

**Traverse County Board of Commissioners
Social Service Board Minutes
June 18, 2024
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 June 18, 2024. Commission Chair, Mark Gail, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Mark Gail, Chair
Jerrel Olson, Vice-Chair
Dwight Nelson
Chad Metz
Kayla Schmidt

Members Absent: None

Other: Stacy Hennen, Director
Shelly Staebler, Social Services

CONSENT AGENDA (Routine Actions requiring Board Action):

A. Approval of Agenda, Minutes of Previous Meeting, and Donation(s):

1. Ave Maria Ladies Guild - \$45.00
2. Lake Valley Charities / Mental Health - \$42.00

Approval of Agenda, Minutes of Previous Meeting and Donations were presented. Upon a motion by Commissioner Olson, second by Commissioner Nelson, and carried unanimously, the agenda, May minutes, and donations to the agency were approved.

CASELOAD TOTALS: Reviewed.

	05/31/23	05/31/24
Social Services (Workgroups)	74	67
Income Maintenance	729	671
Child Support	59	59
Child Care Assistance - Cases	4	9
Child Care Assistance - Providers	7	6
Totals	873	812

OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS: Reviewed and discussed the placement numbers. We continue to have nine children in placement via social services, and one via corrections that we are working with, as well. The one child placed by corrections remains in a facility and we are now paying the bill. We have four children in non-relative care, two in relative or kin foster care, two in supervised independent living, and one with a non-custodial parent. We also have one child, not on this list, who is in a psychiatric residential treatment facility and will likely transition to a placement that is funded via the waiver and levy dollars. The director talked about the types and kinds of placements we are seeing and noted that placement costs continue to remain high.

A. Placements:

1. Total - 10
2. Social Services - 9
3. Corrections – 1

FISCAL REVIEW: Reviewed and discussed. The director reported that the cash balance has decreased due to out-of-home placements.

A. Cash Balances:

1. Cash Balance as of 05/31/2020: \$1,310,955.85
2. Cash Balance as of 05/31/2021: \$1,410,725.95
3. Cash Balance as of 05/31/2022: \$2,221,332.18
4. Cash Balance as of 05/31/2023: \$2,020,118.30
5. Cash Balance as of 05/31/2024: \$2,104,224.62

DISCUSSION/DECISION:

A. Budget:

1. The May 2024 Financial Summary was reviewed with the board. We are \$84,106.31 to the positive for the first time this year compared to where we were at this time last year in our cash balance. We are gradually seeing improvement. We are 42% of the way through the year, and our revenues are at 43%, and our expenses are at 42%. So, we are on track, for the most part. We had estate recoveries in May of \$6,641.96. We have not had any county burials this year. The director and supervisor talked about where Traverse County sits statewide in estate recoveries. While we are the smallest county in the state, we are not last in medical assistance recoveries. We are ranked 84 of 87 for FY2017-FY2024. In that time, we have collected \$445,751.71. The director noted that our long-term care eligibility worker and supervisor work really hard on estate collections, in conjunction with DHS, and that it isn't always popular work. But, they do a great job of meeting the state's expectations and statutes.

B. DHS Updates:

1. Talking Points for the African American Family Preservation Act

The director discussed that the African American Family Preservation Act (AAFPA) passed and was signed by the governor. The director reviewed the differences in the bill that went through the legislature and what ended up passing, and reviewed the trouble points for counties and what our plan of action is, and needs to be, for the upcoming session. The board asked many questions and had a robust conversation about what role they could play in helping alleviate some of the pressure something

like this could put on local levies and local tax payers, and some of the potential damage it could cause for the children that we serve.

C. Traverse County Updates:

1. SNAP Expedited and 30-day Processing Certificate for Quarter One 2024

The director gave the board a copy of the certificate we received from the state, indicating that our staff had, again, achieved a 95% or higher timeliness rate in processing expedited SNAP and in the 30-day processing for January through March of 2024. The director reminded the board that we were also the only county in MN to achieve this all four quarters in 2023, so this is at least our fifth quarter running. Our staff continue to demonstrate their dedication to the people that they serve in Traverse County and we appreciate that, and the skill they bring here.

2. Western Prairie Human Services Third Pathway Proposal

The director gave the board a proposal that the Western Prairie Executive Board had proposed to their full board on the previous Friday, that they had motioned to move forward and explore with the Traverse County Board of Commissioners on a third pathway or option for the future, if the Traverse County Board is interested in moving forward in this manner. The current contract expires at the end of this year, and there is a six-month "out" clause. The Western Prairie Human Services (WPHS) Board voted and passed a motion to extend their contract as far as through 2025, with renegotiated financial rates, if the boards move forward with this, in order to give adequate time to both negotiate and then either move forward if the negotiation moves forward, or terminate, if that is the final decision at the end of the negotiations. At the request of the Traverse County Coordinator, the director also gave the board an updated copy of the document she did about two years ago, that estimated for them what they would need to go on their own. The director indicated that she changed the WPHS rates to reflect updated rates, but didn't have time to change the Traverse ones, and did not add in what additional program changes, like AAFPA, would mean for staffing levels. The proposal is that WPHS would take the Traverse County Social Services staff and business over via a delegation of responsibility from the Traverse County Board, but their joint powers board structure would not change. Traverse County would need to contribute their share of the levy via the current formula, but would not contribute a fund balance share as Grant County and Pope County did. There are several other areas that would need to be negotiated and are touched on in the document. The board had a great deal of conversation on the proposal and expressed concerns about their staff, the lack of a seat on the board, and the other options available to them. They also talked about the fact that this may be an opportunity to develop a working relationship with the WPHS board, and noted that they could develop an agreement that allowed for a consideration of full partnership in five years. They also noted that in their discussions with both the executive committee and the board, there seemed to be an openness to the Traverse County commissioners having a seat on the finance and personnel committees. After robust discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Olson to continue the negotiations, including considering the contract extension, seconded by Commissioner Nelson. The motion carried, with Commissioner Schmidt voting against, and all others voting in favor.

3. Collaborative Safety Learning Communities, Scope of Work Proposal

The director told the board that the Traverse County Child and Youth Collaborative contributed \$1,500.00 to our Collaborative Safety training, and the probation director has training money he is also considering contributing. The director was pleased that

they seemed interested in the training, since it was the school and sheriff that made the motion and second on the collaborative board.

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

ADJOURN: 9:50am

Next meeting: July 16, 2024 @ 9:00AM

Attested to by:

Stacy Hennen/Director

Mark Gail/Board Chair