

WESTERN PRAIRIE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING
August 5, 2022

The meeting of the Joint Powers Board for Western Prairie Human Services was held August 5, 2022 at the Grant County Offices, first floor

MEMBERS PRESENT

Larry Lindor
Bill LaValley
Troy Johnson
Ken Johnson
Doyle Sperr
Cody Rogahn
Paul Gerde

OTHERS PRESENT

Stacy Hennen, Western Prairie Director
Kari Rude, Deputy Director
Ann Goering, Labor Attorney (Zoom)
Justin Anderson, Agency Attorney
Ben Schulz, Social Services Supervisor
Tracy Bowman, Fiscal Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT

Gordy Wagner
Nan Haggerty, joined via zoom
Dwight Walvatne, present via zoom

A. OPENING:

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 and the director requested that it be amended to add 9C, emergency temporary appointment to the agenda. Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU
4. Approval of the July Minutes: After reviewing the minutes, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Ken Johnson, MCU
5. A summary of bills was presented by the director. After review of the bills, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Commissioner Sperr, MCU
 - a. The fiscal manager reviewed the financial statements and explained the graphs and data. She talked with the board about what they would like to see. Commissioner Ken Johnson noted he would like to see what percentage of the annual budget we're at monthly for revenues and expenditures. After review Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the financial reports, seconded by Commissioner Troy Johnson, MCU

CLOSED MEETING:

The Western Prairie Human Services Joint Powers Board is closing the meeting to discuss confidential union negotiation information with their legal counsel.

- At 9:28am Commissioner Troy Johnson made a motion to close the meeting, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU
- At 10:48am Commissioner Lindor made a motion to re-open the meeting to the public, seconded by Commissioner Troy Johnson, MCU

B. CONTRACTS

6. None

C. OLD BUSINESS

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

The director reviewed the agency's out of home placement list. She noted that in June WPHS had 28 kids in placement, the same as the previous month. Three of those has left care since this report was completed and we have six adoptions pending. Three adoptions are awaiting a final court date, two are waiting for a licensing document and one is waiting for a petition to be filed. We have had some kids enter placement but we are still overall trending downwards.

8. **Case Counts:**

The director reviewed the case counts and asked if there were questions on the summary she gave in the cover sheet. Questions were asked and answered.

9. **Personnel/Hiring Updates**

The director updated the board on the positions just filled and the internal hires and shifts that had been made. At this time, we have one open position, an account technician in the Elbow Lake office. All other positions are filled or in the process and will be filled if approved at this meeting.

a. **New Hire Approval of Placement on Wage scale:**

The human resources (HR) director reviewed our choice for our open eligibility position in the Glenwood office. The person has 5.5 years of exact experience in two counties in eligibility. The HR director recommended starting the person out at step 7 on the Pope scale, which is what the staff in the Glenwood office are still using since it would correlate most to the appropriate years of service. The board asked how it compared with wages of current staff who have been with us the same time and the HR director gave the board the information confirming it sits appropriately with our current staff. The HR director asked what the board wanted us to do for hiring in the future since we only have one board meeting a month. Would they like it brought to board or would they like it the executive committee to approve a placement, or would they like some variation. After discussion, the board asked the HR director to look and make sure we don't have language in our current policy manual answering this and if not to bring it back to the board in September. Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the current hire at step 7 on the Pope County scale being used for the Glenwood office still, seconded by Commissioner Sperr, MCU

b. **Policy Manual Change:**

The human resources director brought a change to the WPHS Personnel Policy, page 51, for the board to consider. The policy would pay out sick leave to personnel who have been with the agency for ten years or more at a percentage on a prorated scale. The agency is requesting a modification to grandfather this benefit out effective 12/31/22, so any employees covered by the policy manual who were eligible for this benefit on that date would still receive it. After 1-1-2022 this benefit will not be available to WPHS employees covered by this policy. After review Commissioner Troy Johnson made a motion to approve the change to the personnel policy, seconded by Commissioner Lindor, MCU

c. **Emergency Appointment:**

The HR director requested that the board approve an emergency appointment of Pat Braaten to assist our office in fiscal matters for a maximum of 6 months at 32 hours per week maximum. The director explained the work we had still to do in the fiscal office and indicated that our new fiscal manager was asking for this to assist them in getting the work done. Pat is the retired fiscal officer for Pope County Human Services and she helped us last year in the preparation for our merger so she is well positioned to assist us. She has agreed to help us and agreed to the rate proposed and indicated it was likely she would only be able to commit about 20 hours per week. We are asking for 32 hours per week to give ourselves flexibility. After review Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the emergency appointment request as presented, seconded by Commissioner La Valley, MCU

10. **Grant County Child and Youth Council Update:**

There was a recent Executive and Governing Board meeting for this entity since the coordinator of the program is retiring. The commissioners present at it, representing Western Prairie and representing Grant County, gave an update of the current status. The director also gave an update.

C. NEW BUSINESS:

11. **Local Advisory Council:**

The Social Services Supervisor joined the meeting to follow up on the Grant County Local Advisory Council (LAC) and Pope County Local Advisory Councils discussions on merging and joining the two LAC's that the board has previously been made aware of and approved of. The supervisor reviewed the process used and indicated that the two LAC's would like to hold a joint meeting for the purpose of joining together. The supervisor requested the board's approval of this next step. After questions and discussion Commissioner Troy Johnson made a motion to approve the combination of the two LAC's, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU

12. **Human Services Performance Management Report:**

The director reviewed our most recent human services performance management report (HSPM) for Western Prairie. She indicated that the counties had a program improvement plan for the child welfare measures when they were measured independently, Pope for four years and Grant for one year. The director reviewed the measures and explained the work that had been done to ensure that our performance numbers matched the overall quality of our work and talked about the fact that having a larger scale helped us in two of the measures and a systemic change in how we documented helped in the other. This report also contained our self-support index, a measurement of the efficacy of our family cash program. WPHS met that measure as well and is currently meeting all of the HSPM measures, having no performance improvement plans right now with the formal release from our child welfare measures. The director indicated that the supervisor at that time was the one deserving credit for this work as well as the current supervisors. The board thanked them for their work and congratulated the staff on work well done.

13. **Opioid Settlement Update:**

The director gave the board an update on the next steps being discussed in this project with public health. Also discussed was the possibility of requesting consideration to contract with a planner to develop a comprehensive 18 year plan and periodic reviews of that plan.

14. **Employee Recognition Program Policy:**

The deputy reviewed a proposed policy to implement an employee recognition program based on years of service. We would count years of service as years with the time employed by the county the staff started with as well as their time as a WPHS employee. The deputy director provided the board with documentation from the State of Minnesota Office of State Auditor that allows this and a plan that spells out the process and dollar amount of the WPHS merchandise the staff would have a choice of. The board asked questions and reviewed the policy. After review, Commissioner Ken Johnson made a motion to approve the policy, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU

15. **Do Not Meet Criteria (DNMC) Days**

The director reviewed the definition of this for the board. When State Operated Services determines a person committed to them no longer meets the medical criteria they have laid out it is within statute for them to charge the county the full price of the client's stay in a state operated facility. The director showed that counties have spent between \$16-\$18 million dollars on this annually, with the money going into the State's general fund to "incentify" counties to move people to appropriate placements. The director noted that this is not a matter of county's needing an incentive, but rather a matter of there not being beds or services available to move them to. The director noted that neither county has had to pay for DNMC days in the past three years. She did note that we have a person in danger of that now, and talked with the board about what barriers we are running in to.

16. **Targeted Case Management Rates:**

The director provided the board a brief definition of the four types of targeted case management that we bill for. She also provided them with a history of the individual rates as well as the first year of WPHS rates, which are for 2023. She noted that our child welfare rates went down and indicated that was likely our staff turnover and shortages, which makes our caseloads look larger per worker since we do not have those new staff in our random moments pool at first. All of our other rates, children's mental health, adult mental health, and vulnerable adult/developmental disabilities went up substantially. Since the state contributes nothing to targeted case management rates and child welfare is not a health plan or county-based purchasing service we get 50% of our rate and the other 50% goes to pay the non-federal share. We will see a revenue increase in the mental health case management since PrimeWest pays 100% of our rate. The director showed the trend of rates for both counties over the past several years.

17. **Budget Info and Timelines:**

The director reviewed our 2023 state allocations with the board and talked with them about the timelines for Western Prairie’s preliminary levy request. The director noted that many of our program-based allocations went down as did our vulnerable children and adults funding for 2023. She went over the reasons for the decrease. One of the funds was cut and the rest were based on caseloads. The time frame of measurement for most of the allocations was during COVID when we saw our lowest caseload numbers. Many of them will likely rebound next year. The commissioners asked what happens to the program-based dollars, if we have to supplement those dollars. The director indicated that we do not. Many of them will allow you to overspend if others are under spending and some will automatically give you more if you spend more. The director indicated that we normally get these allocations in June and we are still waiting on some of them. That, coupled with the lack of agreement with the union, has made budgeting problematic in a year when we have no history of our own yet.

18. **Travel/Meal Policy:**

The deputy director went over a policy change that would allow the Agency to update the per diem rates for meals in accordance with IRS rates. Since January IRS rates have increased by \$5.00/day because of costs and we are starting to have to ask staff to pay a portion of their meal when they are gone for a day and not an overnight. After review of the policy change, Commissioner Troy Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed change, seconded by Commissioner Sperr, MCU

19. **Guardianship Request For Information:**

The director presented the board with a letter we are proposing sending out to the county attorney’s and private attorney’s we have worked with on guardianships asking if they are interested in entering into a contract or agreement to do all of WPHS’s guardianships. If the Traverse board approves we will ask about theirs too. This is not a county attorney duty and it would be easier for our staff if we worked with one attorney and developed a relationship and working process with them. Any contract or agreement would need to come back to the board for approval and signature. After review and questions Commissioner Troy Johnson made a motion to approve the letter, seconded by Commissioner Lindor.

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 12:12 pm

Board Chair

Board Secretary