



**AITKIN COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
April 24, 2018**

### **Attendance**

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 24th day of April, 2018, at 9:06 a.m. as the Aitkin County Health & Human Services Board, with the following members present: Board Chair Anne Marcotte, Commissioners Laurie Westerlund, J. Mark Wedel, Don Niemi, and Bill Pratt. Others present included: County Administrator Jessica Seibert, Health & Human Services Director Cynthia Bennett, Accounting Supervisor Carli Goble, Financial Assistance Supervisor Jessi Goble, Public Health Supervisor Erin Melz, Social Services Supervisor-Adult Services Kim Larson, Social Services Supervisor-Children's Services Jessi Schultz, Health & Human Services Administrative Assistant Shawn Speed, and Guests: Kristine Layne/H&HS Advisory Committee Member, Brielle Bredsten/Aitkin Independent Age, and Bob Harwarth/Citizen.

### **Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Niemi, seconded by Commissioner Wedel and carried, all members voting yes to approve the April 24, 2018 Health & Human Services Board agenda.

### **Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the March 27, 2018 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

### **Bills**

Carli Goble, Fiscal Supervisor, presented the bills to the board and noted no significant changes.

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

### **Health & Human Services Director Report, Cynthia Bennett H&HS Director**

Cynthia started by presenting the Board with a draft copy of the new agenda format she would like to use for upcoming HHS Board meetings which would be the same basic format that is used now except financial reports would be given quarterly and be more detailed than the monthly reports have been. The eight other meetings would include an update on one of our many programs by the particular supervisor who manages that specific area within HHS. The presentation would include the program area, criteria for services, number of clients served, number of staff, revenues/expenditures, community partners/impact of services, personal Aitkin County story, and any challenges or impending changes that will impact our county related to this service.

She also talked about the new contract summary page that will provide board members with a better idea of what the contract entails, how it serves our consumers and whether or not we are seeking board action. This will provide the key components of the agreement and save on meeting preparation time for the commissioners.

In closing she talked about a couple of key legislative proposals that HHS is watching this session.

- The MNIT's field testing requirements is proposing that all new software has to include county IT and county input along with pilot testing before a new program is rolled out.
- Legislative proposal to allow counties to appeal decisions that the Anoka Regional

Treatment Center makes concerning discharge status of consumers. This will allow counties an opportunity to dispute decisions made by Anoka Regional Treatment Center that place counties responsible for the full rate of reimbursement for those consumers whom are deemed by Anoka Regional Treatment Center to be ready for discharge. Currently there is no appeal process for Counties who disagree with Anoka Regional Treatment Center's findings.

- Removing the Child Protection withholding. Currently, counties receive 80% of their funding in July and the remaining 20% in February if they meet the state criteria requirements. The original legislative proposal was to eliminate the withholding. There was an addition to this language and now includes a statement to direct the 20% withholding from counties not meeting criteria to the development of a child welfare training academy. This would not help counties in the long run and would be more beneficial for the state to provide adequate training on the front end and also to provide guidance and interpretation of statutes related to Child Welfare services.
  - Commissioner Marcotte commented that she read that 80 percent of newly hired child protection workers were leaving their jobs after only 6 months due to how demanding the current jobs are.

## **Approval of Contracts**

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the agreement to provide Semi-Independent Living Services (SILS) through Woodview Support Services/Oakridge Homes, Inc.

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the agreement to provide Guardianship/Conservator services through Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota.

## **Foster Care Grievance Policy, Jessi Schultz**

Jessi shared the updated version of the Foster Care Grievance Policy with the Board members. It does not require board approval however she wanted to let the board know that it had been updated and will be added to the handbooks.

## **Financial Reports**

Carli Goble reviewed the financial statement for the board-

1. Reported on March 2018.
2. Foster care is currently about half of what it was last year. This may be due to children being placed in family foster homes as opposed to being put into residential treatment centers.
3. Residential treatment center costs for April were highlighted and a handout shared. Discussion around this topic included rates, how discharge and discharge planning works, how determining rates for consumers works and what we are doing to assure timely discharge planning. Handout is attached.
4. HHS spending for total budget should be at around 33% of our budget at this time and we are currently at about 29% right now and should not get close to the 33% after the checks are run this week.

## **Region V+ Mental Health Grant Opportunity, Kim Larson**

Kim reported on the grant opportunity for which the Region V Mental Health Initiative will be applying. If this grant is awarded to the Region V group, implementation will start in Crow Wing

County with a jail diversion program similar to the Yellow Line program in Blue Earth. The rationale for starting with Crow Wing County is that they currently are ready for implementation of this type and will serve as a pilot program for the remaining counties. If awarded, we will move forward in Aitkin County with bringing the partners together and conducting discussions about this opportunity and how it might best benefit our County. The main outcomes expected from this Grant would be increasing coordination of services for individuals needing mental health services and reducing costs for the jail. This is information only at this time with the probability of a request from the board in the future for a letter of support to pursue this grant.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Joint Powers Board Reports**

Tri-County Community Health Services Board (CHS) – Commissioner Westerlund/Erin Melz

1. Erin discussed April 12, 2018 meeting.
2. Talked about interviewing applicants for the Regional SHIP Coordinator position. Had 23 applicants and narrowed that number down to the top 6 and interviewed them on April 10<sup>th</sup> and will be interviewing the top 3 from those interviews on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Erin also talked about the Community Health Assessment and how they are near 500 responses received back.

### **H&HS Advisory Committee – Commissioner Wedel and/or Pratt**

1. Committee member Kristine Layne provided details of their last meeting, held April 4, 2018.
  - a. Kristine discussed that many members of the Advisory Committee volunteered to be on a subcommittee to discuss reorganizing the Committee and setting new goals for the committee with the H&HS Director.
  - b. Discussed the presentation by Brea Hamdorf about the Community Health Assessment.
  - c. Talked about the presentation given by Hannah Colby about healthy food access in the county.

### **AEOA – Commissioner Westerlund**

1. Approved food shelf for the quad cities.
2. Ivy Manor, in Virginia for low income housing, is up and running.

### **NEMOJT Update – Commissioner Niemi**

1. Continue working with local high schools and have been welcomed in to some schools to work with students counseling them on what their interests are and what careers are in demand, to take some pressure of the counselors in the schools.

### **CJI (Children's Justice Initiative) – Commissioner Westerlund/Jessi Schultz**

1. Process for notifying attorneys for children in placement.

Kristine Layne ended the meeting by letting the Board know that Riverwood Healthcare Center has received a \$100,000 grant to work on the opioid crisis in partnership with the Little Falls Hospital to reduce the amount of opioids prescribed and used in the county.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

Next Meeting – May 22, 2018