



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Aitkin County
204 1st Street NW
Aitkin, MN 56431

Phone: 218-927-7200
Toll Free: 800-328-3744
Fax: 218-927-7210

AITKIN COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

February 25, 2025
H&HS Board Minutes

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met on the 25th day of February 2025, at 9:00 a.m. as the Aitkin County Health & Human Services Board with the following members present: Board Chair, Commissioner J. Mark Wedel, Commissioners Laurie Westerlund, Travis Leiviska, Bret Sample and Michael Kearney. County Administrator Jessica Seibert, Health & Human Services Director Sarah Pratt, and Administrative Assistant Paula Arimborgo. Others present included: H&HS Supervisor Erin Melz, Jeanne Schram Aitkin Age, and other public guests.

1.A Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Leiviska, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the February 25, 2025, Health & Human Services agenda.

1.B Approval of January 28, 2025, Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Leiviska and carried, all members present voting yes to approve January 28, 2025, Health & Human Services minutes.

2.A Director Updates

Sarah Pratt, H&HS Director, updated the board on the following:

1. Reminder of discontinuing the separate HHS board meeting. Request included in the consent agenda needing approval. If approved, the last separate HHS board meeting will take place on March 25th. No further discussion needed.
2. Governor's Proposed Budget:
 - a. New 5% County Cost Share for Disability Waiver Services for persons in residential settings.
 - i. **\$303,773 increase to county levy**
 - b. The governor's budget proposal would increase the county cost share for Minnesota Sex Offender Program (MSOP) sex offenders from 10% or 25% to 40%, current cost share depends on admission date.
 - i. Currently we pay \$124,428.50 for four individuals.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

- ii. With this proposed cost shift, **\$158,979.50 increase to county levy.**
- c. The governor's budget would increase the county cost share for the Behavioral Health Fund from 22.95% to 50%.
 - i. **\$5,280.82 increase to county levy.**
 - ii. **Potential annual loss of \$11,431.57.**

In total, these state cuts, at a minimum, are approximately a **\$465K hit to Aitkin County HHS**, representing a direct 14.28% levy increase to HHS (using current 2025 budget amounts).

3. Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act (MAAFPA)
 - Staffing
 - Modernization of technology
 - Training
 - Development of community-based programming
 - Interplay with existing federal and state laws including Indian Child Welfare Act and Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act.

Best Estimate for Aitkin as of now:

Health and Human Services Cost-**\$203,500**

- County Attorney Cost-**\$124,000.**
4. Sarah introduced Mike Willie, Regional Transition Specialist from Sourcewell. It was mentioned at the last HHS board meeting that Mike would be attending the February board meeting to give a presentation. There is going to be a session at AMC with all of Region V+ county directors, commissioners, legislators, etc. to discuss assistance in paying our outstanding bill and asking for ongoing relief to counties on the 100% cost share when clients are in state operated facilities awaiting placement back into the community and have been cleared for discharge. With the governor's budget, our priorities have shifted. However, I still wanted Mike to come and discuss his role and there is still a need for advocacy on the 100% cost share.
 - a. **\$247,267 in outstanding bill/pay \$500 a month.**

3.A Region V+ Efforts to Decrease Unneeded Acute Hospital Stays

Mike Willie, Regional Transition Administrator, presented to the board the Region V+ Efforts to Decrease Unneeded Acute Hospital Stays to include:

- Partnership with the Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI)
- Does Not Meet Criteria (DNMC)
- Goals of the Regional Transition Administrator
- Reducing DNMC Days

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

- Assisting Case Managers
- Liaison with Direct Care and Treatment (DC&T)
- Liaison with Placement Providers
- AMH Case Manager Networking
- DNMC Costs to Aitkin County
- DNMC Costs to Region V+
- Placement Successes
- Relationships Built
- Ongoing Work

4.A Committee Updates

The Board discussed the AEOA, Tri-County Community Health Services and CARE Board.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Next Meeting – March 25, 2025