

SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD MINUTES

August 3, 2022

The Grant County Department of Social Services Board meeting was called to order by Chairperson Don Splinter at 9:00 AM. Roll Call was taken with Don Splinter, John Beinborn, Robert Scallon, Diane Nelson, Brian Lucey present. Adam Day was excused. Also present Fred Naatz, Director, Robert Keeney, County Board Chairman, Shane Drinkwater, Director of IT, Tonya White, County Clerk (z), Amy Esser (z), CeCe Fishnick (z), Kelly Schlarmann (z), and Nicole Huber (z). The meeting was found to be in compliance with the open meeting laws. Robert Scallon made a motion to approve the order of the agenda, second by John Beinborn, motion carried.

Minutes of July 6, 2022 meeting: Diane Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes, John Beinborn seconded the motion, the motion carried.

Citizen Comments- None

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Summary of Vouchers: The board reviewed the Vouchers Accounts

Administrative Report 2021: The DSS Management Report was reviewed

Training Costs: The Board reviewed the training costs

Diane Nelson made a motion to approve the three reports, seconded by Robert Scallon. The motion was approved..

CORRESPONDENCE:

Naatz shared correspondence regarding a Birth to 3 pilot program that Grant County will be a part of. CeCe Fishnick gave further details of the pilot.

ADMINISTRATION – GENERAL:

ARPA Income Maintenance funds and process. – The Southern IM Consortium received ARPA funds, and CeCe Fishnick went over the suggestions to utilize the funds. This would include some new laptops as well as dual monitors for the Income Maintenance workers to increase their efficiencies when working from home. There was discussion about county policy and if this would be allowable. The department will look into this possibility.

Research on Fee Charging families: Naatz shared an article entitled Protecting Fragile Families: New Guidance to Improve Foster Care Referrals Policies and Practices send by DCF. Clark Thelemann highlighted that research indicates that pursuing child support in foster care cases may cause harm to poor parents working towards reunification. The research also found that pursuing child support in

foster care cases is not cost effective. A Wisconsin study found that the vast majority of parents in the child welfare system are poor, with incomes below \$10,000 per year. It also found that with each \$100 in child support increases the time spent in foster care by 6 months. The Board discussed the fee charging issues, and gave guidance to review the department's fee charging policies. Naatz indicated that Thelemann and he would work on drafting a new policy taking this research into consideration.

Request to refill a Service Support Specialist position. Naatz explained that the recent social work vacant position was filled by a current Service Support Specialist, creating a vacancy there. John Beinborn, seconded by Robert Scallon, made a motion to refill the position. The motion carried.

Updated Complaint Process/procedure – Naatz discussed the directive from DCF to update the department's Complaint Process, and shared the updated policy, which reflected the template DCF shared. Diane Nelson made a motion to approve the updated policy, seconded by Scallon. The motion carried.

2023 Budget planning – Naatz shared that the county was not going to be using the process it had used over the last few years, where department heads met as a team to attempt to balance the county budget. This year, the Finance Director and County Board chair will review all budgets, and make recommendations to balance the total budget.

Safety Update – staff input – The board was updated on the safety concerns resulting from several situations that have come up over the last few months. Staff present shared their views, highlighting the need to feel safe in the building. Currently the department is looking at installing bullet proof glass in the reception area and moving a camera to better see the front door. Staff is asking that the main door into Social Services be similar to how schools operate, with it being locked and a remote buzzer and intercom to allow visitors to enter the waiting room. The board directed that department heads at the CSB meet to discuss how best to address the issues and provide safety for staff.

COVID Update – Naatz shared that numerous staff either have tested positive for COVID – 19 recently, or have had a close contact, which greatly limits what those staff can do. We are following guidance from the CDC and Health Department, and erring on caution to reduce any transmittal.

Director's report: Naatz shared that The Resource Fair and Backpack Pickup event will be held again on August 25th at the county fairgrounds, and encouraged board members to drop in. Naatz also shared that a county meeting to look at creating a Health and Human Services Department was held, to review if it would be a good time to make the transition. Directors from Unified, the Health Department and Social Services, along with the County Board Chair, Human Resources Director and Finance Director attended. Further meetings are planned.

ADJOURNMENT- At 10:40 AM, Robert Scallon made a motion to adjourn until September 7, 2022, which was seconded by Brian Lucey. . The motion carried, the meeting was adjourned