

MEETING MINUTES
WATONWAN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
September 20, 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, September 20, 2023**, at **10:02 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
Vacant	Citizen’s Representative	Absent
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	Absent

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Branstad seconded by Pettersen to approve the minutes, as presented, from the **August 16, 2023**, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

6. NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING will be held Wednesday, **October 18, 2023 at 10:00 A.M.** (Location: *Watonwan County Human Services, Community Room, 715 2nd Ave. S., St. James*)

7. STAFF PRESENTATION – CHILDREN’S SOCIAL SERVICES

- o County Agency Social Worker, **Macee Krumwiede**, was present and provided information on **Educational Neglect and Truancy programs**. County schools have already identified 21 students who are enrolled but haven’t shown up for school at all. Truancy is expended to continue to be problematic, especially in St. James.

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

- **Budget**
 - 65% of revenues, 60% of expenses at 67% of the year
 - Out-of-home placements (OHP) at 45% of budget
 - State Operated Services (SOS) / Acute Care hospitalizations at 32% of budget
- **Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators (MACSSA)**
 - Training on responding to media inquiries relating to Safe Passage of Children
 - Diversity Equity and Inclusion presentation given by Ottertail County. It will be offered at Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) conference in December.
 - Prioritizing exercise for legislative positions
 - Woodland Centers, detoxification unit, will be closing in December
 - Presentation by Stearns County on difficulties placing children and the stress it puts on workers
- **Other**
 - IT needs
 - Social Services Information Systems (SSIS) moving to new platform, Azure
 - CaseWorks continues to go down
 - Concerns over the use / non-use of IBM MaaS360.
 - Human Services is hosting “Bridges out of Poverty” training on October 12th and a “Disability Law” presentation on October 19th
 - Customer survey received and shared with Commissioners

9. INCOME MAINTENANCE / CHILD SUPPORT UPDATES – Jodi Halvorson (absent)

- **Income Maintenance:**
- **Child Support:**

10. PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES – Barb Salmela-Lind

- Public Health was present at last weekend's Fiesta celebration. It was a great opportunity to connect with the community.
- There was a car seat clinic on September 19 at the ambulance building for families to stop by and have their car seats checked for placement and size. Public Health gave out 10 car seats and checked 2 additional clients for correct size and placement. Another clinic was held 2 weeks ago and Public Health served 6 people that stopped by for car seat checks.
- COVID-19 and Flu vaccines will be offered on October 17th and 23rd for all Watonwan County employees and their families, ages 9 and older.
- We had a SHIP/WCPHAC meeting two weeks ago. A presentation was given on a recent survey findings that they just completed. Ted requested a one page fact sheet and she has completed this. It needs some adjustments to the page before it is distributed to the public.

11. SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATES

- **Children's Unit** – Joan Stordalen
 - **Child Protection (CP):**
 - CP workers began Reflective Supervision with Jessica Hoepfer. This has already been a very positive experience for them and a safe place for them to process very difficult/often emotional cases. Jessica works with the team on staying curious and energized to serve often very challenging people and to work well together as a child protection team, building self-awareness and team relationships.

- There has been an increase in children needing to be removed from parental homes, which increases the need for supervised visits. This has caused family based workers to use lots of extra time transporting kids/parents to their supervised visits
- Opiate Grant dollars have been spent to support children placed with relatives as well as supporting their parents as they stabilize. The money has been used to pay off fines so parents are able to get their driver's licenses back, pay for deposits and rent for housing, and make sure kids have the clothing and supplies to get a good start back at school.
- We will be attending an information session next week regarding the cannabis law changes and how this affects how we serve families involved in child protection.

Licensing:

- REM Heartland, Inc in Madelia opened a brand new home and transitioned their 3 consumers out of the 2 apartments they provided care in to this new setting.
- We are still seeing a very high need for licensed child care in our county. There have been 2 new applicants interested in becoming licensed.
- **Adult's Unit** – Amy Pluym presented for Katy Goldschmidt, who was absent
 - Increase in MnCHOICES Assessments for August
 - Adult Mental Health (AMH) cancelled picnic due to heat
 - Clubhouse staff are not going to out-of-state conference due to issues with grant funding and waiting list
 - Remediation for Waiver Review is complete
 - Adult Protection hosting “Safe Guarding Older Adults from Financial Exploitation and Fraud” training on October 11th.

12. PERSONNEL

- Miller motioned, Hedberg seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the **Pay for Performance** of the following staff:
 - **Brenda Cervantes**, County Agency Social Worker
 - **Sandra Cuellar**, Office Support Specialist
 - **Karen Oviedo Ortega**, Public Health Nurse
 - **Katy Sturm**, County Agency Social Worker
- Branstad motioned, Hedberg seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the **End of Probation** and move to **Permanent Status** of the following staff:
 - **Destiny Cortez**, County Agency Social Worker
 - **Danelle Ericksen-Bentley**, Public Health Nurse
 - **Lyndsey Haler**, County Agency Social Worker
 - **Estefany Sotelo-Garcia**, County Agency Social Worker
- Branstad motioned, Melheim seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the **Probationary Appointment** of **Jennifer Eckstein**, County Agency Social Worker.
- Miller motioned, Pettersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the **Resignation, in good standing**, of **Kimberly Hensch**, Eligibility Worker.

13. COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS

- **SCHSAC** (State Community Health Services Advisory Committee) – *Melheim*
 - Melheim had a meet and greet in Butterfield with Minnesota Department of Health's, Center for Public Health Practice Planning and Communications staff, Michelle Gin and Deanna White.
- **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*
 - Pettersen reported that one of the site locations in New Ulm is going up 85% in rent costs and they have had very little notice time in order to possibly consider another location.
- **MRCI** (Managed Resources Connections Inc.) Board of Directors – *Miller*
- **CHS** (Community Health Services) Advisory Board – *Hedberg*

14. STAFF TRAINING / DEVELOPMENT

15. MONTHLY FINANCIAL CLAIMS

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

16. CONTRACTS / AGREEMENTS / POLICIES

- Branstad moved, Miller seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the **2024-2025 County and Tribal Nation MFIP Biennial Service Agreement** with Department of Human Services.
- Pettersen moved, Branstad seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve **Policy 48, Local Homeless Prevention Aid**.
- Pettersen moved, Westman seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the 1/1/2023 – 3/31/2024 Purchase of Service Agreement, with the **South Central Community Based Initiative (SCCBI)**, for a grant totally **\$42,765** to purchase a new **vehicle** for the Forever Friends Clubhouse.

17. OTHER

- Melheim moved, Miller seconded and the motion carried unanimously to appoint **Kimberly Hall** as the second **Citizen’s Representative**, back filling Dr. Nicholas Castillo’s remaining term, which will end December 2025.

18. ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Marks, Support Services Supervisor

Dated: 9/20/2023

Dillon Melheim, County Commissioner – Board Chair

Dated: 9/20/2023