



SOUTHWEST HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
GOVERNING BOARD

MINUTES

Date: January 17, 2024
Place: Lyon County Government Center
Commissioners Room
Marshall, Minnesota

Opened: 10:48 a.m.
Adjourned: 11:54 a.m.

The monthly meeting of the Governing Board for Southwest Health and Human Services was held on Wednesday, January 17, 2024 in the Commissioners Room in the Lyon County Government Center Marshall, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Burger.

Members present:	Jeane Anderson	Todd Draper
	Gary Crowley	Greg Burger
	Steve Hauswedell	Doug Nagel
	Maydra Maas	Jackie Meier
	Suanne Ohme	Rick Wakefield
	Mic Vandever	Dennis Welgraven
	Jim Salfer	Dan Wildermuth
	Lois Schmidt	Gary Overgaard

Members absent: Joan Jagt
Les Nath

Staff present:	Carol Biren	Chantelle Fogelson
	Monica Christianson	Nancy Walker
	Lisa DeBoer	Beth Wilms
	Jennifer Nelson	Ashley VanOverbeke
	Cindy Nelson	Ann Orren
	Chris Cauwels	William Toulouse

P. Call to Order

Q. Election of Officers

1. Elect Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for Governing Board
Elections for Chair and Vice Chairperson were held during the Human Services Board. Greg Burger was elected Chairperson and Gary Crowley was elected Vice Chair.
2. Appointment of Executive Committee Members
Chairperson Burger (Rock), Commissioner Crowley (Lyon), Commissioner Wakefield (Redwood) Commissioner Nagel (Pipestone), Commissioner Welgraven (Murray), Commissioner VanDeVere (Lincoln) were appointed for Executive Committee members.
3. Appointment of Finance Committee members
Commissioner Welgraven, Chairperson Burger, Commissioner Wildermuth were appointed for the finance Committee.
4. Appointment of Personnel Committee members
Commissioner Wakefield, Commissioner Welgraven and Chairperson Burger were appointed for the Personnel Committee members.
5. Appointment of Insurance Committee members
Commissioner Salfer was appointed as the Insurance Committee member.
6. Appointment of Recording Secretary
Chantelle Fogelson was appointed as the Recording Secretary.

R. Consent Agenda-

Chairperson Burger asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were two addition items. One discussion item was Bill Toulouse, our agency attorney, giving an update on work that is being done. There was one decision item, asking for three new positions. Chairperson Burger asked if anyone had a conflict of interest to identify. None were identified. He asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the December 20, 2023 meeting. None were identified. Motion by Commissioner Wildermuth, second by Commissioner Draper to approve the agenda and the board minutes as presented with changes. The motion carried unanimously.

S. Financials-

Chairperson Burger asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the financial report as given during the Human Services Board meeting. There were none. Motion by Commissioner VanDeVere, second by Commissioner Welgraven to approve the financial report as brought forward by the Human Services and Community Health Boards. The motion carried unanimously.

T. Human Resources Statistics

Director Wilms deferred the Human Services Statistic to discussion item number two.

U. Discussion/Information Items-

1. Bill Toulouse
Bill Toulouse, our agency attorney, came to the board to provide an update on the work he does for the agency. The law firm has been representing our agency since the 90's; they are the general agency council. The law firm does cover various matters including employees, litigation, and any ongoing questions that supervisors may have. Bill also is working with

accounting on probate issues. They also review contracts from the Mn Dept of Human Services and vendors. The law office is located in Marshall at Quarnstrom and Doering Law Office. Bill is available for anyone that has any questions or concerns and values our relationship.

2. Human resources year-end report

Deputy Director, Nancy Walker, and Human Resources Specialist, Monica Christianson, came forward to give an updated report of year end and quarterly statistics. As of the morning of Board there were seven open positions. In 2023 the days to fill an open position was thirty three days, however Public Health has had some open positions for a few years and that will affect the the data. There were 59 new hires in 2023 and of those 15 were internal. There were 35 staff that left the agency in 2023 which does calculate to a 15.5% turnover rate. Current open positions are five Public Health Nurses, one Adult Mental Health Social Worker, and one Eligibility Worker. Human Resources Specialist Christianson stated that they are working with outside consultants to try and get the harder to fill positions filled. Staff that have left the agency and returned, also known as "Boomerang" employees, since January 2022 have been seven. Deputy Director Walker does reach out to new hires at three and nine months to gain feedback. Common themes for new hires are they feel that staff and supervisory are very helpful. Another common comment from new hires is that time has gone by fast and they are busy. At the end of 2023 the agency did go to a new program called CaseWorks and new employees feel that has leveled the playing field and they learning with their teammates versus alone.

They do feel appreciated here at SWHHS and each day they do learn more about their jobs. Human Resources Specialist Christianson talked about how she meets with employees that are leaving the agency and goes through various paperwork.

Employees do have an option to participate in a questioner about why they are leaving the agency and what they enjoyed here. Common themes for this past year that have been brought up include, folks value the agency communication and appreciate everyone's willingness to work together. They did value the relationships they had with their clients. Reasons folks left were personal, pay and more flexibility. They would like to see more one on one meetings with their supervisor or staff. They would also appreciate more emphasis and training on worker safety and what to expect when you are going into a home for a visit.

Deputy Director, Walker ended with an outlook for 2024. She does expect some cleanup verbage from the legislature on ESST (Emergency Sick and Sick Time) that started on January 1, 2024. They will continue to fill positions as soon as they can and hoping the pay increase and hoping the pay increases and the benefit package for 2024 helps slow down the turnover. They will continue to monitor the workforce landscape and make recommendations on how to make the work environment better. Lastly, they will be watching upcoming developments with Minnesota Paid Family Medical Leave.

3. MCIT Certificate of Excellence

Director Wilms brought forward the MCIT Certificate of Excellence that the agency received for 2023. This was received for our outstanding loss ratio under 50%.

V. Decision Items-

1. Lacey Hubers, Office Support Specialist, Sr., probationary appointment (12 months), \$17.32 hourly, effective 1/8/2024- Pipestone Office
2. Kelli Buysse, Lead Eligibility Worker, probationary appointment (6 months), \$25.00 hourly, effective 1/8/2024- Marshall Office

3. Kevin Spivey, Information Technology Specialist, probationary appointment (12 months), \$32.00 hourly, effective 1/22/2024- Marshall Office
4. Christine Gieseke, Eligibility Worker, probationary appointment (12 months), \$20.07 hourly, effective 1/22/2024- Luverne office

Motion by Commissioner VanDeVere second by commissioner Draper to approve the probationary appointments as presented. The Motion carried unanimously.

5. Hiring request for Case Aide Parent Educator Position
Director, Wilms came forward on behalf of Cindy Nelson to request a new position that was not in the budget. MN Department of Human Services notified us that our opioid allocation funds could work with parents and families that have substance use disorders. This position would not use tax levy dollars as it would be using the grant. With our out of home placements we are finding a lot of families that are utilizing substances. Cindy is looking to expand her staff with this position as the funds cannot be used for a program we already have in place. This worker would provide support for families that have substance abuse, provide education on child development and child safety. Emphasis on basic parenting education along budgeting, scheduling, meal planning and nutrition. This position would also teach and inform appropriate forms of discipline. This worker would supervise parent and child visits along with transportation. Motion to approve a new Case Aide Parent Education position by Commissioner VanDeVere second by Commissioner Crowley.
6. Hiring request for Communication Specialist Position
Public Health Director, Carol Biren, came forward to request a new position that has been budgeted for through the foundational grant. The Communication Specialist position does tie into everything that Public Health does. This position would help communicate about the new ordinances, immunizations, mental health, and all the things that help us build a better relationship with our community. This position will also help with the recruitment of open positions. Motion to approve a new Communication Specialist position by Commissioner Wildermuth second by Commissioner Crowley.
7. Hiring request for Emergency Preparedness Position
Public Health Director, Carol Biren, came forward to request a new position that has been budgeted for through the emergency preparedness funding grant. Currently we do have one person that holds this position, however for all six counties Biren is looking to add another. This position would be preparing plans for any emergency that may arise. Motion to approve a new Emergency Preparedness position by Commissioner VanDeVere, second by Commissioner Hauswedell.
8. Reschedule June 19th Board meeting
Director, Wilms brought forward to the board that the June 19th Board meeting falls on a holiday and needs to be rescheduled. June board has been rescheduled to June 26th, 2024. Motion to approve new board date by Commissioner Wildermuth second by Commissioner VanDeVere.
9. Request to Renew Microsoft Software Contract
IT Director, Chris Cauwels, came to the board to request to renew the Microsoft Software contract for the servers. Microsoft has two buying options, one where you can buy the software outright and the second option is to lease or rent the program. Cauwels is asking to go with the SA agreement that keeps us up to date for three years totaling \$3780.00. This

quote also gives us unlimited server space. Cauwels is also requesting in regards to the Caseworks server's software insurance which is \$8,102.55 a year. Cauwels is requesting \$11,882.55 for software renewals. Motion to approve \$11,882.55 for software renewals by Commissioner Wildermuth second by Commissioner Meier.

10. Donations

- Donation of many new blankets for foster children by BMO Harris Bank, Marshall.
- Donation of new shoes, socks, hat and mittens to be used for anyone in need by Goodwill, Marshall.
- Donation of 50 crocheted kitchen towels for anyone in need by Bonnie Preuss.
- Donation of 66+ sets of pajamas and books for each child in foster care in our six counties by Living Word Church, Marshall.
- Donation of 60+ books donated for foster children in our six counties by Courtney Brockberg.
- Anonymous donation of (6) \$10.00 Wal-Mart gift cards to be used for foster children in need.
- Donation of diapers, wipes, clothes, toys, crayons, and coloring books for anyone local in need by Tattle Tales Boutique, Tracy.
- Anonymous donation of mittens to be used for anyone in need.
- Donation of hand-made fleece blankets by St Anne's Catholic Church, 8th grade class, to be used for Children's services throughout SWHHS.
- Donation of many children books from Dan Sprengeler to any child in need.
- Donation of many boys' clothes sizes 10-12 through 14 and size 1 boy shoes to any boy in need of clothing by Kristi St. Aubin.
- Donation of Pizza and Wings for 2 circle sessions by KB's in Ghent.

Motion by Commissioner VanDeVere second by Commissioner Crowley to accept the donation and send thank you note for the donations. The Motion carried unanimously.

11. Contracts

- **Client Community Services Inc (Worthington, MN)** – 01/01/24 to 12/31/24; provide non-waivered client semi-independent living skills (SILS); \$35.89/hour (no increase) (renewal).
Fiscal Note: 2023 \$8,428; 2022 \$11,185; 2021 \$14,392; 2020 \$14,917; 2019 \$18,138
- **Divine House Inc (Willmar, MN)** – 01/01/24 to 12/31/24; provide non-waivered client semi-independent living skills (SILS); \$28.74/hour (no increase) (renewal).
Fiscal Note: 2023 \$2,826; 2022 \$6,354; 2021 \$10,008; 2020 \$11,985; 2019 \$10,900
- **Northwestern Minnesota Juvenile Center (Beltrami County)** – 01/01/24 to 12/31/24; home school and detention center to juvenile clients; non-secure \$298/day (\$10/day increase), secure \$308/day (\$8/day increase) (renewal). *Fiscal Note: 2023 \$56,239.98*

Motion by Commissioner Nagel second by Commissioner Hauswedell to approve the contracts as listed. The motion carried unanimously.

V. **Adjournment**

Chairperson Burger asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 11:54 a.m.

Approved Date 3/21/24

Authorized Gary Crowley

Chairperson, SWHHS Governing Board

Charlene Foxelson

Recording Secretary, SWHHS Governing Board

Attest: Beckmire
Director