



**AITKIN COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
August 27, 2019**

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 27th day of August, 2019, at 9:01 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, Accounting Supervisor Carli Goble, Jessi Goble Financial Assistance Supervisor, Sheriff Dan Guida, Assistant to the County Administrator Sue Bingham, H&HS Executive Assistant Shawn Speed, and Guests: Joell Hoppe/HHS Advisory Board Member, Cindy Chuhanic/HHS Advisory Board Member, Steven Loney/Northland Counseling Center Director – Aitkin, Colleen Mackay/Northland Counseling Recovery Center Director – Grand Rapids, and Brielle Bredsten/Aitkin Independent Age.

Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Wedel and carried, all members voting yes to approve the August 27, 2019 Health & Human Services Board agenda as presented.

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Niemi, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the July 23, 2019 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

Bills

Carli noted that there was nothing notable on the bills this 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

Directors Update

Cynthia began by noting that Hepatitis A has been in the news a lot lately and that there have been outbreaks across the country and state since about 2016.

In the last year there has been enough of an increase in the number of cases within Minnesota that MDH is considering it an outbreak situation.

Most of the concern is directed at the homeless, incarcerated persons, and the people who work with these populations of people.

Will be setting up clinics to ensure that those people are given the opportunity to be vaccinated.

Brea Hamdorf, Public Health Nurse, is heading up our efforts to ensure those that require the vaccine receive it.

Cynthia also gave the Board members a handout on the disease and our efforts to stop it so that

they would be more able to answer questions, if asked, from their constituents.

Next Cynthia went on to talk about the concerns that MDH has with the current vaping use upswing and the recent number of deaths that have occurred due to a lung disease associated with it.

She started by giving the members a handout on vaping.

According to MDH most of the deaths from vaping have been caused by people using THC products acquired off of the black market. When people buy things off of the black market they cannot be sure of what is exactly in what they are buying.

Letters of Support

Due to SUDS reform and the new rules governing who can perform comprehensive assessments for Rule 25 our staff will no longer be allowed to perform these assessments and as such we need to go to outside providers to have these done. Part of the requirements for them to start doing them is a letter of support from the County Board approving of them providing those services to its citizens. The two letters before you are for that purpose.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the letter of support for New Freedom Center.

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Pratt and carried, all members voting yes to approve the letter of support for Northland Counseling Center.

Steve Loney – Northland Counseling Center Clubhouse

Cynthia introduced Steven Loney, the Director of the Northland Counseling Center Aitkin Office, which is located in the log building owned by Riverwood Healthcare Center.

Steven gave some background information on the Northland Counseling Center. As part of their expansion of services for Aitkin County they plan on providing outpatient CD treatment and a clubhouse.

The Clubhouse will be for individuals who suffer from mental health illness and are seeking mental health recovery.

They currently have 15 members.

Anyone can participate in the clubhouse who have experience with mental illness, be it from a family member, friend, loved one, etc. and that needs support.

Will provide a structured opportunity to rehab out of their mental illness.

They are actively looking for a permanent home for the clubhouse, as they are meeting in the basement of the Methodist Church in Aitkin, but the housing market has been tough so far.

Commissioner Niemi asked about the activities the clubhouse members would be involved in.

Steven responded that they could be involved in any number of things from simply planning a meal for attendees to running the newsletter. Anything that will help them to learn more interpersonal skills and social skills to be more successful in the community as a whole.

Steven also added that they use the peer support model.

Commissioner Niemi asked what age ranges they work with.

Steven said that they currently only support those 18 years of age and older, but that there are plans in place, once a permanent home is acquired, to offer a structured kids program on Wednesdays.

Steven closed by saying that the clubhouse is not only for NCC clients, but for anyone with mental health concerns, no matter who their primary provider is.

Approval of Contracts/Agreements/Policies

Motion by Commissioner Pratt, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Service Agreement between Aitkin County and the McGregor School District for use of their facility during WIC Clinics that are offered in McGregor.

County Burial Policy Update, Jessi Goble

Jessi brought back the County Burial policy for discussion due to it being in the news recently.

She started by giving the members a handout with the history of the program and our current spending levels.

Wanted to let the Board members know that we are keeping our policy up to date and that we are not among those counties having problems with this program.

Commissioner Niemi inquired as to who was responsible for people, such as the homeless, when they die in our county.

Jessi replied that if we are able to find that they were tied to another county that we let that county know and they are responsible for the costs associated with them. However if we are not able to tie them to another county we are responsible and have a duty to that individual that their burial needs get taken care of and that we are respectful of them.

Committee Reports

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

Commissioner Westerlund briefed the Board that they had met up in Backus and went through their financial reports, SHIP update, and had a strategic planning meeting.

HHS Advisory Committee Update

Joell Hoppe and Cindy Chuhanic, Advisory members, were in attendance and briefed the Board members that they began their meeting by being briefed by Kari Paulsen, Advisory member that the US Census Bureau is looking for workers at this time for the upcoming census.

Next Joell said they had been briefed on the 2020 HHS Budget proposal by Carli Goble and that they had voted unanimously to approve HHS's request to the Board and had a signed letter from the Advisory Committee Chairperson Carole Holten asking that the Board approve HHS's proposed 2020 budget.

AEOA Update

Commissioner Westerlund stated that they did meet and had gone over some policy letters along with voting to approve giving employees that retire from AEOA \$100/year of employment upon retiring. Commissioner Westerlund noted that she was the only nay to approving this item.

Other than that they also did strategic planning.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m.

Next Meeting – September 24, 2019