenditures and we are actually at 22%. Revenues are at 14% but noted that is expected as we receive the majority of our revenues with tax payments in July and October.

Commissioner Wedel asked whether or not, in regards to the Anoka item, there were any bills or discussions taking place that would address those kind of situations in the future and Cynthia responded that she believes the ability to appeal would make an impact on those situations in the future, if that passes, and that until the appeal process is done that it will remain the state's responsibility.

Committee Reports

Joint Powers Board Report, Erin Melz

Erin relayed that they discussed their first quarter grant spending as well as delegation agreements and the Health Care Access Fund.

Maggie, the CHB administrator, received approval to attend the National Association of City and County Health Officials Conference in Orlando in July.

The board received an update on Healthy Families America Programs.

Erin concluded by reminding the Commissioners that the first of three Substance Abuse Forums would be held this evening in McGregor at the school with a meal from 5-6pm and program from 6-730pm. The next one will be in Aitkin on May 2nd and in Malmo on May 7th.

H&HS Advisory Committee Update

Cindy and Kari briefed the Board for the Advisory Committee and that they had started work on their project to raise awareness for Suicide Prevention in the County through working with the Committee for the Awareness and Prevention of Suicide (CAPS).

The committee members will be spreading information at community organizations and church groups throughout the year to raise awareness of mental health and suicide.

A few of the members will be sitting in on the CAPS meetings and reporting our work to them and back to the Advisory Committee as a go between to each committee.

The goal is just to raise awareness that this is a problem and that it is ok to talk about this in our communities.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Next Meeting – May 28, 2019