



BOARD MINUTES

WRIGHT COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

June 14, 2021

DATE APPROVED: July 12, 2021

Christine Husom,	District 1
Darek Vetsch,	District 2
Mark Daleiden,	District 3
Mary Wetter,	District 4
Michael Kaczmarek,	District 5

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Wright County Health & Human Services Board met in regular session at 1:31 p.m. with Husom, Vetsch, Daleiden, Wetter and Kaczmarek present.

STAFF PRESENT:

Alexis Koehler, Social Worker
Amber Davis, Case Aide
Dawn Walstrom, Eligibility Specialist
Dena Lampert, Eligibility Specialist
Diane Erkens, Social Services Supervisor
Jami Goodrum Schwartz, Director
Jill Nettestad (remote), Social Worker
Jill Pooler (remote), Social Services Manager
Julie Bemboom, Social Services Supervisor
Kate Dahl, Fiscal Supervisor
Kimberly Johnson, Financial Services Manager
LeeAnn Thimell, Social Services Supervisor
Mason Coaty, Information Systems Specialist
Michelle Czech, Financial Services Supervisor
Michelle Miller, Social Services Manager
Noami Blomberg, Administrative Specialist
Sarah Grosshuesch, Public Health Director
Stephanie Bridgette Wiley, Financial Services Supervisor
Tammi Martens (remote), Financial Services Supervisor

I. MINUTES APPROVAL

ACTION: Daleiden moved, Husom second, to approve the May 10, 2021 minutes. Motion carried

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Daleiden moved, Wetter second, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. APPROVE \$125K BIENNIAL FRAUD PREVENTION INVESTIGATION (FPI) PROGRAM CONTRACT EFFECTIVE 2021-07-01 THROUGH 2023-06-30
- b. ACCEPT ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESIGNATIONS AND APPLICATIONS
 - i. MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL
 1. Resignation
 - a. Mona Trebesch – District 4
 2. Application
 - a. Katie Zehowski – District 1
 - ii. PUBLIC HEALTH TASK FORCE RESIGNATION
 1. Bryden Giving – District 1
- c. APPROVE REQUEST TO CANCEL 2021-06-28 HHS BOARD MEETING

ACTION: Daleiden moved, Husom second, to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

IV. NEW HIRE

- a. LeighAnn Bethke, Office Technician II – Adult Family Financial Services & OT Team, June 7, 2021
- b. Dena Lampert, Eligibility Specialist, Adult Family Financial Services & LTC Team, June 14, 2021
- c. Amber Davis, Case Aide, Child Protection (CP1) Team, June 14, 2021
- d. Dawn Walstrom, Eligibility Specialist, Adult Family Financial Services & OT Team, June 14, 2021

V. EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – JULY

Alexis Koehler is the July Employee of the Month.

VI. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Social Services/Public Health/Financial Services

1. INFORMATION: CONTRACTED CASE MANAGEMENT (CCM) (LEEANN THIMELL)

There are 560 contracted waiver cases and 920 waiver cases maintained by Health and Human Services (HHS). Incoming cases significantly outpace case closings, constantly increasing the workload of 14 waiver case workers. The 40-hour-per-week work-time limitations, vacancies and other administrative duties affect the number of hours for case workers to manage reimbursable billing activities. Additionally, Wright County ranks number one statewide with higher-needs clients, which are maintained by the Agency. In 2020, HHS managed the cases without requesting much-needed additional positions while maintaining a stable revenue.

Daleiden asked if Case Aide staff can take over basic duties such as searching for placements. Thimell stressed that Case Aide duties are at full capacity supporting 14 case managers and that case managers are better equipped to provide client history to facility providers before placement. When Vetsch asked if the backlog on the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in July last year was related to caseload sizes, Thimell confirmed that theory as HHS performs reassessments on in-house and contracted cases.

As caseloads continue to increase, HHS proposed to send 70 existing cases to CCM and subsequently 30 new cases over the next few months. This option provides HHS the relief from requesting new positions or shifting staff from caseloads that cannot be contracted to providers. In reply to Kaczmarek's question if contracting mandated services and high-need cases would be an option, Goodrum Schwartz pointed out the risk of HHS being saddled with cases with no staff to handle them if, at any time, a contractor ends the agreement. Additionally, HHS, she said, is at a good balance between maintaining control of billable cases while contracting one-third of its cases. Husom expressed her preference on the existing CCM model as it gives some wiggle room for the teams. Daleiden suggested that HHS keep the highest-need cases and contract the rest. Vetsch favors a cap on percentage of cases to retain and to be contracted, versus transferring a defined number of cases. He acknowledged this [capping] may require another Case Aide to handle the work – depending on the level of caseload growth. Goodrum Schwartz preferred not to be tied to specific allocations as HHS tried assigning by slots before, which was exhausted in only two months. Goodrum Schwartz agreed a ratio of in-house and CCM monitored cases may be a good option. Vetsch is interested to see proposal comparisons between percentage capping and setting definite numbers of cases for CCM as needed.

HHS will assess its steps in the next few months.

2. UPDATE: JAIL RELEASE PROGRAM (DIANE ERKENS)

Wright County, with its partners in the Four County area, reported a 96 percent success rate in its Jail Assistance Program, with 198 successful discharge out of 207 in 2020; four inmates are still waiting

for the follow-up period. All 16 Department of Corrections-housed (DOC) inmates were successfully discharged. HHS contacts an inmate after 60-day post-discharge for needed services and resources such as employment, driver's license, housing, treatment, financial services or child support applications, court-related communication and others, serving a total of 212 inmates, with 488 inmate contacts.

Challenges still exists in license reinstatements and renewals, ID issuance at the Department of Vehicle Services (DVS). Available housing services is another area of concern, with 43 percent of inmates reported as homeless upon discharge. HHS provides tents and sleeping bags to help homeless inmates meet the two-week requirement to be entered in the Homeless list for vouchers. Considering the many steps to successfully transition in the community, Erkens acknowledged the great work that HHS and its partners have accomplished.

3. INFORMATION: 2021-05-26 HHS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
(JAMI GOODRUM SCHWARTZ)

There was no quorum but had good discussion on program updates. The committee will meet in person on July 28.

B. Administration

1. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Material handout: Central Minnesota Mental Health Center (CMMHC) application Community Behavioral Clinic Certification.

Duffy Development is moving forward with a 59-unit multi-family affordable housing – 53-unit apartment building and six (4-bedroom) twin-home units. Seven of the 53 units will be designated for long-term homeless and four for persons with disability. Another developer for the Delano area contacted Erkens last Friday but no details yet on the plan – the deadline to complete the application to the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency is July 15, 2021.

There is potential for a state shutdown; no direction received to date from the State regarding HHS operations.

HHS had a successful return-to-office work today. Goodrum Schwartz was delighted to welcome the staff back into the office environment.

Wright County is lagging in vaccinations for adolescent populations. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) contacted HHS to mitigate the issue.

Daleiden inquired on the status of the following facilities:

- Mental Health inpatient treatment facility in Otsego approval status – no news yet
- Psychiatric facility in East Bethel – facility closed its doors in June 2021
- [RentHelpMN](#) rental assistance for renters and landlords – no recent update yet

The groundbreaking for the new behavioral health center in St. Cloud is on June 24 the commissioners are invited to attend.

HHS will end its agreement on August 31, 2021 with Sunset Ridge after 27 violations. The Wellness on Wheels van will potentially be used for assessment needs of the facility's existing residents.

Submitted by Naomi Blomberg, Administrative Specialist