

## **SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD MINUTES**

**July 1<sup>st</sup>, 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 Dale Hood, Greg Fry, Don Splinter, Robert Scallon, Lester Jantzen, Dwight Nelson and John Beinborn present. Also present was Fred Naatz, Director, Robert Keeney, County Board Chairman, Chris Douglas IT, Garry Pluemer Maintenance Supervisor, Krystle Lorenz, Social Work Supervisor, Clark Thelemann, 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. Lester Jantzen made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Dale Hood seconded, the motion carried.

Minutes of June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, Dwight Nelson made a motion to approve the June 10<sup>th</sup> minutes, Don Splinter seconded the motion, the motion carried.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS 2020**

Fred updated, the 2020 General Ledger DSS Management Report Detail. The report is five months in, so is a little over 41% of the budget. Revenue is about 42%, so it is right on for the budget and AMSO is low at 30%, looked at last year's Alternate Care budget, slightly over budget at 42.27%. Last year we went significantly over budget we had budgeted 550,000 last year, so we had to increase the budget for this year at \$175,000, we are actually pretty good on this for right now. Secure Detention is recently pretty high, we looked into it and most of it is a kid we have in a court program that is run by secure detention and about 30,000 of it is going to the court program. We also have had to place quite a few kids in secure detention due to having being discharged or running away from their other placements. Clark explained there was one individual who was a big issue as they were involved in a serious incident involving the police. DSS choose to put them in the correction type placement that accounts for nearly \$30,000 of the entire budget. DSS also had some kids who were chronic runaways and ultimately for their safety we had to put them in secure facility to make sure they were not getting in way over there head with some stuff they were in to. It was asked how long is the \$30,000 for, Clark though it was April – December. Social Work mileage budget it says \$10.00 Fred though that was probably not entered right as we spend more than \$10.00 for social workers meals. Social Work budget is a little under budget at 43.5% and 42% for revenue and 39% for ?, so far we are right on budget, which is pretty good. Donald Splinter made a motion to approve the Financial Report Greg Fry seconded the motion, the motion carried.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS 2019**

2019 Report the biggest thing is the out of home care we budgeted \$550,000 for alternate care and came in at \$829,000, \$280,000 over budget. Again, secure detention we budgeted \$1,000 and came in

at \$65,000, so \$64,000 over. DSS has had some pretty expensive placements, we actually have a couple kids placed eternally in Wisconsin and it is running \$15,000 a month. We have had some really High end kids, unfortunately. We have had a lot of kids in foster care too, if you look at between the Children and Family and Delinquency it is significantly over as well. It is not even the high end kids at these residential placements even though they are really expensive, but the number of kids we have and that is tied back into all the meth usage. The family that tends to have meth issues also has a lot of kids. One family we have has 5 kids in placement. We are having lots of trouble finding placement, we have two foster care coordinators that do really good job at trying to recruit people to be foster parents. It is kind of common not just Grant county as it has been increasingly difficult to get foster parents. Not sure if the issue is since we have lost quite a few foster parents is that they increased the training requirements to be a foster parent. We are not having a lot of regular foster parents in Grant County. Fred explained he thinks part of the problem is the Department of Children and Families decided they are going to regulate the rate, so the facilities have a cap of a rate that they can get paid, DCF sets the rate for them. John asked if we possibly might have to go out of state again, Clark stated the agency was looking at a place in Minnesota as there is nowhere in Wisconsin that has the availability or ability to care for the kid, but we could not get reassurance his healthcare would be covered, so now we are looking at Illinois. DSS is going back to the drawing board on Wisconsin to see if any new openings open up here as it is always ideal to keep the kid in state if we can. It was asked since this kid completed the program successfully and they are still a risk, what does that speak for the program and did he really complete it successfully what does that say of the program and did he actually complete it successfully if he is still a risk. Fred explained it was the stop program, which is a formal program with 12 weeks and 12 different steps you have to complete. The challenge with that is they still have to be compliant focused where you can complete that section of that program and as long as you completed it you achieve that step, they tend to be more compliant focused. The Stop program has mixed reviews there is a lot of successes and a lot of questions as to how successful it is. It is one of the few programs out there you can even have people provide as far as children who are sexually acting out. It was asked if the agency finds it is a reoccurring program that after people graduate they're back for help. Fred stated the vast majority of the program when people graduate they don't reoffend. Ultimately there are good successful programs for everyone, but there are some kids who do whatever program and it is not effective.

Kinship care was fairly high, Kinship care is a situation where family members take in children from other family members when they need to be removed from the home for safety plan and they can now get payment to support that child being in the home. While it is high if we were not able to get family member to do this and get a small payment of \$280.00 a month these kids would be in foster care. Then they would be in a family they don't know anyone and the cost would be double and our foster care we don't have availability which means we would have to look into other counties, so it is really good we can tap into that. \$35,000 was budgeted and we spent \$65,000. We are limited on what we get from the state for this program, started looking at the 2021 budget for Kinship Care.

## **SUMMARY OF VOUCHERS**

They are very detailed it would be nice if we could figure out a different way that was not 12 different voucher numbers for one client. No questions on the report. Don Splinter made a motion to accept the report. Robert Scallon seconded, the motion carried.

## **ADMINISTRATION:**

Garry Pluemer update on the building, the warranty is off if it as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, so anything from here on the county has to pay for it. Maintenance is going through and doing warranty items. Garry walked through the building with Brad Bierman and the flooring person, so we are going to be getting the floor taken care of. They had to order more tile as there was not enough to fix what is needed to be fixed. When we go to do the floor personnel will be asked to use the back door versus the front door until the floor is done. Outside of that everything is looking good. Fred asked if they are going to be replacing all of the cracked tiles. Garry stated the tiles that are cracked due to the bad product, yes they will be replacing. Some of the tile because of the product it is does look like it has cracks some looks like it has hair line cracks in it, but that is just the tile itself and those will not be replaced. Looking at the sample it has the hairline cracks in in it also, so that is the product itself. They are ordering 2 boxes which are about 40 tiles. Timeline for replacing, it should take two days, one day to tear out and one to put back in, also going to be looking at some items on a list about carpet needing to be looked at. It was asked if the area being replaced if there was a warranty on it, only the part they fix will have a warranty on it.

Walked through the Annual Report, talks about the number of Grant County employees we have. Counties financial support is a little over 1.1 million dollars and it is more than what we get from the state but not less than what we get from the federal government. When we talked about unfunded mandates for example for the Department of children and Families, the department is supposed to match a little below 10% of our budget and we have put in more than %50.

The Energy Assistance program has been done in different ways over the years. We usually have an LTE come in from August – March. What we have learned from this is we have someone come in and learn the job and then leave and we then have to retrain someone and it puts a burden back on the Support Unit. The Support Unit suggested them just doing it and the support unit has been handling it very well.

CeCe updated on the Economic Support Unit. Since 2012 this unit has been in a Southern Consortium, where virtual caseloads are done now. The Economic support Unit does a great job individually as Grant County as you can see by some of the charts included. Renewal timeliness in 2019 was exceptional, 2019 application timeliness was exceptional, were above all standards pretty much every month and lead in the state average. Extremely proud of the answer rate on the call center, when someone calls in we do everything possible with their cases, so they do not have to call back again. It does make the calls a little longer but less call backs. With our answer rate we are number one in the state in 2019 and started in 2020 the same way. With the COVID April – July are outstanding because we did reduce the call volume in the state, due to the handouts of the federal government, unfortunately we will be paying for this in September, October, November. 2019 is what are normal will be, 2020 will be unusual. The needs are met of the clients and we also keep are air rates under the average that they want. Very substantial

turnover in the state not just Grant County for Economic Support Workers, with the number of new workers we are training and have on the phones we are still keeping our level of community services available and timely to our clients. The state has pushed out the renewals from March, April and June. In September we were originally going to have three months of renewals to process, now they have pushed one month to November. The state is really not listening to what our operational leads are saying as we want to get started to catch up. Another question is how we are going to meet the needs of overtime money, state has not come up with additional funds, there is going to be overtime or work is not going to get done. State keeps telling counties they are looking into overtime money. This will be an issue for all counties in the fall. It was asked why there are a lot of turnover with this position. CeCe stated it is a very stressful position, being on the Call Center and answering call after call and not being able to assist everyone and some of the interactions with the clients can be stressful. The Consortium has been working with a Technical College up North to come up with some training. This should be moving forward. These would be virtual training for ongoing and new workers to hopefully give them some stressful relieving tips.

Clark updated on child welfare, the number of reports of child abuse and neglect received for 2019, 773, of these reports 276 meet the criteria. 496 were screened out meaning they did not meet the criteria. For example a neighbor calls and says kids were outside playing too long, we ask well how old are the kids, 13. We get a lot of calls like that which are not abuse and neglect issues they are more concerns people have and something we do not have authority to investigate.

Child Welfare voluntary cases, 2019 we received 268 calls for services we screened in. Meaning a worker stopped by or called the families to ask "how can we help", before it gets too much of a danger zone or struggled further we would like to offer you services for that. We had 70 we did not as those are usually cases we already had them open for services, most are divorced parents calling and saying "I am doing a good job, but they are not". 175 we screened in for child welfare, 5 were Kinship, 0 court ordered studies, 15 of them were closed cases we had to reopen and 4 were directly for adoption.

Juvenile Justice all these are the referrals we get from Law Enforcement. In Juvenile Justice our goal is to keep kids out of the Juvenile Justice System. The referrals received in 2020 are probably half of what received in 2019 due to school not being in session.

Krystle updated on CST, this is a voluntary program. We currently have 1 full time facilitator. In this program we deal with complex youth. Anyone can make a referral to this program. They have to be involved with two or more services such as therapy, social services worker or IEP. The facilitator does a wrap around program, works with the family and gets all the providers to come to the table to make sure everyone is working together. The family gets to identify what they want to work on and the professionals help them in that area, so it is a real collaborative approach. A lot of kids we work with in this program are at risk of being removed from their home and we also work with youth coming out of home care and being successful.

Fred updated on APS programs, Adults 60 elder abuse referrals in 2019. Some concerns with the COVID as to if the referrals are down and it is more difficult to make contact. All the nursing homes are locked down no, so we cannot get in to talk to people.

Utilization of carry over funds update, alternate care funds for social services, usually keep it at \$200,000. Fred looked back at his emails and saw back in March of 2019, Nancy sent an email when she had prepared the resolution for the full county board for all the carry over funds and at that time she was not going to include the \$200,000 in there because she was assuming we were not projecting out at that time and we were not going to need it and that she would amend that down the line. Fred will work with Amanda and Bob Keeney on this if it ever did need to get changed down the line if we were going to be over budget. Fred sent Amanda email regarding this.

Service Support Specialist, Patricia Skaife, resigned. Work load is still there it is distributed right now with other Service Support Specialist, but looking down the line to rehire. This position does a lot of the parenting assistance with the families. Fred explained a lot of the training for this position is job shadowing with the other Service Support Specialist and right now this would not be able to be done. Would like approval to fill the position, job description will stay the same, Clark explained as well right now it would be difficult to have someone start now, but starting August, September would have the new hire come in. Greg questioned why this person left, Clark said the job is working with some people through some difficult times, worker was taking work home with her and she wanted something a little lighter where she did not take the work home. Lester Jantzen made a motion to authorize the rehiring of the Service Support position. Dale Hood seconded, the motion carried.

Due to the retirement of Lead Economic Support worker, Jane Whitish, DSS will bring in new hire three months prior to Jane's retirement, so the new hire can be trained. Nicole Huber accepted the position and will come back into the office July 20<sup>th</sup> to start to train with Jane. This will leave a couple big holes as we will have Nikki who is a very good worker not available for the phones. We have another new worker who just finished the training just as COVID happened. Due to all the policy changes due to COVID Instead of starting her on the phones and getting her confused with the actual rules, we are having her doing Long Term Care training. Would like to get the new Economic Support Worker trained before Jane leaves as we are going to be swamped during this time and it takes approximately three months to get trained. We would be replacing Nikki's position who was an Economic Support Worker. Greg Fry made a motion to authorize the rehiring the Economic Support position. Dwight Nelson seconded, the motion carried.

Director requested to carry over of 24 hours of vacation time, Robert Scallon motion to authorize the carryover of vacation. Dale Hood seconded, the motion carried.

Naatz explained is thinking on when DSS is going to start bring back workers. Naatz explained one of the biggest events is when kids start going back to school. Let people get back into school and see how that plays out and then if by the end of September if things are going well start to bring staff back. We have had people coming in to use printer occasionally, will possibly bring a couple people back from Support Unit and Economic Support Unit prior. Economic Support workers have their own individual offices.

There are currently five Economic Support workers right now working in the office. The Child Welfare staff share office, so will probably bring one back at a time.

Staff update, laid off part-time CST worker due to lack of cases. Targeted Services Safety Program funds, one of the challenge was in the first three months is we wanted to provide in home therapy and intensive in home parenting, but due to COVID was not able to provide this service. Have been talking with Orion Services and Foundations, they are two companies who do the in intensive in home programs through the Medical Assistance program, one of the staff from Orion offer both the in home therapy and intensive parenting. We have a couple of agencies we can contract with who can provide these services. If we don't use these funds we lose it.

Next Meeting will be August 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

Adjournment: Dwight Nelson made a motion to adjourn Lester Jantzen seconded, motion carried.