



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

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 23rd day of July, 2019, at 9:05 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, Child Social Services Supervisor Jessica Schultz, Accounting Supervisor Carli Goble, Sheriff Dan Guida, Assistant to the County Administrator Sue Bingham, H&HS Executive Assistant Shawn Speed, and Guests: Janet Watson/WRAP Coordinator, Maggie Rothstein/CHS Administrator, and Lynn Mizner/Aitkin Independent Age.

Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the July 23, 2019 Health & Human Services Board agenda as presented.

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Niemi, seconded by Commissioner Wedel and carried, all members voting yes to approve the June 25, 2019 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

Bills

Carli noted that there was only one major change to the bills this month and that was the cost for a client in the Residential Treatment Center in Annandale for \$26,136.

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

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

Legislative changes that were made this last session are still in process continuing to have the details worked out on how they will be implemented.

No new information on how exactly everything will be rolled out.

A state and county Committee was formed on the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) reform that was enacted this last session to determine how assessments will be conducted, who will be authorized to conduct assessments and how counties will be paying for or billed for those comprehensive assessments that will be done for those individuals who need that CD assessment piece done.

Commissioner Marcotte inquired what the difference was between the comprehensive assessments compared to the original rule 25 assessment and requested an update in this area next month to better clarify the changes with the assessment itself and any other updates related to the SUD reform that is known at that time.

Cynthia noted it is fairly certain we will save some dollars in this area in the coming years but how much is yet unknown.

Hot news topics included the resignation of the DHS Commissioner, Tony Lourey, two of his

deputy directors who in turn rescinded their resignations and the resignation of the DHS chief of staff. The new acting Commissioner of DHS is Pam Wheelock.

Community Health Board, Maggie Rothstein

Maggie talked about the Community Health Assessment that was conducted by each county last year and where they are at with that.

- Aitkin Counties top areas were mental health and drug abuse
- We will be putting more efforts into addressing those issues over the next five years.
- Goal is for the plan to be owned by Public Health and the community.

Commissioner Marcotte asked how they were getting the information out to the communities.

- The information has been sent to the stake holders and they disseminate the information out to the communities.

Cynthia added that historically Public Health has not taken a deep dive in addressing community mental health issues as that has been a Social Services based program area.

- Directors in our region are beginning to look at how Social Services and Public Health can work better together to address this area?
- A public health model approach incorporating prevention will work well in regards to mental health.
- The Directors in the NE region are looking at how Local Public Health Association (LPHA) and the MN Association of County Social Service Administrators MACSSA can bridge that gap. There was continuity across the state on the community health assessments identifying mental health as a priority issue. So let's step up and find out how can we work better together across state departments, associations, and county departments?

Introduction of Janet Watson, WRAP Coordinator, Jessi Schultz

Janet handed out a copy of the WRAP brochure that she gives out to families.

- She has seven families that she is currently working with.
- Has been learning a lot, expects to take a year before she is completely comfortable.

Financial Report, Carli Goble

Carli gave the Commissioners a handout and went through the following with the Commissioners.

- June 2019 fund balance numbers show a large decrease, this is due to our levy revenues not yet posted.
- Foster Care expenses are projected to be about the same as 2018.
- Fund balance also looks like it has dropped but that is again because money has not yet been posted to the accounts.
- Out-of-home placement costs are down \$55,000 but she anticipates us to end up right around where we were last year.
- Regional Treatment Center costs are down \$15,000 compared to the same time frame last year.
- We have no clients in the Anoka RTC however we do have a monthly payment of \$500 for a client that is deceased that has a balance of \$280,867 on it to them.

The Commissioners inquired as to whether this has a chance of ever being forgiven and the answer was there is always hope, but probably not.

- We currently have four clients in the MN Sex Offender Program at a cost of \$24,021 for this quarter.
- We have two clients at St. Peter at a cost of \$53,636 for this quarter.

- Lastly we have one client at the Annandale RTC at a cost of \$23,232 for the quarter.

Commissioner Marcotte inquired whether or not health insurance paid any of this and Cynthia's response was that once people drop down below the hospital level of care health insurance would not cover them as they do not need that type and level of care. The responsibility for payment then falls down to the county and if there is no step down facility to discharge these individuals to then they remain in the RTC's until they are able to be released or a bed becomes available in a step down facility.

- Carli continued by saying our total budget numbers should be at 50% and we are currently coming in at 46%, and that revenues are at 27% and that is due to the revenues we receive in July have not yet posted.

Committee Reports

AEOA Update

Commissioner Westerlund briefed the Board that AEOA did not meet but a group of people met at the Birchstreet Center to discuss Nutritional Needs of Rural Older Adults in Aitkin County and there was a lot of people in attendance to discuss the topic.

- The purpose was to help older people eat healthier and to get new sites to host more senior dining opportunities.

CJI Update

Jessi Schultz noted that HOPE presented about their Supervised Visit program they are working on at the old Remnica House.

Updated their state committee members.

Commissioner Marcotte inquired as to where we currently held supervised visitations and Jessi responded that we often do them in the HHS building, but it usually depends on what works best for all involved.

Lakes & Pines Update

Commissioner Niemi noted that they were presented with the 2019 Community Action Agencies Annual Report which had the following information in it.

- In 2019, within Lakes & Pine's service area, 6,188 children, 18,218 people, and 7,722 families with low incomes received services to help them become more self-sufficient.
- 47% of people served fell below the federal poverty standard.
- The poverty rate for Aitkin County is 11%.
- Through their Headstart program 218 children received immunizations, medical, and dental care that would not have gotten them if it were not for Headstart.
- 549 parents/caregivers were given parenting and family functional skills.
- 525 volunteers donated 15,266 hours to various programs.
- Commissioner Niemi left the report with Jessica Siebert to be scanned and sent out to those who wish to look at it more.

Commissioner Marcotte noted that in the news HHS staff were highlighted talking about county burial costs going up and would like to hear more about this at the next Board meeting.

- Cynthia will bring the information back to the Commissioners at the next meeting for review.

Lastly Commissioner Marcotte asked about HHS's involvement with the US Census and whether or not the Tribal Nations will be included in that. Per a story she heard on the radio relating that

deaths of Indian women due to abuse are not accounted for and she would like to know how this population is accounted for.

- Cynthia reported that this is a great question. American Indians have dual citizenship, however, how they are or are not included in the Census process is unclear. Erin Melz attended a meeting with the Census Bureau and will be the lead in this area. We will have her look further into this and report back.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Next Meeting – August 27, 2019