



**AITKIN COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 25, 2019**

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 25th day of June, 2019, at 1:35 p.m. as the Aitkin County Health & Human Services Board, with the following members present: Commissioners Anne Marcotte, J. Mark Wedel, Laurie Westerlund, Don Niemi, arrived at 1:34 p.m., and Bill Pratt. Others present included: County Administrator Jessica Seibert, Cynthia Bennett ACH&HS Director, Child Social Services Supervisor Jessica Schultz, Public Health Supervisor Erin Melz, Public Health Educator Stacey Durgin, Assistant to the County Administrator Sue Bingham, H&HS Executive Assistant Shawn Speed, and Guests: Carole Holten/H&HS Advisory Committee Chair, and Brielle Bredsten/Aitkin Independent Age.

Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members voting yes to approve the June 25, 2019 Health & Human Services Board agenda with the change.

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the May 28, 2019 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

Bills

Cynthia 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 giving her legislative update.

Human Services faired very well this session.

Overall final HHS budget was a bit smaller than was originally proposed, however every issue identified by HHS as a priority was looked at.

Legislative decisions that were welcomed –

- Continuation of the Provider Tax at 1.8% with no sunset date.
- Commitment to fill the gap for the loss of Federal payment for children in residential treatment facilities.
- Opioid legislation that will bring money into our state to address the epidemic.
- Continuation at the base level of funding for local Public Health and the SHIP grant.
- Expansion of payment for telehealth services.
- Changes to the assisted living facilities regulations to better prevent maltreatment of vulnerable adults.

There were a lot of good thing that came out of this session.

Some areas, however, that did have changes we still do not know how they will affect us, for example-

- Substance Use Disorder (SUDS) reform which changed the requirements for assessors in 2017.
- CCDTF (Consolidated Chemical Dependency Treatment Fund) that counties paid money into and we no longer have to pay into that pool. We still have to pay for individuals receiving assessments who are not on MA or do not have private insurance, but not sure how much that will cost us. Nor do we have no way to predict how many of those we will have to pay for each year.

Other areas of interest: Childcare Assistance Progra, the fraud issues which resulted in a proposal to freeze all of the child care assistance to low income families until the State could revamp that program did not pass so that program will continue and child care assistance support will be available moving forward.

In addition there are some things in the works to prevent future attempts at fraud. The State is looking at implementing an electronic attendance record and having a centralized location for providers to register. Also, \$425,000 has been allocated each year for fraud investigations at a county level, presumably to support our fraud investigation team.

Commissioner Marcotte mentioned that DHS has been directed to form a work group that will be looking at how to reduce the DHS spending by \$100 million. Would like Cynthia to let her know when that is formed and who ends up on that.

Commissioner Niemi asked Cynthia if she had heard anything about the new bill being signed by the President that requires Doctors/Hospitals to publish all of their rates for services. Cynthia said she will look into it and report back to the board at a later date what she finds out.

Commissioner Marcotte also mentioned that the MN Attorney General's Office is looking into possibly bringing suit against drug manufactures, such as insulin and others, that over the years has not had manufacturing costs rise but that the manufactures continue to raise prices on that they charge for them to the consumers.

Cynthia continued her update by talking about the Leadership Leverage course evaluations she received; they were all very positive and everyone appreciated the opportunity to take the class. In addition the evaluation showed that the course work was helpful to the participants in their daily operations. She will be reaching out to all of the department heads soon and is looking into starting another class possibly beginning in September.

Commissioner Marcotte thanked Cynthia for leading the class and said that it is up to us to help interested employees who are looking to advance their roles so they can become better leaders.

Lastly Cynthia talked about the Tribal Relations meeting she attended at the American Indian Resource Center in Duluth. The topics that were agreed upon points of concern for both Counties and Tribes and a starting point for collaborative discussions include Child Protection, Children's Justice Initiative, and the Substance Use Disorder issues. There was a good discussion on how together, we can best manage those changes that are coming down from the State. She said they plan to meet quarterly and that she will be bringing back updates after each meeting to the Board.

Adoption of Resolution: Managed Health Care Organizations

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the selection of Blue Cross Blue Shield and UCare for Managed Health Care Organizations.

Approval of Contracts/Agreements/Policies

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Service Agreement between Aitkin County and the Hill City School District for Transportation of Children and Youth in Foster Care Placement.

Facing the Challenges of Dental Health Access in Rural Minnesota Presentation, Stacey Durgin

Stacey started by giving the Board a bit of background on what C&TC (Child & Teen Checkups) is and what she does as the Coordinator.

She said since she became involved with the C&TC Program that she has been concerned with the lack of dental care options for people in the County on MA or Minnesota Care.

She also said there has only been one time, in 20 years, when any of the local dental providers have indicated that they are able to take on new MA or Minnesota Care patients: dentists are only required to have a small percentage of Medical Assistance and MN Care. Once the provider provides service, they are required to continue to provide them with service. Thus providers rarely need to add new patients to meet their percentage requirements.

New federal requirements took effect in October of 2017 that now require medical clinics to provide fluoride varnishing to kids to help with the dental care access issues.

In 2017 Stacey was contacted by the Minnesota Dental Care Initiative and the MN Collaborative Rural Health Project. At the same time she had heard from her partners in the NE Region that Children's Dental Services (CDS) would now bring hygienists and dentists to rural Minnesota to provide dental. She arranged a meeting with these partners, Riverwood Healthcare, and Head Start, which initiated the conception of the Aitkin County Oral Health Initiative. Through that collaboration Riverwood was able to find where to get the fluoride varnish for patients, she was provided with educational materials, and services were set up to provide access to dental care for Aitkin County for patients from youth up to 26 years of age.

The service began in the City of Aitkin, with sites alternating between community partners who allow the use of their space and the Aitkin School District.

In 2018 Children's Dental Services provided care to over 30 patients were served, mostly children. During the 2018-2019 school year, Stacey worked with Hill City and McGregor School districts, to begin meeting the needs in those communities. McGregor School District had 17 people sign up for the clinic. Unfortunately, some of the appointments took longer than expected and one day was not enough time for CDS to serve that many people, so they came back in June to finish the patients they were not able to get to. So far, this year, they have provided dental services to more than 60 people within the county.

Also, just recently Stacey discovered a program for senior citizens, the medically fragile, and the disabled that provides donated services through providers in neighboring counties.

She continues to look for more opportunities to provide the dental care that so many of our constituents are missing in the county.

The Board thanked her for her hard work and dedication to the dental health of our citizens.

Committee Reports

Joint Powers Board Report, Tri-County Community Health Services Board

Erin briefed the board that they met on June 13th and that it was mostly an administrative meeting. That they are starting to look at all of their processes and applying the LEAN method to them to make them more efficient and that they received a legislative update, mostly concerning the SHIP program, also.

H&HS Advisory Committee Update

Carole talked about how good of a group of people there are on the committee and that they are all very active in participating in it and the Suicide Prevention project they are working on.

Commissioner Wedel added that they received training on Suicide Prevention from May Maran of the Crisis and Referral Service.

AEOA Update

Commissioner Westerlund briefed the Board that they met on June 19th in Virginia, MN and that they put on a Senior Carnival that was very well attended.

After the carnival they held their regular board meeting and learned that their current director, Paul, was retiring within the next six months and that they are beginning their search for a replacement for him. They also received some training on financial reports and how to read a budget.

Commissioner Marcotte ended the meeting by speaking about Angels, in McGregor, and how she had received some letters of concern from community members about how important Angels was to the area and that she would leave responding to them up to Commissioner Westerlund and the CARE Board.

Commissioner Niemi mentioned that Bob Marcum has been contacting him in regard to Angels and CARE also and that Bob is taking care of those concerns himself and has a good handle on it.

Commissioner Westerlund added that CARE had recently hired a new director, Lynn Jacobs, and that she had started last week and has been very busy, but has been thinking about the Angels situation and hope to have a plan in the near future. She wants to do it right the first time.

Commissioner Wedel and Erin talked about their meeting with the US Census Bureau representative and how they will be adding more jobs, be them temporary, to the County while the census is being conducted. The bureau also asked that the county set up a Complete Count Committee and Commissioner Wedel intended to talk more about it during the regular Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Next Meeting – July 23, 2019