



BOARD MINUTES

WRIGHT COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

November 14, 2022

DATE APPROVED: December 12, 2022

Christine Husom,	District 1
Darek Vetsch,	District 2
Mark Daleiden,	District 3
Mary Wetter,	District 4
Michael Kaczmarek,	District 5

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Wright County Health & Human Services Board met in regular session at 1:30 p.m. with Husom, Vetsch, Daleiden, Wetter and Kaczmarek present.

STAFF PRESENT:

Adam Johnson, Social Worker
Christine Treichler, Social Services Supervisor
Clay Wilfahrt, Assistance County Administrator
Diane Erkens, Social Services Supervisor
Jami Goodrum, Director
Jill Pooler, Social Services Manager
Julie Bemboom, Social Services Supervisor
Keith Bennett, Health Promotion Coordinator
Kelly Hiestand, Social Worker
Kimberly Johnson, Financial Services Manager
LeeAnn Thimell, Social Services Supervisor
Michelle Miller, Social Services Manager
Molly Martie, Social Services Supervisor
Noami Blomberg, Administrative Specialist
Robin Wheaton, Social Worker
Stephanie Wiley, Financial Services Supervisor
Tanya Finley, Social Worker
Tarynn Anderson, Social Services Supervisor

Other:

Brian Dingmann
Colleen Entinger
Greg Peterson
Nicolas Uecker

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

ACTION: Vetsch moved, Wetter second, to approve the 2022-10-10 minutes. Motion carried

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Husom moved, Daleiden second, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. APPROVE LETTER OF INTEREST FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE CROSS SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS FOCUSED ON ADOLESCENTS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH COURT SERVICES

B. APPROVE CONTRACT RENEWALS

1. APPROVE LETTER OF INTEREST FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE CROSS SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS FOCUSED ON ADOLESCENTS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH COURT SERVICES
2. FUNCTIONAL INDUSTRIES, INC RENEWAL FOR PERIOD 2023-01-01 THROUGH 2024-12-31 – INCREASES TO RATES APPROVED WITH SEVERAL DELETIONS TO SERVICES NO LONGER USED
3. AMENDMENT TO 2022-01-01 – 2023-12-31 REM SOUTH CENTRAL SERVICES EFFECTIVE 2023-01-01 – RATE STRUCTURE INCREASED FROM \$40// \$20/\$10 TO \$48/\$24/\$12 (HOUR/HALF HOUR/15 MIN), TERM EXTENDED TO 2024-12-31, MAXIMUM INCREASED FROM \$200K TO \$225K

C. APPROVE HHS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TWO-YEAR REAPPOINTMENT

1. Dr. Jennifer Ray-Mader, HHS Advisory – District 5 (13th Term Ends 2023-01-27)
2. Dr. Jennifer Ray-Mader, Public Health Task Force – District 5 (13th Term Ends 2023-01-27)
3. Marlene Kittock, Public Health Task Force – District 5 (10th Term Ends 2023-01-11)

D. APPROVE HHS ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPLICATIONS

1. Lisa White – District 2
2. Kelsey Besse – District 1

E. ACCEPT PUBLIC HEALTH TASK FORCE RESIGNATION

1. Eric Bailey – District 1 (One Term)

F. APPROVE REQUEST TO CANCEL 2022-11-28 HHS BOARD MEETING

ACTION: Daleiden moved, Husom second, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

V. **REGULAR AGENDA**

A. **Staffing Announcement**

1. New Hire
 - i. ~~Maria Magyar, Eligibility Specialist, METS Team – 2022-10-17. Absent~~
 - ii. Robin Wheaton, Social Worker, Child Protection (CP1) Team, 2022-10-24
 - iii. Tanya Finley, Social Worker, Child Protection (CP2) Team, 2022-10-31
 - iv. Adam Johnson, Social Worker, Child Protection (CP2) Team, 2022-10-31
 - v. Jessica Schmidt, Child Support Officer, Child Support Team, 2022-11-07
2. Employee of the Month – December
Kelly Hiestand is December Employee of the Month.

B. **Social Services/Public Health/Financial Service**

1. ACCEPT RESOLUTION HHS 22-07 - OCTOBER DONATION
ACTION: Vetsch moved, Daleiden second, to approve Resolution HHS 22-07. Motion carried via roll call vote, 5-0.
2. REVIEW [COUNTY AND TRIBAL BURIAL POLICY & PROCEDURES](#) (KIM JOHNSON)
Johnson outlined the [burial and cremation costs by county agencies](#) within the region, showing Wright County's rates of \$2,600 for burial and \$2,000 for cremation are within range among Sherburne, Stearns, Anoka, Meeker, McLeod and Hennepin counties. Wright County's rates were set at this amount since January 1991, prompting funeral homes in the County area to request the County

Board to review the reimbursement rates to keep up with increasing costs. Kaczmarek questioned how the rates that were set up 30 years ago are still within reimbursement thresholds.

Brian Dingmann from *Dingmann Funeral Care*, who also serves as the President of the State Board Association, reported that while Wright County might be within range in comparison to outlying counties, this portion of the state has the lowest rate statewide. He cited for example that a Human Services Agency serving multiple counties in southwest MN pay up to \$3,800 toward cremation or burial; this is outside of the allowable cost that families could contribute for embalming, body preparation and a ceremony, if desired. Dingmann stated that the minimum cost of a non-sealed casket, at delivery, is \$681, grave liner services at \$904 - \$940, stating that these two alone consume the County's \$1,700 traditional burial allotment, leaving the remaining costs at the expense of the funeral homes. He advocated the Board to consider an increase to the rates, with the possibility of allowing clients the option for upgraded services.

Goodrum explained that the County's indigent burial program is a non-subsidized county burial provision and only provides up to a certain dollar amount for burial or cremation services only.

Vetsch pointed out the need to compensate funeral homes for at least the basic and necessary services since they face the possibility of rendering uncompensated work being that they are required by law to accept a body regardless of funding availability.

Dingmann stated that a third-party firm's assessment on the suggested rate for overhead costs for direct burial – without casket, embalming, preparation – is \$3,575 and \$3,150 for direct cremation. These exclude cemetery expenses potentially costing between \$500 - \$2K. Dingmann explained the process on pre-paid burial policies and asset-allocation toward burial expenses.

Wright County annually budgets \$35K for county burials. To date, Wright County averages 35 – 50 county burials. Goodrum stressed that Wright County HHS, with due diligence, reviews and pursues potential assets that might be missed after an application is approved to reimburse the county for expenditures. At a later statement, Goodrum emphasized that this program is paid by county levy dollars and that HHS examines and verifies county financial responsibility before approving applications.

Greg Peterson from Swanson Peterson Funeral Homes corroborated Dingmann's arguments for a higher rate to provide physical and mental services. He added that the County's \$1,600 allowance, as an example, for cremation and memorial services is not feasible since disposition alone starts at \$1,400, leaving only \$200 for memorial services, which he said is not enough. On Vetsch's question regarding labor cost versus materials, Peterson clarified that the \$1,400 only goes toward materials, leaving labor and other expenses to be covered by funeral homes. Peterson said that the County's cap of \$2,600 for a traditional burial puts the funeral homes behind.

Kaczmarek suggested delaying discussion of this issue until 2023 when the three new commissioners are seated on the HHS Board. Husom is concerned if there is leeway in the budget to raise the amount. Goodrum stated that for 2023, the budget is set at \$30K, leaving it to the Board to either raise it now or bring back mid-2023 to assess. The County-Paid Burial and Cremation Policy & Procedure will be updated with any Board changes and brought back next month for Board approval along with the rest of HHS' Policies & Procedures. County-paid burial costs were \$21,548 in 2021, \$35,588 in 2020 and \$58,173 in 2019.

Vetsch proposed to enter a budget amendment of \$15-20K and address it now versus later. Goodrum and Husom agreed. Daleiden asked if \$3,100 per county burial benefit would be agreeable.

Financial Services Supervisor Stephanie Wiley suggested that in lieu of increasing the rate, allow people who are not legally responsible [non-direct family] to contribute directly to funeral homes.

Vetsch proposed to increase the county rate to \$2,800 – \$3,000 and allow family, or other parties to contribute up to \$1,000 – \$1,200.

ACTION: Vetsch moved, Daleiden second, to increase the county burial allotment up to \$3,000, allowing interested parties to contribute up to \$1,200, effective January 1, 2023. Motion carried.

C. Administration

1. 3rd QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT (CHRISTINE PARTLOW)

The budget is at 75 percent of the year, with revenues at 67 percent and 71 percent in expenditures. Overall, revenues are higher compared to last year's, with the exception of property tax revenues.

The dip in administrative costs are attributed to vacancies and lower numbers of staff being onboarded.

The Income Maintenance Random Moment Study (IMRMS) is \$200K below budget, which is tied to a low expenditure of 65 percent, compared to 75 percent last year.

The Social Services Time Study (SSTS) is \$250K down in revenue, with expenditures also down. The reimbursement rate for Social Services has been on the downtrend; Wright County is working with Hennepin County on Title IV reimbursements as they are not coming back to counties.

The Targeted Case Management (TCM) is on track.

Waiver revenue is sitting at \$142M, trending above the \$141M target.

Public Health revenues are \$300K below target – The Department is responding to this drop by looking at overall staff allocations and where staff time are coded.

The Out of Home Placement (OHP) expenditure is ahead of target, \$200K higher than last year's third quarter. Goodrum reported that placements are at their lowest since 2018, with 132 placements in August this year and 118 in September. Regardless, increasing placement costs, including Rule 5, offset the savings from the current downward trend of placements. Goodrum added that the lack of treatment facilities in the region would be a good discussion to have during the County Legislative Session in late November. Vetsch proposed to highlight the travel costs incurred for Rule 5 to articulate the need for facilities closer to client homes.

2. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Kudos to our Child Protection, Youth Services and Licensing case workers and supervisors for keeping the Out of Home Placements down.

Goodrum reported the receipt of the DHS Performance Report for Adult Protection and Child Support in 2021 – 2022: Wright County scored 99.7 percent over 90 percent threshold for Adult Maltreatment Response within Five Days – an impressive performance regardless of a significant number of 740 maltreatment reports in 2022. The Child Support Cases with Paternity Established showed a 102.77 percent performance over 90 percent threshold; Child Support Cases with an Order Established

reflected 93.96 percent over 80 percent threshold while scoring 78.14 percent above the 75.30 percent threshold for Current Child Support Paid.

Social Services Manager Jill Pooler updated the Board on the 988 Suicide & Crisis Hotline, expanding its services to local areas providing mental health support, creating four lifeline centers in Minnesota. These hubs will connect with local agencies. While the current 988 service is cost-free, the agency is seeking future State funding to continue providing local services. Wright County, with Sherburne, Stearns, Benton, partner with Cental MM Mental Health Center (CMMHC) to provide mental health crisis line, at the cost of \$78,334 in 2021, reaching 1,142 people. In 2022, the cost is \$84,122 and in 2023, \$95,500. HHS attempts to offset the county cost by using the Community Support Program State Grant.

While the Wright County Attorney's Office agrees that the 988 services will suffice as a resource for the mental health crisis line, a few of the partnering counties disagreed. Wright County in 2023 entered into a contract with CMMHC and will continue to work with CMMHC for solutions to escalating costs, or use the 988 services.

Meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Submitted by Naomi Blomberg, Administrative Specialist