



**AITKIN
COUNTY**
EST. 1857
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 23, 2020

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 23rd day of June, 2020, at 2:02 p.m. as the Aitkin County Health & Human Services Board, with the following members present: Commissioners Bill Pratt, J. Mark Wedel, Don Niemi, Anne Marcotte, and Laurie Westerlund. Others present included: H&HS Director Cynthia Bennett, Children's Social Services Supervisor Jessi Schultz, Accounting Supervisor Carli Goble, County Administrator Jessica Seibert, Assistant to the County Administrator Angie Sahr, Public Health Supervisor Erin Melz and Child Support Supervisor Julie Herbst, both who attended via video conference, and Jennifer Eisenbart, Aitkin Independent Age.

Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the June 23, 2020 Health & Human Services Board agenda.

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Marcotte and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the May 26, 2020 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

Bills

Carli Goble, H&HS Accounting Supervisor noted that a bill from DHS Anoka for a client, which was originally billed as nine days at a cost of \$12,564 was reduced to six days for a cost of \$9,213.60 after the Adult Social Services Supervisor requested an administrative review by DHS Anoka and it was determined that they had been short staffed, initially, upon placement of the client in their care.

Motion by Commissioner Wedel, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the bills.

Health & Human Services Director Report, Cynthia Bennett, ACH&HS Director

Directors Update

Cynthia began by mentioning that the special legislative session had ended with neither the House nor the Senate able to reach a consensus on some of the "big ticket" items that counties were hoping for. She deferred updates on these as Representative Dale Lueck was going to be presenting to the board on these matters as part of the main meeting.

Although there were a lot of items left undone during the special session the AMC Blue Ribbon Committee was able to help get many HHS waivers passed, which included a 60 day extension of all HHS waivers beyond the end of the peacetime emergency so that counties have time to get back to business as usual. It also aligned certain waivers to comply with federal law and timelines, preserving healthcare through MA and MnCare, implementing the federal changes to the SNAP program, and eliminating the cost share for COVID-19 testing and treatment. The extensions of these waivers, in relation to allowing the use of technology to forgo face to face visit requirements, remain in effect until June 30, 2021.

Commissioner Marcotte inquired as to what exactly eliminating the cost share for COVID-19 testing and treatment meant and Cynthia responded that it meant that there was no cost to the patient associated with those.

Cynthia ended by updating the board on her and Carli Goble's progress with working on the 2021 HHS Budget and that they had gone through the more than 700 line items line by line to make sure HHS was being as responsible as possible with tax payer dollars and that they would be presenting their proposal to the board during the August meeting.

COVID-19 Update, Erin Melz, Public Health Supervisor

She went on by giving a brief situational update on COVID-19.

There are 33,469 positive cases of COVID-19 in the state.

There have been 1,393 deaths due to COVID-19, 1,101 of which, have been in long term care facilities.

Lake of the Woods County has yet to report their first case of COVID-19.

Aitkin County has 13 confirmed cases and 0 deaths.

On average the state is testing 7,261 people per day.

Review/Approve Contracts/Agreements

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the use agreement with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, Pine Technical and Community College for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Licensing Presentation, Jessi Schultz, Children's Social Services Supervisor

Jessi gave a high level overview of the types of programs that ACH&HS is in charge of licensing by going through the handout she provided the Board members prior to the meeting.

Committee Reports

Joint Powers Board Report

Commissioner Westerlund reported that they had met and reviewed the financials, talked about SHIP and the fact that they had received \$164,000 for the program.

Erin Melz added that this was a Bridge to Health Survey year and that they receive a lot of great feedback from that survey about the needs of the area.

AEOA Committee Update

Commissioner Westerlund said they had discussed community block grants, housing, how everyone is doing with getting people back into the office, reviewed financials, and approved all of the Headstart items requested.

CARE Board Update

Commissioner Westerlund stated that they have a community planning coordination meeting scheduled with the Northland Foundation on June 25.

They had received a grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation that was around \$50,000.

Lastly she mentioned that with everything opening back up the rides for health program had restarted.

NEMOJT Committee Update

Commissioner Niemi mentioned that there was a lot of echoing of concerns in regards to trying to get people to return to work due to the extra \$600 people were receiving with their unemployment checks.

CJI (Children's Justice Initiative) Update

Jessi Schultz briefed the board that the main agenda item they were concerned with during their meeting was court processes involving COVID-19 and that they spent most of the time troubleshooting those.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Next Meeting – July 28, 2020