

**MEETING MINUTES
WATONWAN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
March 15, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Watonwan County Human Services Board met in regular open session, in the Watonwan County Human Services Community Room, in the city of St. James, MN, on **Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 10:00 A.M.**, pursuant to notice given as required by law. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Dillon Melheim.

ROLL CALL

ATTENDEE NAME	TITLE	STATUS
Jim Pettersen	Commissioner – District 1 : <i>2023 Board Vice Chair</i>	Present
Bill Miller	Commissioner – District 2	Present
Jim Branstad	Commissioner – District 3	Present
Scott Westman	Commissioner – District 4	Present
Dillon Melheim	Commissioner – District 5 : <i>2023 Board Chair</i>	Present
Ted Hedberg	Citizen’s Representative	Present
Dr. Nicolas Castillo	Citizen’s Representative	Present
Amy Pluym	Director	Present
Erin Marks	Support Services Supervisor	Present
Jodi Halvorson	Financial Assistance Supervisor	Absent
Barb Salmela-Lind	Community Health Services Manager	Present
Joan Stordalen	Social Services Supervisor	Present
Katy Goldschmidt	Social Services Supervisor	Present

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Pettersen, seconded by Castillo to approve the minutes, as presented, from the **February 15, 2023**, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

4. CORRECTIONS / REVISIONS / ADDITIONS to agenda – so noted

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Branstad motioned, Melheim seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

6. NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING will be held Wednesday, **April 19, 2023 at 10:00 A.M.** (Location: *Watonwan County Human Services, Community Room, 715 2nd Ave. S., St. James*)

7. ADULT SERVICES PRESENTATION

- Developmental Disability Case Managers, Rachel Friesen and Jessica Veenstra, were present and provided information on the process of how an individual would access developmental disability (waivered) services through the county.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT OF AGENCY OPERATIONS – Amy Pluym

- Provided an update on the Southern Minnesota Behavior Health Center meeting with Interim Director, Deb Loverude, in which the mental health assistance program contract was reviewed.
- **SCCBI** (South Central Community Based Initiative) awarded us \$337,272 for 2023-2024 staffing (a 1% increase) and \$46,000 for clubhouse funds (a \$3,000 per year increase).
- Went over **South Central Supportive Initiative** meeting updates. Training on how the project works and how the region can continue to collaborate on various housing and homeless projects. Long-Term Homeless Supportive Services fund equals \$2.48 million, biennium in southern 20 county region. No increase since 2005. Very tight definition and use of funding streams are complex. Intensive case management with 70 households served in 2022 in the Region 9 area. New funding streams are becoming available.
- **MACSSA** (Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators) updates:
 - **MNchoices** to launch in April but lots of fixes are still needed. Directors are asking to push back the start date due to the high level of workarounds and the time needed to do them is very time consuming.
- Recent **outreach** activities included:
 - The adult mental health staff visiting Madelia Health to introduce themselves and the programs they serve.
 - The income maintenance and public health staff were present at the Watonwan County Food Shelf in St. James last month to have information available for their programs.

9. INCOME MAINTENANCE / CHILD SUPPORT UPDATES – Jodi Halvorson

- Pluym spoke on behalf of Halvorson, who was not present, to share an overview on the recent **SNAP** (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) review. County agencies and tribal nations who meet the application processing goal of 96% or higher in both Expedited 5 Business Days or 30 Day Regular SNAP will receive a certificate of achievement. Watonwan County Human Services met this goal for the fourth quarter of 2022.

10. PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES – Barb Salmela-Lind

- Diana Raya was hired as the new **WIC Coordinator** and began her duties on February 28, 2023. Our interim coordinator, Teresa Cooling's contract will end on March 31, 2023.
- Currently advertising for the Family Planning / Immunization Coordinator position and should get our candidate registry at some point this week.
- Salmela-Lind is working with Andrea Stevens, from Probation, and they are jointly meeting with the ORN TA group to get recommendations and suggestions of programs for the **Opioid Allotment funds**. Once those ideas are gathered, they will be brought back to the stakeholders group for approval, then to the board for their approval.

11. SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATES – Joan Stordalen and Katy Goldschmidt

- **Children's Unit** - Stordalen:
 - Children's unit remains fully staffed, and worker's caseloads are full or exceeding recommended sizes.
 - Greater MN hired Jennifer Butler as their **in-home therapist**. This was a position they had not been able to fill for over 2 years. We have already identified and referred 4 of our families for this program.

- The **STAY group** has begun planning for their summer activities, including a 5-day overnight camp in June, getting kids to and from driver's instruction, TLT Conference (a leadership conference for youth).
 - Visions for Families and Community Collaborative (**VFC**) retreat was held on March 2. Funding was approved for the dedicated programs. A new proposal was approved for Reflective Supervision for child protection staff. This will be a monthly group and individual meeting for self-reflection, psychological safety, processing difficult experiences within their positions to lessen burn out and encourage staff retention in this field.
 - Social Services had a table at the College and **Career Fair** at the St. James High School to share info about the work that is done in this agency.
- **Adult's Unit - Goldschmidt:**
 - Two **job offers** were extended for our MSHO positions with one accepted by Lyndsey Haler and one declining. An offer for the CADI/VA position will go out later today and we will continue with reference checks for the last MSHO position to fill.
 - The Adult Mental Health (AMH) position closes on March 20, 2023. Kimm Symens, a Children's Mental Health (CMH) worker is assisting with some AMH clients.
 - The **SCCBI** (South Central Community Based Initiative) hired a new regional manager, Ricki Pribyl. She will begin her duties on April 3, 2023.
 - The waiver team is still prepping for our MNchoices launch on April 3, 2023. There are talks about a potential delay, however, DHS will have the final say. There are concerns that the assessments will not function properly. Right now there are 30 pages of workarounds needed to complete if the assessment would launch on April 3, 2023. Adding approximately 1-2 hours of time per assessment.
 - The number of Adult Protection Services reports received in February was very high.

12. PERSONNEL

- Branstad motioned, Miller seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the **Pay for Performance** of:
 - **Jodi Halvorson**, Financial Assistance Supervisor II
 - **Nidia Zelaya**, Community Service Aide
- Hedberg motioned, Pettersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the **Permanent Status** of **Brenda Cervantes**, County Agency Social Worker.
- Miller motioned, Castillo seconded and the motion passed unanimously to accept the **Probationary Appointment** of **Diana Raya**, WIC Coordinator and **Lyndsey Haler**, County Agency Social Worker.

13. COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS

- **SCHSAC** (State Community Health Services Advisory Committee) – *Melheim*
- **VFC** (Visions for Families and Communities) Collaborative – *Hedberg and Branstad*
 - \$89,000 of funding was approved in 7 different areas of request.
- **Immtrack** (Regional Immunization Registry) Joint Powers Board – *Pettersen*
- **Brown County Evaluation Center** – *Westman*
- **Enterprise North Inc.** – *Pettersen*
- **MRCI** (Managed Resources Connections Inc.) Board of Directors – *Miller*

- **CHS** (Community Health Services) Advisory Board – *Hedberg*
 - Topics included healthy eating, tobacco, and active living.

14. STAFF TRAINING / DEVELOPMENT

15. MONTHLY FINANCIAL CLAIMS

- Branstad moved, Castillo seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the regular **monthly claims** and the **monthly credit card payments** as submitted.

16. CONTRACTS / AGREEMENTS / POLICIES

- Miller moved, Branstad seconded and the motion carried unanimously to end the **WIC Work Agreement** with **Teresa Cooling**, effective 3/31/2023.
- Branstad moved, Melheim seconded and the motion carried unanimously to end the **Child Protection Services Training Work Agreement** with **Kristina Guth**, effective 3/31/2023.
- Castillo moved, Branstad seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the **Mental Health Client Assistance Program** with **Southern Minnesota Behavioral Health**.
- Pettersen moved, Branstad seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the **2023-2024 South Central Community Based Initiative agreement**.

17. OTHER

18. ADJOURNMENT

- Having no additional business, Branstad motioned, Petersen seconded and the motion carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:29 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Marks, Support Services Supervisor

Dated: 4/19/2023

Dillon Melheim, County Commissioner – Board Chair

Dated: 4/19/2023