

**Traverse County Board of Commissioners**  
**Social Service Board Minutes**  
**February 18, 2025**  
**9:00 AM**  
Traverse County Social Services Department  
202 8<sup>th</sup> 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 February 18, 2025. Jerrel Olson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**Members Absent:**

**Other:** Stacy Hennen, Executive Director  
Shelly Staebler, Supervisor

**CONSENT AGENDA (Routine Actions requiring Board Action):**

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

The director noted that there was an addition to the agenda under Traverse County, Child Support Information,

1) \$45.00 from Ave Maria Ladies Guild (1/21/2025) / Families and Children in Need

Approval of Agenda, Minutes of Previous Meeting and Donations were presented. Upon a motion by Commissioner Schmidt, second by Commissioner Metz, and carried unanimously, the amended agenda, December minutes, and donations to the agency were approved.

**CASELOAD TOTALS:** Reviewed.

	01/31/24	01/31/25
Social Services (Workgroups)	74	76
Income Maintenance	672	660
Child Support	61	58
Child Care Assistance - Cases	6	4
Child Care Assistance - Providers	6	4
Totals	819	802

**OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS:**

The executive director reviewed and discussed the out-home placement numbers. We have ten children in placement via social services. We have seven children in non-relative care, one in relative or kin foster care, one in supervised independent living, and one in supervised independent living/education.

**A. Placements:**

1. Total - 10
2. Social Services - 10
3. Corrections – 0

**FISCAL REVIEW:**

**A. Cash Balances:**

- Cash Balance as of 01/31/2021: \$ 1,650,691.85
- Cash Balance as of 01/31/2022: \$ 1,751,982.88
- Cash Balance as of 01/31/2023: \$ 2,150,123.16
- Cash Balance as of 01/31/2024: \$ 2,131,932.65
- Cash Balance as of 01/31/2025: \$ 1,675,995.31

**DISCUSSION/DECISION:**

**A. Budget:**

1. The executive director discussed the January 2025 Financial Summary with the board. We are \$455,937.34 under where we were at this time last year in our cash balance. This should gradually balance out to a lower number from when it was taken out of the levy in 2024, but for now it is lower than last year. We are 8% through the year, we are 6% spent and at 11% revenue. Our revenue is higher because since our account tech returned from leave she has caught up our 2024 medical assistance and targeted case management billing. The director noted that in 2024 we had no county burials and no detox bills. We have currently have no county burials for 2025.

**B. DHS Updates:**

**2. Governor Budget**

The executive director discussed The Governor's budget for 2026. The budget proposal has concerns for all counties within it. The Governor would like counties to pay 5% of residential, integrated community support, and customized living waiver expenses from the State to the County. The current split is 50% federal, 50% State. It would be 50% federal, 45% state, 5% County. A part of this will be at Horizon Public Health with the waivers. This budget also increases the cost shift from 22.95% to 50% for the Behavioral health fund to counties. It also increases the cost shift from 10% or 25% to 40% for Minnesota State Sex Offender Program patients to counties. Making Competency Restoration a county cost, it is currently undefined. Moving all non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) to the State and one provider and moving all prescriptions to straight Medical Assistant and removing them from Prepaid Medical Assistant Programs. The board talked about the financial ramifications for counties and what action steps they could take. The director gave the board a 1-page sheet that outlined all of the costs to Traverse County, at least as we know it now. The annual levy increase would be a minimum of \$394,688.97, which on our 2025 social services levy would be a 39.65% levy increase. This does not include the projected MAAFP costs for Western Prairie and Traverse County of \$890,911 that we determined based on the questions asked by the Legislative Budget Office in 2024.

**C. Traverse County Updates:**

**a) DHS Letter**

The executive director discusses a letter received from the Department of Human Services Commissioner letting us know that our fiscal department reported 32 major quarterly reports on time and submitted them on time to the Department of Human Services. Our fiscal department continues to strive for excellence as our agency continues to strengthen.

**b) Qualified Individual Contract**

The executive director presented a contract for a qualified individual. We need a qualified individual to do an assessment if we determine a residential placement may be needed. This is primarily used for children's mental health. We don't have very many of

these, many years we will have zero. The contract before you is an hourly rate that we pay only if we engage in the service. The hourly rate is set by the State so isn't really a negotiation. Upon a motion by Commissioner Metz second by Commissioner Nelson, the motion carried unanimously.

c) **LSS Letter of Support**

The executive director discussed a letter of support for Lutheran Social Services (LSS). Traverse County is providing a letter of support to LSS in applying for a grant to build capacity in providers in our region for children 0-5. We were asked to provide one to The Village in Alexandria too, we will likely provide a similar one. We're fortunate to have two providers seeking it in our area.

d) **Licensed Family Child Care**

The executive director discussed the following for families who are current providers and would like to be a licensed provider or a non-licensed provider. Gale a Case Aide in Traverse County works with individuals and families to provide education on becoming a licensed provider. Providers may be eligible for Financial Assistance and other programs including the Child and Adult Care Food Program, First Children's Finance and West Central Initiative. Currently there are six licensed family childcare providers in Traverse County.

e) **Child Care Assistance Program**

The executive director discussed The Child Care Assistance Program. Gale a Case Aide in Traverse County works with families to help pay for childcare costs for all children aged 12 and younger, and for special needs children through age 14. The childcare being used must be pre-approved and the parent(s) must be working 20 or more hours per week at minimum wage or higher, job searching, or going to school. There is no limit on how long a family may receive Child Care Assistance as long as the family income is within the income guidelines for the family's size, the child is age-eligible, the family cooperates with child support (if required), and provides the required verifications (income, citizenship, activity, etc.). There are six programs to help families Minnesota Family Investment Plan (MFIP), Diversionary Work Program (DWP), Transition Year (TY), Transition Year Extension (TYE) Basic Sliding Fee Portability Pool (BSF) and Basic Sliding Fee.

f) **Child Support Option**

The executive director discussed with the board that Child Support would either need to stay with Traverse County or stay with Western Prairie Human Services. Traverse County currently has one child support worker who works 50% on child support and 50% as a legal secretary for Traverse County. Traverse County would need to make several changes to keep the current child support cases. The current child support officer has made it clear she wishes to stay with Traverse County regardless of what decision the board makes and there is an adequate amount of work in the county attorney's office for her to be a full-time legal secretary. The personnel committee has been looking into that option and it could be done without changing the staff's pay grade or scale. Western Prairie Human Services currently have staff to absorb Traverse County Child Support cases. After further discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Schmidt to table this item until next month, with a second motion made by Commissioner Metz, the motion carried unanimously.

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

ADJOURN 10:07 am

Next meeting: March 18th, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

Attested to by:

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Stacy Hennen/Director

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Jerrel Olson, Chair