

WRIGHT COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

MINUTES

January 27, 2014

1:30 P.M. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The regular meeting of the Wright County Human Services Board was called to order at 1:30 P.M., Monday, January 27, 2014, by Chairperson Sawatzke.

MINUTES: Approval of Minutes of January 13, 2014.

Action: The Minutes were moved for approval as presented by Potter, seconded by Daleiden. Motion carries unanimously.

AGENDA:

Action: The Agenda was moved for approval as presented by Potter, seconded by Husom. Motion carries unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Christine Husom - District 1
Pat Sawatzke – District 2
Mark Daleiden – District 3

Michael Potter – District 4
Charlie Borrell – District 5

Staff Present:

Jami Goodrum Schwartz, Director
Carol Schefers, Public Health Director
Susan DeMars, Health Education Coordinator
Michelle Miller, Social Services Manager
Christine Partlow, Fiscal Manager
Michele Raymond, Collections Officer
Aggie Gunnerson, Secretary

New Staff Introduction(s):

Megan Jahnke, Social Worker in the Mental Health Unit, date of hire 1/27/14
Erin Baker, Social Worker in the Intake/Assessment Unit, date of hire 1/21/14

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Social Services Payments Abstract – \$124,021.96
Action: Motion by Daleiden, seconded by Husom, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carries unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

ADMINISTRATIVE PAYMENTS:

Payments total: \$42,648.75; 46 vendors; 146 transactions.

Action: Motion by Daleiden, seconded by Borrell, to approve the Administrative Payments subject to audit. Motion carries unanimously.

PERSONNEL:

1. January 22, 2014 Personnel Committee Minutes.
Reclassify Office Technician II position to Case Aide – Mental Health Unit.
MEMBERS PRESENT: Sawatzke, Husom, and L. Kelly

OTHERS PRESENT: Kramer, Miller

I. Reclassify Office Tech To Case Aide.

Miller distributed a document entitled, “Reclassification: Office Technician II to Case Aide” (see

attached). She explained that the request pertains to a currently vacated Office Technician position in Social Services. She referred to three reasons addressed in the document:

- 1) "The changing culture of County services to a work environment increasingly more reliant on technology." Miller said due to the increased use of technology, more support is needed. The Office Technician job description encompasses filing and paperwork versus use of technology. In addition, Miller said a Case Aide can perform case management functions. Case Aides meet with clients and provide additional support for social workers. If a social worker is out on a visit, the Agency always has a backup in the office for different Units. A Case Aide could function as such, but an Office Technician could not. Miller said Case Aides also evaluate client eligibility, while Office Technicians cannot.

Miller said the Agency has a Case Aide and a contract worker who are responsible for supervised visitation. She said two is not enough. Last year the Agency exceeded supervised visitation dollars, and another Case Aide would alleviate that situation. In addition, employees occasionally transport clients. A judge recently ordered the Agency to transport a youth to school and court. Miller added that the list in her document is not inclusive, but rather a sampling of functions a Case Aide can perform.

- 2) "The Human Services cost for the reclassification incurred is a difference of \$.38 without benefits and \$.49 with benefits. The annual increased cost for wage and benefits would be \$1,019.20."
- 3) "The Human Services reimbursement for an Office Technician is minimal between 5-7 percent. The reimbursement for a Case Aide position is 50 percent. Therefore the annual net increase due to the reclassification is more than \$9,500."

Sawatzke asked whether this request came before the Committee in the past. Miller replied that Jami Goodrum Schwartz, Human Services Director, reclassified several positions in the Child Support Unit so they could work across the entire third floor Agency office at the Government Center. Originally the positions were only dedicated to Child Support. Husom said Case Aides have a broader classification. Miller said Case Aides offer more functional flexibility and receive more reimbursement.

Recommendation: Refer to Human Services Board to reclassify the vacant Office Technician II position to Case Aide.

Husom reviewed the Minutes. Correction to Minutes: Bigelow not present.

Action: Motion by Daleiden, seconded by Potter, to approve the Minutes and Recommendation.
Motion carries unanimously.

SOCIAL SERVICES/PUBLIC HEALTH/FINANCIAL SERVICES:

1. Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Breastfeeding in the Childcare Settings.
Susan DeMars presented item. Susan works on the SHIP Grant (State Health Improvement Program), which is focusing on obesity and tobacco prevention. Susan said she is working on the Strategy Health Eating, Physical Activity and Breastfeeding in Child Care in Wright County. She will begin working with caregivers and educators of children (birth to school age) to assess and help them improve the nutrition and physical activities environments in their child care programs. Initially, she will work with child care centers and in-home child care providers who serve those receiving child care assistance and qualify for Tier I of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and breastfeeding in the child care setting. She explained the curriculum used: LANA (Learning About Nutrition Through Activities), and IMIL (I am Moving, I am Learning). She provided statistics on free and reduced lunches in the schools, and the food programs in child care settings and organizations reimbursed through the various food programs. Susan said on any given weekday, 424 child care settings in Wright County have the opportunity to have a positive impact on healthy eating and active play behavior on more than 4,600 children age 5 and younger. There was discussion on causes of obesity – whether it is genetic, poor nutrition choices,

parental behavior, inactivity, etc.

2. Social Service Reorganization presentation.
3. MnCHOICES presentation.

Michelle Miller presented information on both the Social Service reorganization and MnCHOICES. Social Services is going back to seven units. Reorganization is due to implementing MnCHOICES; adding a new supervisor for the new Intake & Assessment Unit (Richelle Kramer); to decrease size of Units; to create case flow efficiencies ; to balance programs in units, and to centralize Intake. Units that have undergone changes are: Intake & Assessment (NEW-includes MnCHOICES); Children's Services (formerly Child Protection); Family Services (formerly Family Assessment), Licensing & Resources (formerly Intake/Resources). Adult Services; Developmental Disabilities, and Mental Health were not impacted by the reorganization. Miller reviewed placement of staff and programs for the four units affected by the reorganization, including staff transition dates. A better backup system was developed for the Intake & Assessment Unit. The Licensing & Resource Unit will include Family Group Decision Making services, as well as Licensing and Chemical Dependency. Children's Services includes child protection investigations, family assessment workers, truancy, minor parent and the parent support outreach program. Family Services includes ongoing child protection, kinship, supervised visitation, adoption, therapy/skills workers and child welfare. In regards to MnCHOICES, the Dept. of Human Services has modified the roll-out dates for counties to implement MnCHOICES, Wright County's roll-out has been delayed from March 24 to the beginning of May. Because of this delay, the two new social workers for this unit will start March 10. Some counties are having issues with roll-out of MnCHOICES. Hennepin County is the next county to go on MnCHOICES. DHS is saying their first communication to counties was a "tentative" schedule. Schwartz said she will keep the Board updated on process.

Daleiden asked if the Agency will be combining Intake for all programs – answering questions on Financial Services. Miller said no, this is just for Social Services. Daleiden said once the software is up and running, and things get done at the State level, will this happen? Schwartz we won't be totally integrated; we are looking at ways to leverage the technology we have, we are closer to it than where we have been in the past. With such new endeavors (MNSure and MnCHOICES), it would be premature to say we can coordinate everything to a single point of entry. She said many Social Service clients don't have a piece in Financial. Daleiden said when we had the County's "Best Idea" contest, it was mentioned having a financial worker at the Human Services Center due to concerns of employees and/or clients. Schwartz said they did look at it, but it wasn't feasible at the time due to resources and staffing. There has been communication between Financial Services and Social Services; mainly on MnCHOICES and MNSure. The Social Services Intake & Assessment Unit is not on the 2014 OnBase schedule. Miller said Child Protection is on, and the old Family Assessment Unit is next. Schwartz said to implement in OnBase; we need to know all document types and to do workflow, which we don't have in those new processes. Miller said we don't have the IT support needed to do this, and can't do it with the staff we have. Schwartz said the Agency will be hiring a new technology person to assist with getting the entire Agency on OnBase.

ADMINISTRATION:

1. Write-off Accounts – January-December 2013. (attachment)
Christine Partlow said the County collected \$1.3 million last year, and brought both accounts that were written-off totaling \$149,131.22 for 2013. There are two different sets of criteria used for write-offs: Wright County Human Services Administrative Memo and a DHS Bulletin. A small policy change is requested for the first three criteria in Public Health/Social Services debt write-off policy. change "X" to numbers 1, 2, and 3. The first list of write-offs totals \$93,763.84, with \$42,095.86 accounting for deceased clients. Partlow indicated the accounts have already been written-off in 2013, and we are now asking for approval. Daleiden asked if we report these on a W-9 to the IRS. Raymond said no, there is no gain for that, collections staff are diligent in collecting these debts, and there is no point in using staff time in collecting these debts. Commissioners asked about specific clients and Raymond and Partlow explained the lengthy collection process that client goes through before it's written-off.

Action: Motion by Daleiden, seconded by Husom, to approve list of Write-offs for January 2013-December 2013, for a total sum of \$93,763.84. Motion carries unanimously.

The second list – Income Maintenance Write-Off Accounts was discussed. Partlow said the criteria is set by DHS and falls under a different realm than we just talked about. Commissioners asked about a specific client. Partlow and Raymond agreed to provide more details at the next meeting.

Action: No action taken.

Partlow said the last thing requested is approval of policy change – the first three “X’s” replace with numbers 1, 2, and 3 (numbers respond to those on first report).

Action: Motion by Husom, seconded by Daleiden, to approve changes. Motion carries unanimously.

Sawatzke said he expects to see report on second list at the next meeting or shortly thereafter when you are ready to report back to us.

2. Phone update – AGC network.

Schwartz said item is informational. There was a meeting with ACG Network last week with herself, Bill Swing, Financial Supervisors and Financial Workers. The County purchased a “Call Center” for law enforcement. The Agency is working on improving customer service in Financial Assistance especially on the phones. We have a high call volume. In March, we put in an interactive phone system, and a lot of people aren’t calling into it, but are calling their worker. We still have had a lot of custom services issues surrounding the phones. At the meeting with ACG, goals talked about were: increase customer service, reduce the time spent on the phones, empower our customers to get information they need, and a supervisory component to phone use (what phones are or are not being answered, how much time spent on phone, when available/unavailable). We are looking at ways to leverage the system we already own. We need to give clients more options when dialing into financial workers’ phones. If we leverage this system, we need to purchase licenses, and update phones. We are investigating further on ways to improve customer service and assist staff to do their jobs. Borrell said it is something really needed, and asked if it works in Social Services. Schwartz said system is being piloted in Financial Services. Borrell said the biggest complaint he hears is people don’t answer phones. Daleiden said he hears people keep calling, calls build up. Borrell asked if software gives number of calls to worker, length of time, and calls answered. Daleiden said it would be nice if message said, “you are #3 caller.” Borrell said it would be good to see the average number of calls workers answered. If this works in Financial Services, it can make it work in Social Services. Schwartz said we need to look at phones to see what they are capable of doing. Daleiden said we need specific server, hardware – costs about \$6,000 or \$7,000. Schwartz said we are looking at about 45 licenses. Borrell said he and Daleiden need to talk with Bill Swing. Schwartz said we own software, but need licenses and digital phones (current phone may not have enough buttons). We need to look at models of what will work best with us. We are moving forward, doesn’t think it will be a big price tag, we have a case manager service model, but this would potentially open up the phone calls to an open model with people answering phone calls on availability. If this works, we anticipate workers will be on the phone less. Combined with OnBase, this leverages that technology as anyone can see another workers case on their desktop.

3. January 22, 2014 Building Committee Minutes.

Request to add work space for new staff at Human Services Center.

Members Present: Borrell, Husom and L. Kelly

Others Present: C. Hayes, M. Miller, Kramer

I. New Staff Workspace, Human Services Center.

Miller distributed three documents. Two displayed charts showing the current office configuration at the Human Services Center, entitled “Administration – Social Services,” and, “Public Health – Fiscal Technology – Office Support.” The third document was a preliminary proposal from Intereum to convert six individual work stations into three stations that accommodate nine staff (see attachments).

Miller explained that the Human Services Department (Agency) has been considering various options since last August, and are striving for a fiscally sound solution to accommodate six employees.

Miller said the proposal from Intereum, totaling \$6,861.26, covers the necessary office components they need and the cost to do the reconfiguration. Kelly asked if Miller knew whether any additional wiring would be required for computers. Miller said she talked with Christine Partlow, Fiscal Manager, and with Information Technology staff regarding wiring for computers and phones. Miller said it depends on the type of phones used. The Agency decided to utilize IP phones to avoid the need for additional jacks. She was not sure about other wiring requirements.

Kelly clarified that the proposal is for three new workspaces for nine people. Borrell asked whether this includes furniture. Kelly replied that it includes furniture and installation. Miller added that the proposal does not include chairs. They need four additional chairs, as the Agency already has two.

Kelly asked whether all the work stations will be set up at similar heights. Miller said two of the staff who will occupy a new space need a lower configuration. She asked whether they have done an ergonomic assessment. Kramer said one staff member wants an ergonomic assessment. Her supervisor will follow up. Borrell asked whether the office furniture is adjustable. Kelly said it would be good to anticipate future needs. Miller said the desks are changeable as well.

Husom asked whether the Agency's Furniture and Equipment budget is sufficient to cover the Intereum costs. Kelly replied that the amount isn't in the budget. He said the Site Improvements line item would have to be the funding source. Miller said the new chairs are budgeted. Husom said it makes sense to expand the workstations.

Recommendation: Refer to the Human Services Board to proceed with conversion of six individual work stations into three stations that accommodate nine staff, as proposed by Intereum, in the amount of \$6,861.26, funded from Site Improvements.

Borrell reviewed Minutes and Recommendation.

Action: Motion by Potter, seconded by Daleiden, to approve Recommendation and Minutes. Motion carries unanimously.

4. December 2013 Financial Statement. (attachment)

Partlow said report is in draft because there are possibly some year-end adjustments that will be made. We should be at 100%; with Revenues at 98%, and Expenditures at 97%. We are about \$170,000 short in Property Taxes. Sawatzke asked if that would suggest that a lot of people did not pay their taxes. Sawatzke asked how much are we short in Property Taxes. Partlow said \$168,000, and we have \$700,000 in County Program Aide. Daleiden asked if the \$13,923 in Revenues – Other Contribution is donations? Partlow said that contributions are mostly in the Public Health Unit and the Volunteer Driver Program. Daleiden asked if the \$351,126 in Recoveries is what the collections people do? Partlow explained that Recoveries are split into several Revenue codes and we only receive a portion of the total collection. Borrell asked if we do an umbrella policy on Volunteer Drivers? Partlow will check into that and call Borrell with answer.

Action: Motion by Daleiden, seconded by Borrell, to accept the December Financial Statement. Motion carries unanimously.

5. Other. Schwartz had Certificate of Appreciate for Tami Dahlman, Human Services Advisory Committee member, for Board signatures. There was discussion of doing reception for recognizing all County people at one time, and will be brought up at the County Board meeting tomorrow.

The next regular meeting will be held at 1:30 P.M., Monday, February 10, 2014, in the Commissioners Room, at the Wright County Government Center. Chairperson Sawatzke adjourned the meeting at 3:05 PM.