

WESTERN PRAIRIE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING
June 3, 2022

The meeting of the Joint Powers Board for Western Prairie Human Services was held June 3, 2022 at the Grant County Offices, first floor

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dwight Walvatne
Bill LaValley
Troy Johnson
Ken Johnson
Gordy Wagner
Cody Rogahn
Paul Gerde
Nan Haggerty
Larry Lindor

OTHERS PRESENT

Stacy Hennen, Western Prairie Director
Kari Rude, Deputy Director
Dave Salberg, Traverse County Commissioner
Phyllis Reller, WPHS Supervisor
Chris Rylander, WPHS Fiscal Manager
Ann Goering, Labor Attorney for WPHS

MEMBERS ABSENT

Doyle Sperr

1. The Chairman, Commissioner Rogahn, called the meeting to order at 9:00am.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was said
3. The agenda was reviewed. Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Commissioner Walvatne, MCU
4. Approval of the May Minutes: After reviewing the minutes, Commissioner Wagner made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU
5. A summary of bills was presented by the director. The director also reviewed the year to date updates that the fiscal manager had given and said we are working on formats that we think would be most useful for the commissioners. After review, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU.

6. **Contracts:**

A. **Memorandum of Understanding with Pope County:**

The director presented a memorandum of understanding between Western Prairie and Pope County that she was sent from the Technology Director at Pope County. The MOU was for assistance with technology infrastructure or systems that they may give Western Prairie at Western Prairie's request. The rates were there for the next three years. The director stated that she sent this to our agency attorney and our Technology Contractor, Shawn Larsen, and both agreed that it was appropriate. Commissioner Gerde noted that the rates in the MOU are the same rates they are charging the cities they do work for. The director noted that there wasn't any disagreement on rates or terms. After discussion Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the MOU, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, MCU

7. **Old Business:**

A. **Out of Home Placement List:**

The director reviewed the agency's out of home placement list. She noted that on April WPHS had 26 kids in placement, two more than the previous month. Three of those placements are 18-21, four of them are 260D waiver placements, 5 are pending transfers to family out of State, four are pending adoption and are close to completion, and one we have an adoption match we're looking at. We've had some increased drug activity

B. **Case Counts:**

The director noted that our human services cases are relatively stable and even adult protection is going down a little. The caseloads ebb and flow so this may not last but it's good to keep our eye on it. Overall, social services numbers are up a little but primarily in intakes not ongoing cases. Our healthcare cases are steady, our child support cases are down a little but it's the end of the school year so that's normal. We're seeing some decreases in cash assistance and slight decreases in SNAP.

C. **Personnel/Hiring Updates**

The director updated the board in our difficulty in hiring the social worker for Traverse County and the steps we are taking to work on that. We have a child support opening that started out as an opening in the Elbow Lake office and is an opening in the Glenwood office when one of our staff moved offices to be closer to home. With approval at last month's meeting, we have sent the lead worker ratings and the changes to the supervisor's position in to Baker Tilly. We have not heard back at this time. We are going to be asking for some help in the child support area later in the meeting. The director reminded the board it takes two years to train a child support staff and we have one fully trained person and one person who is around the six-month mark. We're going to need some assistance with cases and training.

D. **Legislative Update:**

The director noted that the legislature closed without a health and human services omnibus bill being passed and a special session looks unlikely at this point. The director noted that we hope to have a better idea of what was in the policy bill by next month.

8. **New Business:**

A. **Update on Childcare Recruitment:**

The disabilities/adult services/licensing social services supervisor spoke with the board about what we have been doing for childcare recruitment in our counties. We currently have 4 new licenses pending, three in Pope County and one in Grant County. The supervisor reviewed the information and work we are doing and answered questions from the board.

B. **Third Pathway for Children's Mental Health:**

The director reviewed the history of how the concept of a third pathway for placement came to be. It is a result of the law changes around federal IV-E dollars, specifically family first. Mental health advocates did not think that the changes necessary to collect IV-E were appropriate for children placed for their own disabilities, under 260D. Specifically, the relative search and other language surrounding that. When the discussion first began it was to be something that the counties were not financially responsible for at all. The final product has the State allocating what they feel would be lost by these kids out to counties and otherwise relying on a parent's private insurance and the county for payment. The way the statute is written it would involve us paying for placements and signing off on financial responsibility for placements without any out of home placement plan, court oversight or action, or any ability to manager or control the cost. Western Prairie's allocation from the State for 2022 and 2023 is about \$3600 annually. The director noted this would not pay for even a month of placement for one child. The director consulted with the agency attorney on this and both agreed that we should decline the money. We agreed that the liability that exists to the county in funding a placement that does not have the fundamental things listed above is too high and that the result is not consistent with the spirit in which the Third Pathway was developed. The director indicated that the timeline to decline was last week so she consulted with the executive committee and they agreed so she went ahead and sent the letter. The director is asking for approval now of the letter and reviewed a copy of it. After discussion Commissioner Wagner offered a motion approving the letter that was sent to the Department of Human Services declining the funding for 2022 and 2023 for Third Pathway placements, seconded by Commissioner Walvatne, MCU

C. **Union Negotiations Update:**

The director reviewed a letter from our labor attorney with the board outlining the status and progress thus far on union negotiations. The commissioners asked questions and there was discussion surrounding the document.

D. **Policy on Badge Access for Federal Tax Information (FTI):**

The director reviewed the policy regarding badge access that we are required to have in order to meet the FTI requirements. These audits are done by site and we are currently working on the Elbow Lake site. This policy is indicative of our current practices, but we need to have it in policy. After discussion and review Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the policy, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU

E. **Policy on controlling access areas for FTI:**

The director reviewed a second policy needed in order to comply with FTI rules, this one relating to tracking access to our restricted areas. This policy prohibits staff, or anyone, from "tailgating" or "piggybacking" to get access to restricted areas. Our restricted areas are posted and the director reviewed those areas with the board. This policy would mean that if two employees are at the entrance to an FTI area at the same time they must both scan their badges and one cannot go inside when the other scans their badges. The director noted that she would guess this happens with some regularity at certain times of the day, like 8am, and she will be notifying staff of the new policy if approved. After review and discussion Commissioner T. Johnson made a motion approving this policy, seconded by Commissioner Haggerty, MCU

F. **Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Changes and Plan:**

The director reviewed a document we received that has the number of SUD providers by county. There are none in Western Prairie or Traverse County and even Douglas County only has two providers. The director talked about need and what would happen to people who did not receive the appropriate SUD services both in terms of their addiction and in terms of meeting court deadlines both for criminal charges and for child protection and other human services cases. We currently have two staff who can provide treatment care coordination (TCC). The issue is that we will not be reimbursed to provide that until after the comprehensive assessment (CA) is done and there may be difficulty in getting the assessment done. The director talked about looking at a memorandum of agreement with the entity that is doing clinical supervision with our staff for TCC and see if they would like to work out a system where we refer the CA to them and they refer the TCC to us. The supervisor is working on that. If so, it should not cost us money since those are all reimbursable services. The board agreed that we should continue working on that.

G. **Bed Closures of group homes:**

The director and supervisor in this area provided the board with an update on the beds that have closed over the past months, primarily in the Elbow Lake area. The supervisor has managed to get one new provider to come in and open up four of the sixteen that closed but staffing is an ongoing issue. The twelve beds left remain ours for WPHS for the next year but after that go into the State pool of beds. If we think we can get a provider who will do it we'll work with them, it will likely hinge on staffing.

H. **Emergency Appointment:**

The director and deputy director reviewed an agreement being proposed to bring back a retired child support lead worker from Grant County to help us train and to maintain a small caseload of 75-100 cases. The board reviewed the proposal and Commissioner T. Johnson made a motion to approve the appointment with the conditions laid out, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU

- At 11:03am Commissioner Haggerty made a motion to close the meeting for the purpose of discussing labor and wage negotiations with our labor attorney, seconded by Commissioner Walvatne.
- At 11:55am Commissioner Lindor made a motion to re-open the meeting, thus ending the closed session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU

Report from Board Appointments:

- A. Lakeland Mental Health Center.....K. Johnson/Haggerty
- B. Horizon Community Health Board.....Sperr/Walvatne/Lindor/Wagner
- C. PrimeWest Health County Based Purchasing..... Wagner/K. Johnson/T. Johnson
- D. West Central Community Action INC..... Rogahn/K. Johnson
- E. Agency on Aging..... Lindor/LaValley
- F. Child Protection Pre-Placement..... T. Johnson/Haggerty
- G. Rainbow Rider..... LaValley/Walvatne/Gerde/Rogahn
- H. R4S Governing and Executive Board..... K. Johnson/Rogahn

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Rogahn. At 11:58 am

Board Chair

Board Secretary