

Traverse County Board of Commissioners
Social Service Board Minutes
May 20, 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 May 20, 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 Resource
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 (4/18/2025) / Families and Children in Need

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

CASELOAD TOTALS: Reviewed.

	04/30/24	04/30/25	
Social Services (Workgroups)	64	72	
Income Maintenance	667	637	
Child Support	61	58	
Child Care Assistance - Cases	7	4	
Child Care Assistance - Providers	6	0	
Totals	805	771	

OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS:

The executive director reviewed and discussed the out-home placement numbers. We have fifteen children in placement via social services up from four last month. We have eleven children in non-relative care, one in a trial home visit and three in supervised independent living/education. Next month our numbers will be lower due to reunifications.

A. Placements:

1. Total - 15
2. Social Services - 15
3. Corrections – 0

FISCAL REVIEW:

A. Cash Balances:

- Cash Balance as of 04/30/2021: \$ 1,441,374.33
- Cash Balance as of 04/30/2022: \$ 1,651,609.56
- Cash Balance as of 04/30/2023: \$ 1,986,662.54
- Cash Balance as of 04/30/2024: \$ 1,975,084.46
- Cash Balance as of 04/30/2025: \$ 1,450,080.33

DISCUSSION/DECISION:

1. Budget:

- A. The executive director discussed the April 2025 Financial Summary with the board. We are \$525,004.13 below where we were at this time last year in our cash balance, as we are waiting for funds to come in. At 33% through the year the overall budget is 29% expenditure and 32% revenue, so we are right on track for expenditures, which is what we should watch since revenues come in at all different times of the year. Estate recoveries for 2025 are \$6,250.47. We have currently have one county burial for 2025.

B. State Affordable Housing Aid (SAHA)

The executive director discussed State Affordable Housing Aid that Traverse County received \$197,041 in funds to help prevent homelessness and improve the quality of livable housing in the community. Stevens County HRA is requesting \$60,000 of these funds. The remaining funds, Traverse County would like to use towards homeowners to make improvements to concentrate on energy efficiency and access to water and accessibility into their homes (new front steps with railings). The desire of the board is for the funds to be available to all people living in Traverse County. The board looked at the letter from the Stevens County HRA asking for money retroactively for administration. The Director and supervisor reviewed the original agreement they made with the Stevens County HRA with the board as well as what the HRA gets from HUD per month per unit in administration. The director also noted that the funds are meant to be spent on actual housing needs, not just administrative dollars. Upon a motion by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Schmidt the board approved keeping the funds in Traverse County and declined unanimously to approve Stevens County Request due to a lack of detailed information necessitating a change to their current agreement.

C. Estimate for Front Office Restructure

The executive director discussed the reconstruction of the front office. The front office is not ergonomically designed for employees. This space was meant to be renovated in the remodel that was done last year for the rest of social services but we could not find a contractor who would give us a quote at that time. One issue that held this up is that the large glass window that we have is held up by the counter and we don't want to disrupt that. The reconstruction cost is \$16,000 and would come out

of social services reserves. Upon a motion by Commissioner Nelson, second by Commissioner Metz, and carried unanimously.

2. DHS Updates:

A. Traverse Legislative Info

The executive director discussed the financial impact of the Minnesota Senate proposal, the House proposal, and the Governor's proposal. The director gave the board a document that she had earlier e-mailed and has shared with our local legislators that shows the impact of those bills to the Traverse County Levy. The House bill is the most impactful with the Governor's bill being next and the Senate bill being last. The board and director discussed where we are at in the process of determining a budget.

B. Omnibus Bill Update

The executive director discussed the policy bill and how it will impact us as well as the proposed federal legislation and how that may impact us.

3. Traverse County Updates:

A. Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Student Assistance Services Contract

The executive director discussed Lutheran Social Services contract. This contract student assistance program is intended to provide assistance to students, parents and school staff. The focus is to provide support in the school setting to students that may be struggling in that environment which negatively impacts their learning and general functioning. The program is intended to provide a short assessment, possible referral to other community resources and short-term counseling as appropriate. The unit cost for providing student assistance services is as follows; \$105.99 per hour for mental health professional/clinical trainee services or \$80.34 per hour for mental health practitioner services. Upon a motion by Commissioner Nelson, second by Commissioner Schmidt, the contract was approved unanimously.

B. DHS Letter

The executive director discussed a letter from DHS regarding the fiscal department meeting 32 quarterly report requirements in 2024.

D. Federal Tax Information (FTI) Report Due

The executive director discussed that Traverse county is due for a federal tax information (FTI) audit. The executive director strongly suggested that Traverse County Social Service be in compliance with the laws regarding FTI. The IRS is doing site inspections in greater Minnesota. The Executive director talked about the fact that this compliance period is starting January 1, 2026 so this will need to go to the Western Prairie Board too and they will have to be ok with the compliance. FTI is not only child support but also income maintenance information and what is at risk is the 66% federal funding for child support and 50% federal funding for medical assistance and SNAP that we receive.

E. 2024 Traverse County Performance Report for Cash Assistance and SNAP Timeliness Measure

The executive director discussed the cash assistance and SNAP timeliness report for 2024. This measure looks at the percentage of approved applications for which benefits were issued within mandated timelines. The included programs are regular SNAP, MFIP, DWP, Refugee Cash Assistance, Minnesota Supplemental Aid, General Assistance, and Group Residential Housing. The measure uses the difference between the application date and the date of the first issuance made for each program approved on the application. Traverse county meet all measures at 100%.

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

ADJOURN 9:58am

Next meeting: June 17th, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

Attested to by:

Stacy Hennen/Executive Director

Jerrel Olson, Chair