

GRANT COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD
April 21, 2020

The regular meeting of the Grant County Human Services Board was held April 21, 2020 with the director present at the Social Service Center, Elbow Lake, Minnesota and the board present via a video platform. Our offices are closed to the public because of COVID 19, but there was a notice posted on the front door of the building instructing people how to make a request to be an observer or part of the meeting. There were no such requests.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dwight Walvatne
Bill LaValley
Troy Johnson
Doyle Sperr
Keith Swanson

OTHERS PRESENT

Stacy Hennen, Social Services Director

Doyle Sperr called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: The agenda was reviewed. After review, Bill LaValley made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Troy Johnson, vote was by roll call and the agenda was unanimously approved.

MINUTES: The minutes of the March 17, 2020 meeting was reviewed. Dwight Walvatne made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Bill LaValley, vote was by roll call and minutes were unanimously approved.

BILLS: The Social Services Claims Abstract and Purchase of Service Bills were presented and reviewed. After questions Troy Johnson made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Dwight Walvatne, vote was by roll call and bills were approved unanimously.

BOARD REPORTS: Report from Board Appointments

Lakeland Mental Health..... Keith Swanson
Horizon Community Health Board..... Doyle Sperr, Dwight Walvatne
County Based Purchasing.....Keith Swanson/Troy Johnson
Grant County DAC..... Doyle Sperr
West Central Communities Action, Inc...Keith Swanson
Agency on Aging.....Bill LaValley
Child Protection Pre-Placement.....Troy Johnson
Rainbow Rider..... Bill LaValley/Dwight Walvatne
Adult Mental Health Team..... Troy Johnson

CONTRACTS

A. **Housing Support Application:**

The board reviewed the request from a corporate foster home to renew their housing supports agreement. The director explained that the amount is set by the State and there is no approval for any supplemental amount in the application. Housing supports are paid through the State after the county determines eligibility for the recipient. After review, Keith Swanson made a motion to approve, seconded by Bill LaValley, vote was by roll call and it was approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

A. **Case Counts:**

The Director reviewed the case counts with the Board. The director indicated that our child protection numbers are down, likely because kids are not in school, many are not in daycare, and after school activities are cancelled. Our reports remain a little higher than the average Statewide trend but are still lower. The rest of our caseloads are stable and our financial programs are starting to get a little higher.

B. **Legislative Update:**

The director reviewed the legislative update in detail with the board talking about how it impacts county human services agencies.

NEW BUSINESS

A. **Safety Practice Pilot:**

The director went over the pilot program that our three-county child protection team was chosen for. It is aimed at helping staff and supervisors move toward a culture of safety with the goals of keeping children in their homes if possible while also ensuring safety and engaging external supports for the family. It begins in April and goes through November of 2020.

B. **Federal and State COVID Waivers:**

The director reviewed a document she had put together that went over all of the waivers in the human services programs that we have received, both at a State and Federal level. The director further discussed with the board how these waivers impact our funding, caseload, and overall practice.

C. **Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Numbers:**

The director gave the board a handout reviewing our spending thus far this year and talked about how the waivers that were given for this program are likely to impact our budget. We were already planning to overspend on this allocation, which normally isn't a problem since multiple counties underspend. The issue this year is the waivers and the six month time that school age children need care instead of three months are likely to put everyone over budget, or closer to the budget. As it stands, we will overspend this and we have not yet heard if the State will cover this for us. We currently have a waiting list of four families and the director asked if the board wanted her to maintain and build the waiting list or go further over budget. The board discussed it and came to a consensus to keep the waiting list. The board asked to be updated on this monthly, our spending, the Statewide spending, and any developments in getting re paid on this.

- D. Placement Data:
The director reviewed the out of home placements with the board. We have 17 children in placement, with 4 of them being on trial home visits so we are not paying for them. We are ready for permanency for six of those children, but are waiting for DHS to get us the paperwork we need, for the court to schedule adoption hearings, and for the Interstate Compact Placement Agreement (ICPC) process for two kids who are supposed to go to Washington State to be adopted by their uncle. COVID 19 has caused delays in all of this. We also placed a sibling group of four last week that is not on this list yet. Our daily costs are \$668.37. Our monthly cost was \$20,719.47. Commissioner Johnson talked about the status of some of our cases, he sits on the preplacement committee and is aware of the work being done on the cases.
- E. March Financial Report:
The director reviewed the financial report with the board. We are 25% of the way through the year and our revenues are at 18% and our expenses are at 25%. One thing that will drive our expenses to be higher all year is the \$100,000 the State took, their share of our Medical Assistance Estate Collections for 2019. We budgeted that expense in 2019 but they did not get it done until 2020. We are over budget still in many child protection areas of the budget.
- F. Status of Social Services Employees re: work schedules:
The director explained to the board that all of our social workers are working remotely because they are still going out into the field seeing vulnerable children and adults face to face and we wanted to minimize risk for those who remain in the office. The director reviewed what staff are working from home, when our last maternity leave would return, and how the staff are doing in these times. The director indicated there is a lot of worry about opening the front doors and she feels if that is done too soon it would be difficult for the staff to feel safe. The same is true of the people out of the office, bringing them back in too soon would likely create more risk for the staff here.
- G. Letter from the Department of Human Services regarding State Operated Services:
The director reviewed a letter we received from State Operated Services explaining the trouble they are having discharging patients into the community because many entities aren't accepting new people right now or are closed, and then taking new people because of the same issue. They further anticipate they may have staffing issues if their staff get ill, further exacerbating the concern already noted. The director pointed out that once a person is determined as not meeting a medical level of care anymore (DNMC) in the State Operated Services the county has to pay 100% of their bill until they leave. AMC and MACSSA are working with the Governor's office and Legislature to talk with the State about paying for those.
- H. Adaptations requested to CMH Screening Grant:
The director stated that part of the COVID waivers include allowing additionally flexibility in what we use some of our state grants for. We requested and received a waiver for our children's mental health screening grant to be able to purchase some technology needed to allow parents to visit with their children remotely and phone cards with minutes on them for parents so they can call their children and talk with them on the phone.
- I. Traverse Presentation 2020:
The director reviewed a document put together by the child protection supervisor about our work over the past four years in Traverse County. She is presenting this to their board as a part of our annual review of the services we provide. The director went through the presentation with the board and answered questions.
- J. Committee Representation:
The director reviewed the recommended committees for the work that Pope and Grant are going to be doing exploring a joint entity. The director indicated that she needed the board to decide how many commissioners would be on each committee and who. The board discussed that they thought two per committee would be good so that they could make sure if one couldn't make it the other would. They didn't have a preference if it was two members each or a member and alternate. The director was asked to talk to the board chair to get people assigned to committees. The director indicated she would be giving the same sheet to the Pope board in early May.
- K. Medical Assistance Collections Data:
The director reviewed with the board the 2018 and 2019 numbers for collection of medical assistance debt. The director showed the board our region and counties that are like sized to Grant County. We did well in both years in terms of collecting more than the average for a county our size. We don't know what will happen this year since our collection's person has retired, but it has been moved to someone else and they are working hard on it as well.
- L. Private Client Data:
All pertinent data was discussed

Chairman Doyle Sperr adjourned the meeting at 11:13am
