

Traverse County Board of Commissioners

Social Service Board Minutes

March 18, 2025

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 March 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
Kari Rude, Deputy Director/Human Resources
Shelly Staebler, Supervisor

CONSENT AGENDA (Routine Actions requiring Board Action):

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

1) \$45.00 from Ave Maria Ladies Guild (2/20/2025) / 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 Nelson, and carried unanimously, the amended agenda, December minutes, and donations to the agency were approved.

CASELOAD TOTALS: Reviewed.

	02/29/24	02/28/25
Social Services (Workgroups)	73	73
Income Maintenance	686	627
Child Support	63	59
Child Care Assistance - Cases	4	3
Child Care Assistance - Providers	6	4
Totals	832	766

OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS:

The executive director reviewed and discussed the out-home placement numbers. We have eleven 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, one in juvenile corrections and one in supervised independent living/education. The director did note that we have placed a lot of kids in March and we should expect to see larger numbers in March.

A. Placements:

1. Total - 11
2. Social Services - 10
3. Corrections – 1

FISCAL REVIEW:

A. Cash Balances:

- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2021: \$ 1,596,322.91
- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2022: \$ 1,771,729.97
- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2023: \$ 2,188,307.14
- Cash Balance as of 02/29/2024: \$ 2,065,474.16
- Cash Balance as of 02/28/2025: \$ 1,724,662.73

DISCUSSION/DECISION:

1. Budget:

A. The executive director discussed the February 2025 Financial Summary with the board. We are \$340,811.43 below where we were at this time last year in our cash balance. At 17% through the year the overall budget is 14% expenditure and 26% revenue. We received fourth quarter revenue which came in higher than expected. That is why the revenue is showing high compared to last year. We have currently had no county burials for 2025.

2. DHS Updates:

A. Medicaid in Minnesota

The executive director discussed the awareness of Medicaid and Community Impact. Medicaid makes an impact on our communities and investing in Medicaid invests in our communities. Having good hospitals and clinics that bring in good healthcare providers benefits our communities by making them desirable to live in, grow in and age in. Providing infrastructure, jobs and healthy communities. Medicaid provides support for substance use disorders and mental health services, hopefully reducing crisis situations. For our communities it pays for assisted living and nursing home facilities, allowing our elderly to remain in their current communities close to friends and family, and provides job opportunities. Medicaid matters, we encourage our board members to reach out to their legislation as Medicaid impacts of your communities when funding is being reviewed to cut services, rates and coverage. The director reviewed the data given to us by the Department of Human Service that indicated that in 2023 there were \$7 million dollars in Medicaid and Minnesota Care dollars spent in Traverse County, which is \$2,334 per capita in Traverse County.

B. 2025 Association of MN Counties Legislative

The executive director discussed the AMC conference she attended. AMC supports new state investments in creating a comprehensive mental health continuum of care to address Minnesota's mental health crisis facing those in community and in our justice system. Nearly \$800 million is the estimated cost to add the 350 beds and to come into compliance with the 48-Hour Rule expectations.

3. Traverse County Updates:

A. Traverse County Child Support

The executive director discussed with the board at last board meeting that Child Support would either need to stay with Traverse County or with Western Prairie Human Services. A decision was made to move Child Support to Western Prairie Human Services in 2026 along with all the other services. The director thanked the Coordinator and personnel committee for ensuring that the staff who is choosing to move to a full time legal secretary did not lose any benefits and remains on the same pay grade. Upon a motion by Commissioner Schmidt, second by Commissioner Nelson, the motion carried unanimously.

B. 2024 4th Quarter /Annual SNAP Expedited

The executive 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 October-December quarter of 2024 and for all of 2024. The director reminded the board that we were also the only county in MN to achieve this for all four quarters in 2024. Our staff continue to demonstrate their dedication to the people they serve in Traverse County, and we appreciate that and the skill they bring here.

C. Family Resource Center Report

The executive director discussed the Family Resource findings. In 2024, Western Prairie Human Service and Traverse County Social Services received a joint grant award from the Sauer Family Foundation. This grant provided the resources needed to assess their existing family support system (including service gaps) with an eye toward possible development of one or more Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in their area. Western Prairie Human Service and Traverse County Social Services then engaged Human Services Consultant Meghan Mohs to assist with this work. Specifically, the consultant was retained to assist Western Prairie Human Service and Traverse County Social Services with completing this formal Community Needs Assessment with recommendations detailing if, when and where Family Resource Centers might be helpful to area families. Traverse County Human Services findings show that families are lacking the support they need to raise children, activities, services, communications and finding assistance. The executive director requested applying for the developmental grant. Upon a motion by Commissioner Schmidt, second by Commissioner Nelson, the motion carried unanimously.

D. DHS Letter to Commissioners

The executive director went over the audit results of the 2024 Single Audit that our programs were chosen for. The director explained why it was important that we do well in those audits and indicated that our federal funding is dependent on that in the long run. The review found showed that Traverse County is compliant.

F. Electronic In/Out Board (EIO_

The executive director discussed the EIO board and the benefits of having Traverse County employees incorporated with Western Prairie Human Services employees. With this system staff are able to see where other staff members and the management team are located throughout the day. Morris Electronics was able to merge the systems into one at no cost to either county.

G. Outlook 365

The executive director recommended Traverse County purchase a Microsoft Office license for each staff member. The cost is \$276 per month for 12 employees on an annual basis not to exceed \$2500. This will give the Traverse County staff the ability to use Western Prairie Human Services Share Point among other programs. Upon a motion by Commissioner Nelson, second by Commissioner Metz, the motion carried unanimously.

H. Slack

The executive director discussed moving forward with Traverse County staff using the “Slack” app. This app is to inform employees of weather-related announcements, code red announcements, and any work related issues that can’t be done on our computer whether it’s because it’s outside of work hours or there are issues with our computers. Staff can also use the app to communicate with supervisors and team members if they are unavailable for the day. This app is at no cost to the county. The director asked the board for permission to add the Traverse County staff to the WPHS Slack. Upon a motion to approve the request made by commissioner Metz, and a second by Commissioner Schmidt it was unanimously approved that the Traverse staff be added.

- I. The Director updated the board on other items discussed at the technology meeting in March. Among other topics, we discussed:
 - a. The need to eventually migrate the Traverse County VOIP phone numbers to Western Prairie. WPHS will need permission from the Traverse County board to do that. IT is working on an estimate to do that.
 - b. Case Works is something that will need to be combined and transitioned as well. We will need to get a cost on that as well.

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

ADJOURN 9:55 am

Next meeting: April 15th, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

Attested to by:

Stacy Hennen/Director

Jerrel Olson, Chair