



AITKIN COUNTY
EST. 1857
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 27, 2021

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 27th day of April 2021, at 9:02 a.m. as the Aitkin County Health & Human Services Board, with the following members present: Commissioners Brian Napstad, J. Mark Wedel, Anne Marcotte, Don Niemi, and Laurie Westerlund. Others present included: H&HS Director Cynthia Bennett, Accounting Supervisor Carli Goble, Public Health Supervisor Erin Melz (VIA WebEx), Adult Social Services Supervisor Jessi Schultz (VIA WebEx), Financial Services Supervisor Jessi Goble (VIA WebEx), Child Support Supervisor Julie Herbst (VIA WebEx), County Administrator Jessica Seibert, Assistant to the County Administrator Angie Sahr, Paul Vold, KKIN (VIA WebEx), and Rebecca Fudala, Aitkin Independent Age.

Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Napstad and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the April 27, 2021 Health & Human Services Board agenda.

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Napstad, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the March 23, 2021 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

Bills

Carli stated that there was nothing out of the ordinary for the bills this month.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the bills.

Director's Update

Cynthia started by giving a legislative update.

From a broad perspective, the American Rescue Plan is causing a significant disruption for budget planning as we are unsure what those monies will entail and what exactly they can be spent on.

Debates continue over the executive powers and authority that the Governor has.

From a more narrow scope, There have been no changes in the legislative proposals for H&HS as a whole, however in relation to Public Health, specifically, there have been three changes that are significant in the legislation that are being proposed:

1. Public Health Grant dollars – The original proposal was for \$5.5 million for that area to be used from 2022 to 2025 and that has been increase to \$7.5 million.
2. Public Health Infrastructure – The original proposal was for \$5.5 million per year and that too has been raised to \$7.5 million per year.
3. Family Home Visit Program – The original proposal was for \$2.5 million per year and that has been proposed to be raised to \$5 million annually.

Other than those three changes there have been no other significant changes proposed in the legislature since the last board meeting.

Commissioner Marcotte inquired as to why the significant increases?

Commissioner Westerlund commented that it was probably to fund more Public Health nurses.

Cynthia agreed with Commissioner Westerlund and mentioned that she had the percentage of loss of Public Health professionals in the last 5-10 years in her office and could forward that to the members if they would like, but she also believes that the extra monies are meant to rebuild our Public Health infrastructure.

Continuing on with the HHS update, Cynthia remarked that H&HS would be reopening the lobby to pre-covid "normal" hours on May 3 and will be open to the public from 8-430pm. She also commented on the great job the H&HS employees did in adapting to our reduced hours assuring that our consumers had access to services as well as workers.

She went on to comment that she had conducted a remote work survey with all of the H&HS employees in relation to what worked and what didn't work during the past year. This survey will be part of a larger evaluation process conducted by the administrator.

Commissioner Napstad inquired as to whether or not all of our remote workers were working from within the state or not?

Cynthia responded that all were working from within the state.

Lastly Cynthia added that she and Carli Goble were asked to travel to Morrison County to review how we have our budget structured. They currently have a separate budget for Public Health and Social Services and are looking to combine these. The plan is to travel there on April 28th.

Along with consulting on the budget, Carli and Cynthia will be touring their building. They recently remodeled the H&HS building. Part of the HHS re-design plan is to see how other newer buildings are laid out and to try to get some ideas on how we might redesign our H&HS building.

2020 Year End Budget Report

Carli Goble, Accounting Supervisor, presented the HHS 2020 year end budget report.

Review/Approve Contracts/Agreements

Motion by Commissioner Napstad, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the agreement with the McGregor Ambulance Service for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Napstad and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Foster Care Transportation agreement with the Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy for February 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Committee Reports

Tri-County Community Health Services Board Report

Commissioner Westerlund stated that they did meet and that it was short meeting that had them go over financials and they received an update on the counties in relation to vaccine distribution.

CARE Report

Commissioner Westerlund reported that they also met and that they are looking for some new employees and that they have reopened their toenail clinic.

H&HS Advisory Board

Commissioner Wedel stated that they had met and they had not met since October of last year. The main topic was a presentation by Erin Melz on the COVID-19 vaccine rollout and vaccination numbers.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

Next Meeting – May 25, 2021