

**WESTERN PRAIRIE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING**  
**June 2, 2023**

The meeting of the Joint Powers Board for Western Prairie Human Services was held June 2, 2023 at the Western Prairie Human Services Office in Elbow Lake.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bill LaValley  
Paul Gremmels  
Troy Johnson  
Ken Johnson  
Larry Lindor  
Paul Wildman  
Paul Gerde  
Dwight Walvatne  
Gordy Wagner

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Stacy Hennen, Director  
Kari Rude, Deputy Director/HR Director  
Tracy Bowman, Fiscal Manager  
Sarah Lohse, Social Services Supervisor  
Brianna Crowley, Lead Social Worker  
Amanda Schonhardt, Social Worker  
Anna Berends, Social Worker  
Dwight Nelson, Traverse County Commissioner

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Doyle Sperr

**A. Opening:**

1. Chair Troy Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:00am
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.
3. The agenda was reviewed. Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU.
4. Approval of the May 5, 2023 meeting minutes. The location of the meeting will be updated. After reviewing the minutes, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the amended May minutes, seconded by Commissioner Walvatne, MCU.
5. A summary of bills was presented by the fiscal manager. The fiscal manager reviewed the May 2023 bills. After discussion, Commissioner Wildman made a motion to approve the bill summaries, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, MCU.
  - a. The fiscal manager reviewed April 2023 financial information. The overall budget is on track. The agency has seen an increase in case management revenue, potentially due to the specialized caseloads which resulted from the merger. After questions, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the financial reports, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU.

**B. CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS**

Not applicable

**C. OLD BUSINESS**

**6. Out of Home Placement List:**

The director reviewed the out-of-home placement list. There are currently 33 children in out-of-home placement. The director reviewed the categories of cases and progress made with reunification or permanency of the children. There are less children in out-of-home care this month, however the cost of care has increased due to a few specialized placement needs. It is anticipated an additional five children will achieve permanency within the next month.

**7. Case Counts:**

The director reviewed the case counts for social services. The number of total cases have decreased this past month, which is typical for this time of year. Child protection caseloads are by family, rather than individual, so the numbers don't show the reality of the actual number of children being served. The director reviewed the case counts for child support, MNSure, and MAXIS. There has been a decrease in SNAP services and child support cases.

**8. Personnel/Hiring Updates:**

The director provided information regarding hiring the past month. The child protection position has been filled. The employee starts on 05/05/23. Both eligibility workers have been hired. One employee is scheduled to begin on 06/20/23. The other employee hired was an internal hire. This has left an opening for a case aide. The agency is currently evaluating applications for the case aide position. Currently, one employee returned from a leave of absence and there is one employee on a leave of absence.

**9. Director Update**

The director updated the board on the progress of employee development, strategic planning, communication with the state auditor, the executive committee's meeting with Traverse County, and internal employee communication.

**D. New Business:**

**10. Child Protection Presentation:**

The social services supervisor, lead worker and two social workers provided education on the child welfare/protection process, including the intake and screening process. Between WPHS and Traverse County, there were 867 intakes in 2022. Of those intakes, 192 were assessed and 37 opened for case management.

**11. Meal Policy Update**

The deputy director presented an updated meal and travel expense policy. This is being brought forward to clarify when meal reimbursements are allowed. Travel status is defined as travel outside both WPHS sites and the TCSS office, as employees have access to break rooms and kitchen appliances in all three offices. Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the updated policy, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, MCU.

**12. Data Breach Policy (federal tax information)**

The deputy director presented policies in regards to data requests, one for data requests for public and data requests for subjects. The documents are being reviewed by attorneys. Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the policies pending attorney approval. The motion seconded by Commissioner Wildman, MCU.

**13. Strategic Planning Updates**

The director provided a draft of the SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis that the management team has been working on. The director and deputy director are in the process of meeting with employees to gather additional information and a final version will be provided.

**14. PrimeWest Community Reinvestment Grant**

The director discussed the grant process for PrimeWest. The director and public health director are working together to determine options and whether the grant would be best split or shared. The lack of dental care was discussed as a community barrier.

**15. County Charges for Do Not Meet Criteria**

The director provided the costs of do not meet criteria days for 2021 and 2022. The agency had nine days in 2022, for a total cost of \$15,390. This is the first payment in several years. The decrease in the number of days and amount is due to large part to the mental health unit spending a large amount of time, finding appropriate step down locations.

**16. Data Retention Policy**

The deputy director presented a policy for email data retention. The document is being reviewed by attorneys. Commissioner LaValley made a motion to approve the policies pending attorney approval. The motion seconded by Commissioner Gremmels, MCU.

**17. Marijuana Legalization**

The director provided materials on cannabis legalization effective 08/01/2023.

**Report from Board Appointments:**

Lakeland Mental Health Center.....	K. Johnson/Gerde
Horizon Community Health Board.....	Sperr/Walvatne/Lindor/Wagner
PrimeWest Health County Based Purchasing.....	Wagner/Lindor/K. Johnson/T. Johnson
West Central Community Action INC.....	K. Johnson/Gerde
Agency on Aging.....	Lindor/LaValley
Child Protection Pre-Placement.....	T. Johnson/Gremmels
Rainbow Rider.....	Gerde/Wagner/LaValley, Walvatne
R4S Governing and Executive Board.....	K. Johnson/Lindor

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Troy Johnson at 11:07 am