

MEETING MINUTES
WATONWAN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
April 19, 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, April 19, 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	Present
Barb Salmela-Lind	Community Health Services Manager	Absent
Joan Stordalen	Social Services Supervisor	Absent
Katy Goldschmidt	Social Services Supervisor	Present

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

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

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

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Pettersen motioned, Miller seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

6. NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING will be held Wednesday, **May 17, 2023** at **10:00 A.M.** (*Location: Watonwan County Human Services, Community Room, 715 2nd Ave. S., St. James*)

7. NEW STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

- New employees, Estefany Sotelo-Garcia, County Agency Social Worker for CADI/VA and Lyndsey Haler, County Agency Social Worker for MSHO were present at today’s meeting to introduce themselves.

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

- Pluym informed the board that her 6-month Probationary Review was due in May. The board will complete her review following next month's meeting on May 17, 2023, in closed session.
- Budget Update: We are at 16% of projected revenues, 23% of projected expenses at 25% of the year. With recent staffing vacancies there has been a decrease in personnel costs, but also a decrease in revenues because of not having the ability to bill for staff time. With the end of Public Health emergency and the return to face-to-face client visits required, Pluym would anticipate a decrease in revenues due to no-show of clients. Pluym will monitor the budget as this scenario plays out, as past direct, Ochsendorf, likely did not anticipate the change occurring this fiscal year. Some of the recently hired new staff have the additional skill of being bilingual. This will hopefully lead to decrease in agency interpreting costs and will help to better service to Spanish speaking community members as well.
- MACSSA Update: There is a delay and longer implementation process proposed for MnCHOICES. Leaders of committees met at the capital with representatives to discuss various concerns; mental health, direct care treatment and modernization of systems being the top issues. There was a presentation from the newly approved Department of Children, Youth, and Families.
- Unwinding of the Public Health Emergency: An approximate allocation of \$73,870 is slated for fiscal year 2024. The counties are waiting for guidelines on spending this allocation. The funds are related to Department of Human Service's efforts to unwind from the public health emergency, assisting counties on the costs of resuming renewals.
- Recent outreach efforts included: Children's Social Services Supervisor, Joan Stordalen presenting social services information to the Lions Club. County Agency Social Worker, Jessica Veenstra presented at the recent St. James Rotary Club meeting. Eligibility Workers, Kimberly Hensch presented Child Care Assistance information at the Madelia Schools and Randee Nelson and Desiree Garibay were at the St. James food shelf recently to be available for questions on the different financial assistance programs offered at Human Services.

9. INCOME MAINTENANCE / CHILD SUPPORT UPDATES – Jodi Halvorson

- Income Maintenance: Medical Assistance unwinding is consisting of weekly meeting to get updated information on the procedures for going back to normal processing of cases. Department of Human Services is doing a campaign to get updated addresses so people receive their review information and have the chance to continue their eligibility. Clients that we on assistance prior to April 1 will remain eligible until the next review. Clients with an asset limit will get 2 more reviews. Reviews will be starting July 1. Minnesota has until the summer of 2026 to be in compliance with our Medical Assistance systems. Currently applications are processed on two different systems that have different requirements for clients and by the summer of 2026, they will need to match. That will involve looking at more automation with elderly/disabled population, along with taking reviews over the phone.
- Child Support: Workers are currently working on adjusting for cost of living increases. The increase for a non-custodial parent is higher than normal this year, averaging \$40-60, per month, more. Workers are getting a few phone calls from clients saying they can't afford the increase, however, the clients have not followed through with filing a motion to contest it.

10. PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES – Barb Salmela-Lind

- A new Family Planning & Immunization Coordinator was hired and will be starting April 23rd. Continued planning for use of Opioid dollars – recent meeting with ORN to discussion possible spending options. Will be bringing Strategic Planning group back together to review ideas/options.

11. SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATES – Katy Goldschmidt

- **Children’s Unit** – Stordalen absent, but Pluym presented her information for her about the summer food programs in Watonwan County.
- **Adult’s Unit** – Goldschmidt informed the board that her final hire, Destiny Cortez, will begin her duties as an Adult Mental Health County Agency Social Worker on April 24th. Continued work is being done on transitioning of staff to new positions, training of new staff and caseload distribution. MnCHOICES 2.0 is on pause for 60 days. The program is now expected to launch in June. An upcoming Blue Plus audit to review MSC+/MSHO files is scheduled for April 21 and a Waiver Review Audit is scheduled for June 26-29.

12. PERSONNEL

- Miller motioned, Hedberg seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the **Pay for Performance** of:
 - **Kimberly Hensch**, Eligibility Worker
 - **Michele Johnson**, Health Services Program Aide
 - **Lori Sandmeyer**, Eligibility Worker
 - **Sarah Solheid**, Office Support Specialist
 - **Maria Thorson**, County Agency Social Worker
- Branstad motioned, Petersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously to accept the **Probationary Appointment** of:
 - **Danelle Ericksen-Bently**, Public Health Nurse (Family Planning & Immunization)
 - **Destiny Cortez**, County Agency Social Worker (Adult Mental Health)
 - **Estefany Sotelo-Garcia**, County Agency Social Worker (CADI/VA)
 - **Ana Van Laanen**, County Agency Social Worker (MSHO)

13. COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS

- **SCHSAC** (State Community Health Services Advisory Committee) – *Melheim*
 - The Minnesota Department of Health (MHD) has hired a new director of the Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Prevention and Control Division (IDEPC). Jessica Hancock-Allen will start in May 2023.
- **VFC** (Visions for Families and Communities) Collaborative – *Hedberg and Branstad*
- **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*
 - New officers were elected on April 3rd.
- **CHS** (Community Health Services) Advisory Board – *Hedberg*

14. STAFF TRAINING / DEVELOPMENT

- Branstad moved, Miller seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve **Pluym’s** request to attend the **MACSSA** (Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators) Conference from May 24-26.

15. **MONTHLY FINANCIAL CLAIMS**

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

16. **CONTRACTS / AGREEMENTS / POLICIES**

- Melheim moved, Petersen seconded and the motion carried unanimously to amend the **2022 South Central Community Based Initiative Agreement**. Amending this agreement, allows a surplus of \$28,779.49 to be allocated to Watonwan County Human Services to help cover staffing costs.
- Pettersen moved, Branstad seconded and the motion carried unanimously to amend the **LexisNexis Risk Solutions Agreement**. This amended includes an additional \$25 per month to the current agreement, but also increases access to the features of the software.

17. **OTHER**

- Beginning at 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, the commissioners will meet in the lobby of Human Services for a tour of the building.
- Maintenance Supervisor, Matt Durham, was present at today’s meeting to discuss the 23 year old **heating and cooling systems** in the Human Services building. The immediate need and a longer range plan was discussed. Melheim motioned, Branstad seconded and the motion carried unanimously to accept the bid from Vee Plumbing and Heating, in the amount of **\$11,001.34 to replace one condensing unit and furnace** and to allow Durham to seek bids on purchasing 2 additional units at the same price.

18. **ADJOURNMENT**

- Having no additional business, Pettersen motioned, Miller seconded and the motion carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Marks, Support Services Supervisor

Dated: 5/17/2023

Dillon Melheim, County Commissioner – Board Chair

Dated: 5/17/2023