

WRIGHT COUNTY
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BOARD
MINUTES
February 22, 2016

1:30 P.M. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The regular meeting of the Wright County Health & Human Services Board was called to order at 1:31 P.M., Monday, February 22, 2016, by Chairperson Daleiden.

MINUTES: Approval of Minutes of February 8, 2016.

Action: The Minutes were moved for approval by Potter, seconded by Husom. Motion carries unanimously.

AGENDA:

Action: The Agenda as amended was moved for approval by Borrell, seconded by Potter. Goodrum Schwartz made the following changes - Deletion: SS/PH/FS – Social Services Year-In-Review; Addition: MNsure update; Correction - PERSONNEL, No. 1, Request to hire 67-day temp to cover staff leave. Motion carries unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Christine Husom - District 1
Pat Sawatzke - District 2
Mark Daleiden - District 3

Michael Potter - District 4
Charlie Borrell - District 5

Staff Present:

Jami Goodrum Schwartz, Director
Michelle Miller, Social Services Manager
Kimberly Johnson, Financial Services Manager
Tammi Martens, Financial Services Supervisor
Marianne Charbonneau, Social Services Supervisor
Brandi Kirkpatrick, Social Worker
Christine Partlow, Fiscal Manager
Aggie Gunnerson, Secretary

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Social Services Payments Abstract – \$343,280.81

Action: Motion by Husom, seconded by Borrell, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carries unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

ADMINISTRATIVE PAYMENTS:

Action: Motion by Borrell, seconded by Potter, to approve the Administrative Payments in the amount of \$124,409.18; 63 vendors; 177 transactions, subject to audit. Motion carries unanimously.

PERSONNEL:

1. Request to hire 67-day temp to cover staff leave.

Goodrum Schwartz said request is for one 67-day temp to cover multiple staff leaves. According to Sunny Hesse, because our Department has no line item for temp staff this Board needs to approve the request. We do have many thousands of dollars in our salary budget that is going unspent due to a number of vacancies.

Action: Motion by Husom, seconded by Sawatzke for discussion. Sawatzke asked Goodrum Schwartz who is the person that is going to be hired that has the skills to come in and know what they are doing for 67 days. Goodrum Schwartz said we would hire someone with the skills. Miller said we would post position and be specific that we would need Child

Protection experience. Borrell said there are always staff leaving and this being that we need to make it a permanent person. With other companies, people step up and fill in. Goodrum Schwartz said we rarely take this step, even though we have multiple leaves. We have seven openings in Social Services; this is to fill behind a maternity leave. Miller said in Child Protection we need to maintain certain numbers to get Child Protection drawdown monies from DHS. Goodrum Schwartz said Child Protection has stringent rules that we need to abide by. Daleiden asked how many vacancies are in Child Protection. Miller said there are two vacancies in Child Protection. Goodrum Schwartz said plus the new January 1st position. Husom said she sees this as one way to find out if the temp person would be a good fit for the Agency. Goodrum Schwartz said in the past we have done this with interns and hired them. Daleiden said there are three openings; not on maternity leave. Miller said one is a maternity leave in March, one is a new position, and the third one is a resignation; in addition to a current maternity leave. Goodrum Schwartz said we have seven open positions in Social Services. This person would backfill staff on maternity leave. Sawatzke said this Department has never had a temp line item, it is because we are concerned that it would go a little bit wild and every time someone is gone, you would hire a temp. In an organization as big as yours, it has been the mindset of the Board that if you have 16 of one position and some is gone, the other 15 would pick up the slack. Goodrum Schwartz said we have hired temps in the past when our vacancy rate is high or the amount of work is unforeseen. Lately, our seasonal highs are all year long. With the MnCHOICES scenario, we are just barely treading water if we are going to make some headway. In Child Protection, we are so close to the DHS required percentages, with the amount of work coming in the door, we are behind even with people pitching in and doing more. We have approved overtime in these areas. Borrell said why we don't we hire one of the new openings. Sawatzke said instead of hiring a temp, why not hire someone for the opening. If you can't find someone for that, how can you find someone for the other (temp). Miller said we have struggled with rest of the State hiring 300-400 Child Protection workers to find qualified candidates. There have been some interviewed that we would hire for 67-day temp and do test run with them, but not hire as a full-time employee. Sawatzke said there is a six month probationary period, and in a matter of months will be a one year period. If this person doesn't come on board within a month, we will probably have the Human Services contract signed by then and you'll have a great opportunity to look and decide whether the person works out or not. Goodrum Schwartz said we do try to fill the gaps as much as we can, and right now Miller is being proactive in trying to fill the gap in number of vacancies. Miller said when we went to the Personnel Committee back in October, and talked about what is the percentage of staff increase added to Child Protection – 43% increase when adding the 6th position. We had already seen a 43% increase in work; without the 43% in staff to cover that increase. We have been working without that person since October, but the workload has been at least 43% higher. Goodrum Schwartz said the volume of cases is worse than anticipated. She said Sherburne County is also dealing with staff turnover. Everybody is scrambling for staff. Borrell asked about the educational and work experience. Goodrum Schwartz said the minimum qualifications for a Social Worker is a degree in Social Worker or related field (sociology, psychology, etc.) plus one year work experience if degree is in a related field. If person does not meet the minimum qualifications, they are not interviewed. Borrell said there is a reason you are not getting enough qualified people because the requirements might be too high. Goodrum Schwartz said the temporary hire would have the same minimum requirements. Sawatzke said if you hire someone, they don't have a year experience, if they go 67 days and are great, they can't apply for the job because they don't have the year, so you haven't gotten anywhere. Borrell said you could have a qualified person coming out of college. Goodrum Schwartz said the one year experience gives our HR people a chance to look at work experience and ethics. Daleiden said are interns qualified. Goodrum Schwartz said they are finishing their Social Work degree; they have experience working in the Agency. Motion does not carry 2-3. No – Borrell, Potter, Sawatzke.

Goodrum Schwartz said we may come back later to ask for position if Charbonneau has people she is interviewing today that are qualified. Sawatzke said if you didn't have one that was open, you could fill the spot. As Borrell said why not hire the person. The AFSCME Contract may be signed sometime in March.

2. February 10, 2016 Personnel Committee Minutes. (attachment)

Members Present: Husom, Sawatzke

Others Present: S. Hesse, J. Goodrum Schwartz, M. Miller

I. Request to Increase .8 FTE Planner Position to Full-Time Position (HHS Board)

Held over to February 24, 2016 Personnel Committee.

II. Hire Social Worker Above Step 3 (Within 12% Range) (HHS Board)

Miller presented the committee members with the reason and rationale for the request as well as the candidates training and experience which makes her the top candidate for the position.

Miller shared information regarding the responsibilities and goal of the position related to facilitating the Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Program.

Recommendation: Offer position at Step 5 of the current Social Worker pay grade.

Goodrum Schwartz said the first request was held over to the February 24 Personnel Committee meeting. The second request, we have good candidate, it would be within the 12% range the Department Head could approve, is above current Step 3, we are asking to hire staff at current Step 5 on the social work pay grade. Sawatzke said he and Husom was concerned about leap-frogging people with equal or greater experience. Goodrum Schwartz said HR has had conversation with applicant, and application would consider Step 5. Sawatzke said person would have a six month probation period and, hopefully, there shouldn't be anyone in-house that would get passed.

Action: Motion by Husom, seconded by Sawatzke, to approve the Minutes and the Recommendation. Borrell said he is always looking forward to saving money on the budget. When we retire these senior people making all this money, we can't find young people that have a bright future, we always have to find someone that has been in the field 4-6 years. He doesn't understand why we can't find the young talented people, because they are out there. Goodrum Schwartz said they are out there. Many of the people we have hired have not been heavily experienced. They rarely have experience we are looking for; we don't end up with people with the same experience in the same job. Sawatzke said the background of this person was impressive. Husom said this person has a lot of supervisory experience. Motion carries unanimously.

SOCIAL SERVICES/PUBLIC HEALTH/FINANCIAL SERVICES:

1. February 2016 Employee of the Month – Brandi Kirkpatrick.

Goodrum Schwartz introduced Kirkpatrick who was nominated by a family in the process of adopting children; they said Kirkpatrick put in the time and effort; and she acted like she was no different and very professional. Goodrum Schwartz thanked Kirkpatrick for making a difference in her clients' lives.

Kirkpatrick said she has worked 13 years with Wright County; prior to being hired had been out of college for 5-6 years, had worked at a research center, did PCA services, a bake shop, and a bicycle shop. Wright County has a great group of people to work with.

2. Transitional Housing and MNsure update.

Kimberly Johnson said a month ago she was here and asked for approval of Resolution in support of Lutheran Social Services (LSS) administering a grant for the family homeless prevention and assistance program (FHPAP). She and Martens met with Rachel Zetah, of LSS, who explained what we can do with this grant. LSS administers the grant from the MN Housing Finance Agency (MHFA); in the amount of \$303,000 for a two-year period. There are several subgrantees under the grant – Tri-Cap, Catholic Charities, Hope and Community Support, the Fair Sale Program, and Rise (focuses on people with mental health problems). As a member of the FHPAP, Wright County can refer clients to them. Financial

Services will track the needs for these services. The closer we track this and the more need we show, will give the FHPAP the opportunity to ask for additional funds in the future. These are Federal funds (MHFA). In order to receive these monies, we need to create a coordinated entry point (program where you call one place, assembly resources needed to be successful in solving issues). By July, we need this coordinated entry point to receive these Federal funds. A person will be hired to coordinate this entry point. Daleiden said homeless in Wright County go to St. Cloud to apply. Johnson said they can apply with us for Emergency Assistance, etc. We refer person to Wright County Community Action – they take two clients a year. Daleiden said they have funding available for only two people. Goodrum Schwartz said after July, would person be housed in St. Cloud? Martens said that has not been decided yet. The Financial Worker will refer person to the coordinated entry point who will evaluate the situation. Tri-Cap does come here to meet with people. Daleiden said there are no shelters in Wright County, they are in St. Cloud. Partlow said we are looking for a pro-active approach to prevent foreclosures or eviction from rentals. Goodrum Schwartz said our programs are geared toward sustaining a home. We don't give dollars if person can't keep up with house/rent payment. Husom said we work with people to help them with rent. Martens said if person is on MFIP, we do vendor payments for housing to the landlord. Borrell said it is hard for the average person to understand how people get into their circumstances – is it lack of education, drugs, etc.? Daleiden gave an example of a person with a medical condition, he needs a doctor's statement to go back to work, and position was filled by the time he received statement. He had jobs at multiple employment agencies; his vehicle didn't work and lost his job, and the employment agency quit working with him. Goodrum Schwartz said barriers are unreliable transportation – will not have way to get to work; don't have place to shower/clean up. Person is homeless because of barriers to transportation, child care, etc. Borrell said person has burned bridges with families and friends. Daleiden said some people prefer to live the way they do, and not be obligated to others. Husom mentioned a lot of shelters are dangerous. People fall into hard times.

Johnson gave update on MNsure. We have experienced ups and downs. You cannot know the scope of what the Financial Workers deal with. DHS has a 14 page document of known issues based on what Counties are telling them. The improvements made are very slow. They have a road map for 2015, some fixes have been made, but haven't made a big enough difference. The 2016 road map was abbreviated. DHS said they don't have resources, or are being diverted to other important things. On the third floor, we will be restructuring. A bigger focus will be put on the health care area. In November, we had 600 callers that chose MNsure from our phone tree; that doesn't count the people calling for something else, and had a medical question as well. In December, the number went to 1,000 calls. The new phone system has been beneficial to management in seeing trends. Goodrum Schwartz said we still have almost half of our medical support cases not on MNsure. Our staff have problems with adding a person and changing addresses. Martens said when we do add updates, it goes through system, and system shuts down. Goodrum Schwartz said the MNsure Governing Board is not too responsive to public assistance programs. Johnson provided Daleiden with the 14 page report on known issues, and he said he would get it to others. Johnson said it is problematic. Minnesota is one of four states with their own system. Husom said our system has not worked from the beginning, and has gotten worse. Johnson said there have been some improvements made. Goodrum Schwartz said after the renewal applications are processed, many will not qualify for MNsure. After renewal notices go through, we will get more calls initially. Johnson said Hennepin County received 17,000 pieces of returned mail for change of address. Goodrum Schwartz said the other three Directors in our region have said, when do we tell the State "no," we are not going to do this anymore. Borrell said to call the Federal inspectors on this. Johnson said we have a compassionate team working on this. Goodrum Schwartz said 17% of enrollees are not eligible for the program according to one audit. Johnson said with our restructuring, we might get better results with that as well. Borrell said other states on the Affordable Care Act – is it working for them. Goodrum Schwartz said our system is more sophisticated, intensive and private than on the Federal level. The Feds are saying they will not give any more waivers/extensions; the State is hearing compliance issues from Feds. New staff will go into the Health Care Unit and be introduced to a single system; and working in collaborative environment to get them up and running. Later, they will be moved to other areas.

3. Licensing & Resource Unit Retreat – April 22nd, at the Cokato Library Community Room.
Action: Motion by Sawatzke, seconded by Borrell, to approve request. Motion carries unanimously.

ADMINISTRATOIN:

1. January 2016 Financial Statement. (attachment)
Partlow said Revenues are at 2%, and Expenditures are at 7%. Waiver and TCP Revenue were not billed until the first batch in February; the same things for MA transportation. Have been billed for all WC, Property and Liability Insurance, and are \$10,000 down from last year's expenditures and \$19,000 under what was budgeted. We should receive a Dividend in July – last year our amount was \$2,600.
Action: Motion by Borrell, seconded by Husom, to accept the January 2016 Financial Statement.
Motion carries unanimously.
2. Director's Comments.
NEXUS Contract - Goodrum Schwartz said the potential contract with NEXUS to build a short-term residential place for youth is no longer an option. We will continue to work with Village Ranch. NEXUS looked at expanding their facility at Mille Lacs Academy. NEXUS underestimated the pay needed, staff levels, problems with Annandale area schools and law enforcement; underestimated the length of time to make a profit. They were happy with facility, location and cost.

Sherburne County Health and Human Services is dealing with staff turnover; 25% staff turnover in 2015; 19 resignations in 2015, and have had a domino effect with current staff moving into vacant positions.

Six DHS staff are with us this week doing an audit on waiver programs.

The next regular meeting will be held at 1:30 P.M., Monday, March 7, 2016, in the Commissioners Room, at the Wright County Government Center. Chairperson Daleiden adjourned the meeting at 2:56 P.M.