

GRANT COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD
October 19, 2021

The regular meeting of the Grant County Human Services Board was held October 19, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dwight Walvatne
Bill LaValley
Ken Johnson
Troy Johnson

OTHERS PRESENT

Stacy Hennen, Social Services Director
Justin Anderson, County Attorney

MEMBERS ABSENT

Doyle Sperr

Dwight Walvatne called the meeting to order at 1:45 pm

Pledge of allegiance was done

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: The agenda was reviewed. After review, Bill LaValley made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Troy Johnson, MCU

MINUTES: The minutes of the September 20, 2021 meetings were reviewed. Troy Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Bill LaValley, MCU

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 Bill LaValley, MCU

BOARD REPORTS: Report from Board Appointments

Lakeland Mental Health..... Ken Johnson
Horizon Community Health Board..... Doyle Sperr, Dwight Walvatne
County Based Purchasing.....Troy Johnson/Ken Johnson
West Central Communities Action, Inc...Ken Johnson
Agency on Aging.....Bill LaValley
Child Protection Pre-Placement.....Troy Johnson
Rainbow Rider..... Bill LaValley/Dwight Walvatne
Region IV South Governing Board..... Ken Johnson

CONTRACTS

A. **Herman/Norcross Transportation Agreement:**

The director reviewed the agreement sent to us by Herman/Norcross schools laying out how we will handle the transportation of kids when they are removed from their home and are placed out of district. The agreement reflects how we currently manage this process. It is necessary to formalize it for the school's funding. After discussion, Ken Johnson made a motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Bill LaValley, MCU

B. **Transportation Agreement with West Central Schools:**

The director had an updated and amended transportation agreement for West Central School for children who are in foster care. The proposal codifies our current practice and is necessary to have in writing for the school to draw down some dollars. After discussion, Troy Johnson made a motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Bill LaValley, MCU

OLD BUSINESS

A. **Case Counts:**

The director reviewed all of the cases counts and noted the increases and decreases. Our child protection intakes and adult protection intakes account for most of the increases in numbers. We discussed the ongoing hiring for child protection and the director noted that we have filled two of our three open positions and we re-advertised for the third position. Those interviews should be done within the next few weeks.

NEW BUSINESS

A. **Retirement:**

The director gave the board a copy of a retirement notice from our office support specialist. She has indicated February 4, 2022 will be her last day. The director requested to begin the hiring process immediately with some changes in duties that we have done for Western Prairie. The grade and classification should not change but it would be easier for training and recruiting to have all the applicable from the beginning. After discussion, Bill LaValley made a motion that social services be allowed to fill the office support position immediately, seconded by Troy Johnson, MCU

B. **Child and Youth Collaborative Interagency Agreement and Governance Agreement:**

The director indicated that the Interagency Agreement and Governance Agreement for our child and youth collaborative will need to be redone and Western Prairie Human Services will need to enter into one for both the Pope County Child and Youth Collaborative and the Grant County Child and Youth Collaborative (CYC). The county attorney indicated that he had also received these documents and discussed them with the director. The director noted that there are some differences between the Grant County agreement and the Pope County agreement that she wants the board to weigh in on and that she has some concerns that not all the requirements laid out in these agreements are being met or completed and she is wondering how to proceed. The director and county attorney noted the history of this agreement, that pre-dates either of them, and that it entails county levy dollars being expended and given to the Grant County CYC whereas the Pope County CYC does not get any levy dollars and instead maximizes what they draw down in Local Collaborative Time Studies and gets various other grants via their 502C3 status. We have been led to understand that the Grant County CYC has given up their 501C3 status thus preventing them from applying for many grants since that is a pre-requisite. While the CYC Coordinator has not told the county that we are aware that our Foster Closet had to seek another entity to be listed under because of this. The director has concerns that we are supplementing one of our CYC's and not the other and is concerned that it may be a problem when we share the budget in its entirety with our partner in Western Prairie. The director and county attorney further indicated that there are layers of governance required in the agreements that we sign internally and with DHS that are not being met. The director is unaware of any executive level or governing level meetings being held since well before COVID, likely since 2017 or 2018 so she is not aware of what entity is

overseeing or governing the CYC or what they are doing. The last assigned County Board member on there is retired and there is not a current appointee. The school is the fiscal host and the county is supposed to get periodic financial reports from the CYC, we have not gotten those in several years either. The director expressed concern about entering into new agreements with both the CYC and DHS knowing that the core components of the contract are not being met. The board asked the county attorney about this and he indicated that he doesn't recommend that they enter into agreements that they know are not being fulfilled in the manner in which they are spelled out. The board asked questions, reviewed the documents given them, and had extensive discussion. After discussion, Ken Johnson made a motion authorizing the director to correspond with the executive director of the Grant County CYC indicating that there will not be a financial contribution from the county in 2022 and going forward. The director is also authorized to communicate with the executive director about the deficiencies we have seen in meeting the contractual obligations in the local and State agreement, seconded by Troy Johnson, MCU

C. Placement Data:

The director reviewed the September out of home placements with the board. For August we have 27 children in placement from 17 families. We have completed two adoptions in October and completed a trial on a transfer of custody to family in early October so that should be closing soon. We have three children in placement for their disability, which we pay nothing or little for, and one child on a temporary home visit so we are not paying for that either. Of our two large sibling groups we have received an approved Interstate Compact and hope to begin transitioning them soon. Our other sibling group will be moving to an adoptive home at the end of this month. We continue to see our numbers move, slowly, in a positive direction but we are always working with other high-risk families as well. We believe we will have two that are reunifying soon and we have four sibling groups of two who are with relatives that are permanent options if reunification cannot occur. Our two highest costing placements look to be transitioning, one to permanency and the other potentially to a waived setting. The director noted that in September out of home placements cost us \$43,139.94.

D. September Financial Report:

We are 75% of the way through the year. At this point in the year our expenses are at 68% and our revenues are showing 74%. Overall we appear to be on track with the exception of out of home placements. Our fund balance is on track compared to last year and our collections are up from last year, we recently collected a large medical assistance debt.

E. Letter from the Attorney General:

The county attorney and director reviewed a letter we received from the attorney general regarding some issues going on with the closing of the DAC and how that is being handled by that board. The Attorney General has several suggestions for action that the county board can take in addition to any that their office may take. They cannot tell us if they are investigating this issue but have given us guidance. The board discussed this and agreed by consensus that if the current negotiations between the DAC and Productive Alternative, the new provider in that location, breakdown they would ask that the county attorney act swiftly to follow through on any or all of the recommendations in the letter from the Attorney General's office.

F. Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) and Qualified Individual (QI):

The director gave the board an update on the process of Minnesota congregate care settings getting certified as a QRTP so counties can draw down federal IV-E dollars. There are only 14 in the State that are certified, primarily in the metro area, and several that are waiting for certification at this time. The greater loss to the system, according to the director, will be those that will not attempt to get certified because they can't meet the fidelity standards. Thus far, none of our 245D waived homes have indicated that they are going to attempt, those we've spoken with said they will not. The director noted that the State did receive their waiver allowing county staff to be QI's, but it cannot be within their program area. We are working on a way to share this between the three counties so we can share this instead of contracting with someone and paying them. We need the State to open up their training so we can get our staff trained, we haven't heard any details on that at this time.

G. Fingerprinting Update:

The director indicated that we have gotten an updated list and there are fingerprint providers in Fergus Falls, Alexandria, and Morris. There aren't any in Grant County and none projected here either. One concern we have is that often people who don't understand the details of this agree to be a provider and then quit within the first six months because it doesn't meet their expectations or abilities. That is concerning and something we always watch for.

H. HSPM:

The director followed up with the board regarding the meeting she attended to address how this system works for counties that have small numbers. The director went over a number of options and solutions that were discussed in the meeting.

I. Rainbow Rider Flier:

The director wanted to make sure the board had seen the new route that Rainbow Rider is going to be offering in Grant County.

J. Region IV South Fiscal Host:

The director and county attorney gave the board an update on the status of this. It appears that Region IV South would still like for us to be the fiscal host. I have informed R4S and DHS that the State will have to enter into that contract with Western Prairie for this. The state has begun making the necessary changes already and getting that contract ready. While it doesn't appear that there is any concern about the fiscal host remaining as is, this may have revisited the issue of seats on the executive board and the question of if each county should have one or if WPHS should have one. The board discussed it and agreed that their stance has not changed, each county should be represented on the Executive and Governing board.

K. Family First Update:

The director talked with the board about the preventative services that are supposed to go along with the new Family First and allow counties to bill IV-E for preventative services. DHS has not submitted their prevention plan for federal approval and does not believe they will submit it until January. They don't expect approval until likely the summer of 2022, and without an approved plan we cannot bill it. The director expressed concern that there are only two eligible services listed in Minnesota's prevention plan and neither are available in our area nor is there any movement that she is aware of to make it more widely available in Minnesota.

L. Traverse County Contract:

The director let the board know that she expects a contract to be brought to the Traverse board and the WPHS board soon. She indicated that she is working with the county attorney and fiscal to get all the details worked out.

M. Private Client Data:

All pertinent data was discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:18pm
