

**Traverse County Board of Commissioners
Social Service Board Minutes
March 21, 2023
9:00 AM**

Traverse County Social Services Department
202 8th Street North, Wheaton MN 56296

The regular meeting for the Traverse County Board of Commissioners/Social Service Board was held at the Traverse County Social Services Department, Wheaton, MN on March 21, 2023. Commission Chair, Kayla Schmidt, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Gail
Chad Metz
Dwight Nelson
Jerrold Olson
Kayla Schmidt

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

CONSENT AGENDA (Routine Actions requiring Board Action):

- Approval of Agenda, Minutes of Previous Meeting, and Donations received from:
 - 1) Ave Maria Ladies Guild - \$45.00

Upon a motion by Commissioner Olson, second by Commissioner Nelson, and carried unanimously, the agenda, February minutes, and donations were approved.

CASELOAD TOTALS: Reviewed.

	02/28/2022	02/28/2023
Social Services (Workgroups)	74	63
Income Maintenance	706	713
Child Support	70	59
Child Care Assistance - Cases	4	6
Child Care Assistance - Providers	7	6
Totals	861	847

OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS: Reviewed and discussed the placement numbers. There are three children using the independent living, 18-21 program; and one other child in placement.

- Total - 4
- Social Services - 4
- Corrections – 0

FISCAL REVIEW: Reviewed and discussed.

- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2019 - \$1,418,790.65
- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2020 - \$1,458,155.96

- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2021 - \$1,596,322.91
- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2022 - \$1,771,729.97
- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2023 - \$2,188,307.14

DISCUSSION/DECISION:

A. BUDGET:

1. The February 2023 Financial Summary was reviewed with the board. Our cash balance is up \$416,577.17 from February of last year. The director said we have looked over the budget, and while our cash balance has gone up, we are not significantly under or over spending on anything. The director indicated that one thing that may be influencing this, is our lower out-of-home placements. It's hard to budget for that, since we cannot decline to place children when it's necessary, and placements have been lower in 2022, and so far in 2023. There have been years when we have been very high in placements, so we use an average to budget. We are at 17% of the way through the year at the end of February. We are at 11% for revenues, and 14% for

expenditures. So, our spending is actually pretty close to budget, thus far. There have not been any county burials, so far, in 2023.

B. DHS UPDATES:

1. The director went over the audit results of the 2022 Single Audit that our programs were chosen for. The director explained why it was important that we do well in those audits, and indicated that our federal funding is dependent on that, in the long run.
2. The director talked about legislation that is being considered, particularly the following:
 - a. A bill to fund counties' time and work in the medical assistance renewal rollout, as we unwind the federal state of emergency. The director noted that we are looking at doing things that will increase community outreach and community access.
 - b. High Acuity Bill: the director talked about the bill that came from the Sheriff's Association, in regard to the 48-hour rule that the state is not in compliance with. The director noted that all over the state, people who are committed while they are in jail, are sitting in jail, post-commitment, well after the 48-hours that is in statute. The state doesn't have the beds for them to go to. The bill would force the state to pay the counties if they do not follow the law. The director indicated that, while she generally supports the state being held to the same level of accountability that the counties are held to, there are potential impacts to us for this. If the state has to pay the jails, then they will prioritize those people above all else, including the people sitting in small, ill-equipped hospitals, awaiting placement from a civil commitment. The director noted that will simply cause another backlog somewhere else, and doesn't address the problem. The director talked about the statewide gap, in terms of a continuum of care, and what we can advocate for that will create a more balanced approach.
 - c. The director talked about a MNChoices assessment, and what it is, and what revisions they are doing. The revisions are behind schedule, and the legislature, DHS, and counties are talking about how best to roll this out.
 - d. DHS and the governor's office are proposing the creation of a new state office for children's programs. The director is part of a small group of directors and county commissioners who will be talking with DHS about this, and communicating our potential concerns and trouble points.
3. The director reviewed the number of medical assistance clients who enrolled in Blue Plus versus PrimeWest. We weren't sure what to expect, since this is the first year that we, as original PrimeWest counties, have not been single-plan. There are very few people who opted to move to Blue Plus. We have nine cases that are Blue Plus.

C. TRAVERSE COUNTY UPDATES:

1. The director talked about the Expedited SNAP processing and numbers that our staff met. Traverse County met the SNAP Expedited and 30-Day Processing timelines at 96% or higher in the fourth quarter of 2022. The director noted that the experience and knowledge of the staff is an asset that cannot be over appreciated. We are so fortunate to have staff in these areas who know our programs, as well.
2. The director, again, went over the document she talked about last month with the board, summarizing the relationship between Traverse County (TC) and Western Prairie Human Services (WPHS). The director talked about the fact that she will be going to the Western Prairie Board on April 7, 2023. Her goal would be for them to confirm what options they are willing to consider, so Traverse County knows what options they have. The director indicated that she spent considerable time talking about this with the staff at our all-staff meeting last month, as well as sharing different documents with them; some that the board reviewed, and some that they have. The director noted that she was very transparent with the staff that this is a big decision for the board, and in the end, they may have to consider big issues like financing, as well as the ability to sustain a trained workforce in the areas they need. So, while the board wants to hear from the staff, it is also a decision that entails many other things. The board agreed with those statements. They indicated a desire to talk to the staff, and the director encouraged that, noting that anything that happens is likely to involve big change, and the director wants to do whatever she can to answer questions and walk them and the staff through the options. The board asked if the full Western Prairie Board had seen the document yet. The director indicated that they had not. The executive committee has, but not the full board. They will see that before the April 7th meeting.

3. The director talked about the nursing home situation with the board. She clarified who the license holder is, and what the duties in this process or any potential future process may be for both the county and the license holder. The board had many questions, and discussed and reviewed the statutes and documents that the director included in the packet.

ADMINISTRATIVE/VENDOR PAYMENTS: Upon a motion by Commissioner Nelson, second by Commissioner Olson, the vendor payments were unanimously approved.

Adjourn

Next meeting: April 18, 2023 @ 9:00AM

Attested to by:

Stacy Hennen/Director

Kayla Schmidt/Board Chair