

SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD MINUTES

May 6, 2020

The Grant County Department of Social Services Board meeting was held via Zoom due to COVID. The Grant County Department of Social Services was called to order by Chairperson John Beinborn at 9:00 AM. Roll Call was taken with Dwight Nelson, Don Splinter, Greg Fry, Dale Hood and John Beinborn present. Also present was Fred Naatz, Director, Robert Keeney, County Board Chairman, Jack Johnson, Grant County Sheriff's Department, Clark Thelemann, Social Work Supervisor, Krystle Lorenz, Social Work Supervisor, CeCe Fishnick, Economic Support Supervisor and LeaAnne Smith, Office and Financial Coordinator. The meeting was found to be in compliance with the open meeting laws. Don Splinter made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Dwight Nelson seconded, the motion carried.

Minutes of February 5th: Nelson made a motion to approve the February 5th minutes. Fry seconded the motion, the motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Summary of Vouchers included in the report dated April 13, 2020 was reviewed. It was questioned why one of the Foster Parent's had 30 different payments. Naatz explained, financially they break out each placement in several different rates and can have up to five different costs to equal that one rate. There is also some other rates the state is providing for Foster Parents now. Hood made the motion to approve the voucher report, seconded by Nelson. The motion carried. The DSS Management Report was reviewed. The Office Supplies and Secure Detention are significantly higher; otherwise the other programs look to be fairly on target. Nelson made the motion to approve, seconded by Fry, the motion carried.

ADMINISTRATION:

Naatz is asking for the approval of some extra CST funding the program received from the state. Naatz explained some different ways the funding could be used by going out of the box. It was asked if there would be a problem spending it Naatz did not see a problem being able to spend it. Social Services did receive some TSSF funding to be spent by the end of April, but with COVID the services that DSS wanted these funds to be used for were limited. It was asked if there would be any ramifications if the CST funding was not used, Naatz said, there would not be. Hood made the motion to approve, seconded by Fry.

Approval of DSS vehicle policy and creating a budget line for automobile expenses, Naatz explained issues staff is having with their car insurance companies when transporting a client. Naatz talked to other Counties on what they do and Naatz spoke with Randy from Tricor and Randy recommended the way to resolve that issue is to have a county vehicle. It was brought up if the vehicle needed to be cleaned before the next transport that who would do the cleaning. Naatz said, depending on what level it is we would take to a shop to have detailed. There should be no problem getting it in right away. It

was asked how the Sheriff's Department cleaned their vehicles and Jack Johnson stated they clean themselves in the garage. Naatz explained also a concern with staff using their own vehicle if methamphetamine is involved and then the next day having their own family in their car. Naatz would like the company vehicle to be professionally cleaned for this reason. It was asked if there was a test whether the car was properly cleaned. Naatz talked to the Health Department and it is his understanding there is not. Fry made the motion to approve, seconded by Nelson.

Naatz is asking for approval to purchase a vehicle; Johnson approached Naatz and they had a 2013 Nissan Rogue they were going to be traded in and they would be willing to transfer to DSS. Johnson said he could get about \$5,000 from the wholesale side and it seemed like a fairly decent price for it. Staff have been driving it and said it is a nice vehicle so we would like to purchase from the Sheriff's department for the \$5,000. Naatz blue booked it and it was in the right price range, mileage is 90,982. Naatz stated they are also looking at a van the Sheriff's Department has that they could use to transport. Finance transferred some of the money DSS budgeted to purchase a van to the Sheriff's Department towards the new Maintenance Worker position. The reason for the second vehicle purchase is if staff needed to transport more than one client in a day. We would also be under budget for employee mileage with the purchase of company vehicle for transporting. This should cover the \$5,000 for the Nissan Rogue. DSS is planning down the road to build a garage where the old building was to keep the vehicles. Fry made the motion to approve, seconded by Nelson.

Update on programs under COVID. Naatz updated the Support Unit side, LeaAnne is coming into the office and the other two workers are working from home. The Energy Assistance Program may see an increase in applicants from people losing their jobs.

CeCe updated the Income Maintenance side; most Economic Support workers are working from home. Medical Assistance cases are being left open unless they requested to be closed, moved out of state or incarcerated until maybe the end of May. Food Share they are giving the maximum benefits for March and April and will be doing in May regardless of their income. Have had a number of new applications, have pushed back renewal dates three months. July, August and September we will be doing double renewals due to just being pushed back. The Call Center hours have been extended.

Krystle updated on Child Welfare. Social Workers job have changed drastically due to COVID. All Social Workers are working remotely from home. Workers are using electronics and getting creative to work with our families and getting our jobs done, it does take more time to operate services over electronics and getting our job done. We are seeing most of our Youth Justice and JIPS cases by using Zoom and facebook messenger. We still need to make face to face contact with the families we have safety plans on to ensure safety in the home. We are responding to all of our initial assessments of child abuse and neglects face to face. Clark and Krystle have been working hard to support workers. State has put out new guidance; normally we see families twice a month minimum. Now we are seeing them over technology and calling them to check in every week sometimes more. Families are having more issues due to COVID. Workers are staying busy by doing trainings, helping by getting out PPE supplies out and supporting each other.

Clark updated on Juvenile Court Intake; we have gotten a lot of the electronic stuff done on the Juvenile Court Intake side. Some of the positive to some of these changes are we have worked out a lot of bugs in order to communicate electronically with our courts. Our JCI workers have done an excellent job and some of these time saving measures we will be able to bring in to policy and practice once we get back to normalcy.

Clark updated on out of home care; there is a change in the foster homes as the expectations place on our foster parents. Before COVID our foster children went to school most of the day. Now foster parents are watching and educating the children during the day. The state did offer for the month of April to compensate the extra expenses. There is somethings with Residential and Group Home placements as they are picking and choosing and the more difficult kids are being kicked out and it is hard to find placements. One of the challenges with not being able to do the face to face visits with parents it is more difficult to get these kids home as the facilities do not want them going home for three days and being exposed to stuff and then coming back. We are trying to facilitate with skype and zoom, but while these work it is not effective as face to face. It is hard to measure the safety of a child over a video screen.

Fred Naatz touched on how DSS is going to bring back workers once the go ahead is given. Workers will be brought back slowly, especially with workers having to go out in the field and then coming back to the office.

Fred updated on the procedure of PPE for staff. Since DSS did not have any PPE, Steve of Emergency Management gave us masks, gowns, sanitizer and gloves. If you are going out in the home and doing a face to face you have to put on a mask. We do have the ability of calling Dispatch to see if there was anyone sick in the household before going out. We have 5 social workers who do the majority of face to face contacts.

Income Maintenance upcoming retirement and replacement planning; would like approval to advertise internally for the Lead Worker position, so they can train and work with the current Lead Worker. Would not receive higher pay or take position until Lead Worker is retired. Don made the motion to approve, seconded by Dale. The motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

Adjournment: Dale Hood made a motion to adjourn Dwight Nelson seconded, motion carried.