



BOARD MINUTES

WRIGHT COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

April 27, 2020

DATE APPROVED: May 11, 2020

Christine Husom,	District 1
Darek Vetsch,	District 2
Mark Daleiden,	District 3
Michael Potter,	District 4
Charles Borrell,	District 5

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Wright County Health & Human Services Board met in regular session at 1:39 p.m. with Husom, Vetsch, Daleiden and Potter present. Borrell joined the meeting remotely.

STAFF PRESENT:

Jill Pooler, Social Services Manager
Jami Goodrum Schwartz, Director
Kimberly Johnson, Financial Services Manager
Alyssa Kellner, Office Technician II
Amanda Anderson, Social Worker
Angela Gaughan, Case Aide
Elizabeth Hertenberg, Social Worker
Elizabeth Wipper, Social Worker
Jana Hogensen, Social Worker
Jessica Nelson, Social Services Supervisor
Julie Bemboom, Social Services Supervisor
Karen Popken, Child Support Supervisor
Kate Dahl, Fiscal Supervisor
Kirsten Schieber, Case Aide
Mary Nesseth, Public Health Supervisor
Molly Martie, Social Services Supervisor
Noami Blomberg, Administrative Specialist
Vicki Rasset, Case Aide
Vicky Galarowicz, Social Worker

I. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Husom moved, Vetsch second, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Budget Amendment – Rule 20 Assessments** (*budget amendment to move \$5K to the Court Services budget for Rule 20 Assessments*)

ACTION: Vetsch moved, Daleiden second, to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

III. NEW HIRES (*absentees are stricken out*)

- a. Jana Hogensen, Social Worker, Child Protection (CP2), February 25, 2020
- b. Vicki Rasset, Case Aide, Child Support, February 24, 2020
- c. Alyssa Kellner, Office Technician II, Adult Family Financial Services OT, March 3, 2020
- d. ~~Kelsey Hammer, Social Worker, Assessment Services, March 3, 2020~~
- e. ~~Sarah Dass, Social Worker, Youth Services, March 16, 2020~~
- f. Kirsten Schieber, Case Aide, Child Protection (CP1), March 23, 2020
- g. Elizabeth Hertenberg, Social Worker, Child Protection (CP2), March 23, 2020
- h. ~~Kelsey Thompson, Social Worker, Youth Services, March 30, 2020~~
- i. ~~Danielle Jans, Public Health Nurse, Family Health, March 30, 2020~~

- j. Angela Gaughan, Case Aide, Family Health, March 30, 2020
- k. Vicky Galarowicz, Social Worker, Child Protection (CP2), April 1, 2020
- l. Elizabeth Wipper, Social Worker, Intake & Intervention, April 6, 2020

IV. EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – APRIL & MAY 2020 (invite Brandy to May)

Presented Amanda Anderson as April Employee of the Month.

Bandy Vollbrecht, May Employee of the Month, will be invited to the May 11 HHS Board meeting.

V. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Social Services/Public Health/Financial Services

1. ACCEPT ADVISORY COMMITTEE NEW APPLICATION

a. Mental Health Advisory Council

i. New Applicant

1. Shana Bergman – District 5

ACTION: Daleiden moved, Husom second, to accept Shana Bergman’s membership application to MHAC. Motion carried.

2. PRESENTATION: 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

(JAMI GOODRUM SCHWARTZ)

Goodrum Schwartz presented the 2019 HHS Annual Report, reporting the Cash Assistance and SNAP Applications Processed Timely threshold increase from 81.6 to 84.1 percent; expedited SNAP processed within one business day increased from 56.7 to 70.7 percent. Wright County passed all ten DHS Performance Thresholds. The Annual Report is located on the Wright County HHS public website.

ACTION: Potter asked for data comparison of fraud investigations between 2018 and 2019; coordinate with Communications Specialist Jon Holler for press release.

3. APPROVE REQUEST TO INCREASE CONTRACTED CASE MANAGEMENT CASES

(JILL POOLER)

Pooler sought Board approval to increase the number of cases that HHS contracts with private case management providers by 120 CCB (CAC, CADI & BI programs) cases. Wright County’s 74.5 cases-per-staff is higher than most counties and is increasing due to county growth. The county’s cases grew by 34 in the past month. Caseload increases require additional staffing to sufficiently meet required timeframes and case management activities. Contracting 120 cases is the equivalent of hiring two full time case managers. Reducing caseload size also allows staff to focus on billable waiver services. Additionally, Pooler stated, that a balanced case manager-to-client ratio of CCB cases in CCM provides better services to clients, allowing them to remain in their homes versus being in hospitals – which are currently focused on COVID-19 patients.

Goodrum Schwartz requested to include in the motion for approval: HHS to annually review and determine projected need to contract out cases and report its assessment to the Board.

ACTION: Vetsch moved, Daleiden second, to approve contracting out 120 CCB cases to CCM and for HHS to **annually** review and determine suitability of increasing CCM cases. Further recommendation on frequency of review to be determined after initial assessment. Motion carried.

Borrell, however, expressed concern on reports of client dissatisfaction on CCM services, citing a specific scenario. Vetsch acknowledged reports of service gaps during transition but that the contract providers have done better jobs at providing continuing level of care, i.e. calls are returned faster due to fewer case numbers per CCM caseload.

4. POLICY CHANGES FOR DETERMINING AND COLLECTING PARENTAL FEES

(CHRISTINE PARTLOW KATE DAHL)

HHS in September 2018 reviewed its policy and practices in collecting out-of-home placement fees to reduce unreasonable barriers from parents, incentivizing them to work with the Agency in paying off accrued debts affordably based on family situation. Since February 2020 and onward, HHS stopped charging fees for emergency foster care placement under a protective hold (72-hour holds) when a child returns home without an ongoing placement. The Agency also started using the State's Social Service Fee Schedule in lieu of the child support calculator to simplify the process of determining parental responsibility. The State Fee Schedule typically results in a lower parental obligation. HHS also reduced the parental share of cost of Foster Care from 100 percent to 50 percent of the total cost when parents are uncooperative, understanding that the full cost of care is insurmountable for families. HHS hopes to use some of these tools in working with parents to facilitate better cooperation with the Agency, resulting in a better environment to collect payments.

Goodrum Schwartz provided a few examples of ways HHS could work with parents, including debt forgiveness and negotiating debt. Borrell and Vetsch agreed and stated that most of the clients in these situations are already struggling financially and that HHS' proactive measures alleviate potential negative impacts on society. Borrell called to prioritize cases with overwhelming debts to immediately help families who are on the brink of insolvency.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue to work with families to collect parental fees and monitor results from the new initiative to compare with prior collection percentages/amounts.

ACTION: Vetsch moved, Borrell second, to move forward with the newly applied fee-collection changes. Motion carried.

**5. MN ELIGIBILITY TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM (METS) PROCESSING UPDATE
(KIM JOHNSON)**

Johnson reported that while there was a projected 46 percent nationwide increase in Medical Assistance (MA) cases due to COVID-19, Wright County has not yet seen an increase in applications.

Johnson reported that on March 21, 2019, there were 4K processing to-do lists in the METS system; on March 2, 2020 (pre-COVID-19 Stay-at-Home order), there were 3.5K items; mid-March to April 6 – 2,155 items were remaining. Johnson saw a continued decrease of items to process: April 13 – 1,801 and April 20 – 1,893.

Johnson concluded that the current remote-working system during COVID-19 produced a higher productivity trend on the workers. Additionally, staff in-office working the phone lines were able to return calls timely. This favorable trend ushered a future possibility of implementing new working strategies in case management such as case banking and mobility on a case by case basis. This, according to Johnson, could eliminate backlog and reduce cost on staff overtime payments.

**6. CRISIS NURSERY UPDATE
(MICHELLE MILLER)**

Goodrum Schwartz confirmed that the Crisis Nursery Contract is in the works and is just waiting on final signature. HHS will likely be using their services within a week or two.

B. Administration

1. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Goodrum Schwartz recognized Social Worker Month which was celebrated in March.

Information:

- Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) grant amendments:
 - An additional \$50K was received to the Grantee's work on the Opioid Prevention Peer-to-Peer Agreement
 - An additional \$50K (one-time) grant was received to assist the State on physical activity consultation work – Opioid grant will be included again in a contract for 2021
- The Drug-Free Communities grant was extended for a year
- The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) contract between Wright County and the Wright County Community Action (WCCA) was extended for a year

HHS and the Board acknowledged Becky Frank's 36 years of service to Wright County. Frank retires on May 1, 2020.

Goodrum Schwartz thanked Commissioner Vetsch's letter to the adult and child foster care providers of Wright County – Thank you.

Wright County's Unemployment Claim is currently at 16.9 percent – will bring specific information to the May 11 HHS Board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Naomi Blomberg, Administrative Specialist