



**AITKIN
COUNTY**
EST. 1857
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 26, 2021

Attendance

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met this 26th day of January 2021, at 9:08 a.m. as the Aitkin County Health & Human Services Board, with the following members present: Commissioners Brian Napstad, J. Mark Wedel, Don Niemi, Anne Marcotte, and Laurie Westerlund. Others present included: H&HS Director Cynthia Bennett, Lakes & Pines Family Resource Coach Janet Watson, County Administrator Jessica Seibert, Assistant to the County Administrator Angie Sahr, and Jennifer Eisenbart, Aitkin Independent Age (Via Webex).

Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the January 26, 2021 Health & Human Services Board agenda.

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Niemi, seconded by Commissioner Marcotte and carried, all members present voting yes to approve the December 22, 2020 Health and Human Services Board minutes.

Bills

Cynthia noted, per Accounting, that there was nothing out of the ordinary for the bills this month.

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

WRAP Program Presentation

Janet Watson gave the Commissioners an update on the WRAP (We Rally Around Parents) Program and the current status of the program.

Director's Update

Cynthia started by highlighting that the 2021 legislative session had begun and that it had been a quiet first couple of weeks. She stated that the items that the commissioners may hear about and that we hope are addressed are-

1. Behavioral Health Initiatives
2. Child Welfare Initiatives
3. Home and Community Based Services Initiatives
4. COVID-19 Waivers, specifically the telehealth waiver that allows us to bill for this service. Previously we were not allowed to bill for this and since the approval of this waiver the county has experienced cost savings in travel time and expenses. Case Managers have more free time and were able to connect with consumers more frequently which was a benefit to our consumers.
5. County Based Purchasing –County Based Purchasing (CBP) gives counties special authority to select CBP for delivery of Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). This gives counties the authority to make service related decisions at a local level. As such AMC supports empowering counties that elect County-Based Purchasing (CBP) for delivery of Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) as provided for in state law (256B.692) through direct procurement arrangements with the MN Department of Human Services (DHS).

6. DHS Issues – The billing errors through the DHS have not been forgotten. This specific piece will be included in a larger attempt to address issues and concerns within DHS. Counties are supportive of the AMC statement which notes that a true, long-range, transformational approach to redesigning how the Department of Human Services delivers services is vital to meeting the needs for Minnesota residents. As the state embarks on this transformational change, it will be important to look at best practices from other states, convene a panel of systems transformational advisors from private and non-profit sectors, and work closely with counties who have long been the state's key partners in delivering services to Minnesotans.
7. Modernization: System Upgrade – Modernization of human services programs is imperative to the sustainability of publicly funded human services and continues to be a pressing issue. In addition, counties will continue to advocate for changes in the METS system that will enable full integration with other health and human services technology systems. Counties believe that the state should have a plan for sustaining operations.

She continued by giving an update on COVID-19 pilot vaccination clinics conducted by the state last week and this week. The purpose of these clinics and intended outcomes. Reviewed local Public Health vaccination plans, discussed target populations, the limited vaccine available, vaccine specific information and frustrations local Public Health has experienced as we have individuals who want to be vaccinated, we have individuals who are able to administer the vaccine and the reality is we do not have enough vaccine at a local level to do this. She also reiterated that the guidance from the state is changing daily and either she or Erin will keep the commissioners abreast of updated information.

Approval of Contracts/Agreements/Policies

Motion by Commissioner Niemi, seconded by Commissioner Napstad and carried, all members voting yes to approve the MFIP Agreement with NEMOJT for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Agreement with the AEOA for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Napstad, seconded by Commissioner Marcotte and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Foster Care Transportation Agreement with the McGregor School District for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Ambulance Agreement with Mille Lacs Health Systems for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Napstad, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Agreement with Northern Psychiatric Associates for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Napstad and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Clubhouse Agreement with Northland Counseling Center for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Agreement with Phil Tange for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Napstad and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Family Planning Agreement with Riverwood Healthcare Center for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Napstad, seconded by Commissioner Niemi and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Agreement with Woodview Support Services/Oakridge Homes for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Niemi, seconded by Commissioner Napstad and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Emergency General Assistance (EGA) Policy.

Motion by Commissioner Marcotte, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried, all members voting yes to approve the Emergency Assistance (EA) Policy.

Committee Reports

CARE Board Report

Commissioner Westerlund said they met last week and reviewed their by-laws, financial policies, created a new member application and even with everything that is going on CARE is doing great.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Next Meeting – February 23, 2021