

CASS COUNTY HUMAN SERVICE ZONE BOARD MEETING
November 1, 2021

MINUTES

With quorum present, interim co-Director Ms. Jacobson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Present: Chad Peterson (via Teams), Mary Scherling, Brian Hagen, Rick Steen, Duane Breitling, Jim Kapitan

Absent:

Presenter: Kim Jacobson, Human Services Zone Interim Co-Director; Lynn Flieth, Human Services Zone Interim Co-Director; Robert Wilson, County Administrator

I. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Steen made a motion to approve the September 7, 2021 Board minutes. Ms. Scherling seconded it. Motion carried.

II. Introduction of Incoming Zone Board members

Since the last time the Zone Board met recommendations for Zone Board members were given to the County Commissioners and were selected for the 2022 Human Service Zone Board. To help with the transition of the new board they were invited to attend today's board meeting. This transition period is so the new board members can see where the Zone is at and what challenges they are facing.

An introduction and welcoming of the 2022 Human Service Zone Board members was done. Reappointed members include: Brian Hagen; Commissioner Rick Steen; and Commissioner Duane Breitling. New members include: Carey Fry; Dan Madler; Julie Haugen; and Michelle Kommer.

III. Review of Interim Co-Directors Assessments

Having two interim co-directors through this transition period has been appreciated. Each one has been putting in 30 to 32 hours a week in Cass County Human Service Zone (CCHSZ) in addition to their own zones. Both took a strategic overlook of CCHSZ to see where we are at; where we can go and how we can make our zone better. They got a strong understanding of the challenges we are facing.

In October the interim co-directors each submitted written assessments of the CCHS Zone, including areas where improvement is needed and related recommendations.

Mr. Breitling made a motion that the Cass County Human Service Zone wholeheartedly supports the recommendations of the interim co-directors. On discussion, it was felt that "wholeheartedly" be removed from the motion as it seemed presumptive. Mr. Steen seconded the motion with the removal of "wholeheartedly". Mr. Hagen suggested to start looking at next steps as well. Hearing no other discussion, motion passed unanimously.

IV. Hiring Committee Appointment, Processes and Notice.

The job posting for the Zone Director closed on October 29, 2021. The Department of Human Services will review the applications and compare them to job qualifications. They will then be passed to the interview panel. The panel is required to be made up of equal number of representatives from both DHS and the Cass County Human Service Zone Board. There can be two or three individuals from each. Once candidates are interviewed, the panel will make recommendations and forward on to DHS for approval. With DHS' approval, the decision will be recognized at Cass County Human Service Zone Board meeting on December 6, 2021.

Mr. Steen made a motion to appoint three members from Cass County Human Service Zone Board to the interview panel. Mr. Kapitan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion on the three members of the Zone Board that would be a part of the interview panel. Interviews are scheduled to take place November 18 and 19, 2021. It was asked if the interim co-directors would be able to sit in on the interviewing process. Because they are members of the Zone Board, this would be an option.

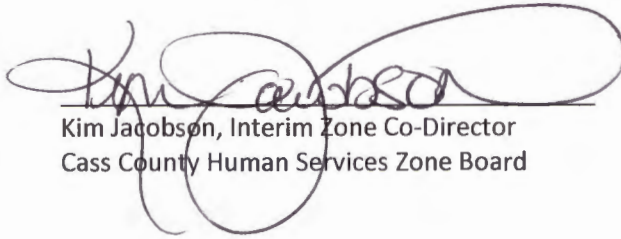
Mr. Breitling made a motion to appoint Mr. Hagen, Mr. Steen, and Mr. Breitling to the interview panel. Ms. Scherling seconded. On discussion, Mr. Hagen hoped that both Ms. Jacobson and Ms. Flieth would be able to attend and provide feedback to the interview panel. Hearing no other discussion, motion passed unanimously.

Due to time, Mr. Wilson stated the Facilities Update could be addressed at the Building Committee before the next Commission meeting. Ms. Scherling suggested that before it is brought back, that the Eide Bailly study be reviewed so that the changes made in the past are not undone.

Mr. Steen made a motion to table rest of agenda items until next board meeting. Mr. Kapitan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

V. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.



Kim Jacobson, Interim Zone Co-Director
Cass County Human Services Zone Board

Blair Hodge, Recorder

Addendum to Chapter 300 of the Cass County Human Service Zone General Assistance Manual.

The following refer to policies outlined in Chapter 300 of CCHSZ General Assistance Manual.

302.: No Change

302.1: No Change

302.2: No Change

302.3: No Change

302.4: No Change

302.5: No Change

302.6: No Change

303: No Change

304: No Change

305: No Change

306: No Change

307: No Change

308: Add "Repairs for Vehicles will be referred to *Fix It Forward* or any other local assistance programs which offer such services".

309: No Change

310: No Change

311: No Change

312: No Change

313: No Change

314: add to 'the maximum of' the term "\$250.00 per unit/individual per calendar year".

"POSSIBLE ADDENDUMS/GUIDANCE FOR CHAPTER 300: NEED".

Cass County Human Service Zone recommends not providing any of the additional services here listed.

Cass County Human Service Zone

OPERATING REPORT November 2021

Personnel:

Recruitment is at various stages for the following positions:

- Eligibility Worker I (2 positions open)
 - Posting will close December 6, 2021.
- Family Service Specialist III - Case Management Social (2 positions)
 - Posting will close December 8, 2021.
- Family Service Specialist III – Child Protection
 - Posting closed November 21, 2021. Interviews are underway for this position.

Heather Collins will join the agency on January 3, 2022 as the new Executive Staff Officer (formerly Administrative Service Manager position).

Family Services:

October we were able to recognize staff for years of service for the first time! Raelyn Soltis, 15 years, Lyndsey Tungseth, Ashley Lill, and Megan Dahl, 3 years of service.

Kim Jacobson worked with the state and our IT department to order Surfaces and the equipment that accompanies it so that employees have the ability to actively participate in virtual trainings and meetings. This will also allow employees more flexibility to be able to work in the field when assisting families.

Our community partner, YouthWorks, has made some policy changes which may impact how other zones are able to access the YouthWorks Shelter. The other zones are relying on our staff to be available to case manage the children in the shelter in Fargo.

October is the beginning of the Christmas Wish List that Lyndsey Tungseth coordinates for our division. Area businesses contact our agency looking for children or families to help brighten the holidays by donating presents. The children and families that receive the donations are the children and families that we work with through the year.

In October there was a significant increase in the number of child protection reports that were assigned. Typically, in September there is a rise due to school resuming, however this year we did not see the increase until October. The number of children that were placed into protective custody was down from the previous two months.

Kim Jacobson assisted in developing (2) 0.5 FTE trainer positions within our division. These positions are not new positions, rather they are reassigning job responsibilities with the existing positions within the Child Protection and Case Management units. The goal of reassigning job responsibilities to have trainers is to support new staff in their onboarding process, to have standardized consistent training across the division for new and existing staff, which will build competency/confidence for staff to provide a high level of service to children and families.

Economic Assistance:

Rebecca Askins joined the Division on November 1, 2021, upon being selected to fill the Supervisory position vacated by Kayia English. Unfortunately, several Staff members have left or

will soon be leaving. Susan Gailfus will retire on January 3, 2022, after serving as an Eligibility Specialist for over 28 years. Audrey Ganje resigned on November 24 and Massi Faizee will leave us on November 30 to join Lutheran Immigration and Naturalization Service. Interviews have been conducted for two of these positions as well as the replacement for Becky Welsh who now occupies the Eligibility Worker II position vacated upon the retirement of Jennifer Emery.

As of November 1, 2021, 14,070 cases are being managed in SPACES. In preparation for the changes anticipated to be a part of Social Service Redesign, each Eligibility Worker has taken on the responsibility of managing both the Energy Assistance Program [LIHEAP] as well as the HCBS (Home and Community Based Services coverage group) for those families they already serve. Doing so has resulted in a recalculation of the HCBS case numbers.

EW staff continue their efforts related to Social Service Redesign with bi-weekly, virtual meetings held with Zones across the state while the TANF Supervisor and Lead Worker continue work with CFS (the office of Children and Family Services) and their "Peer to Peer" program; this with the goal of reinvigorating TANF; a program that has all but lost its significance as a support for single parent families. Yet to be received are the results of the survey distributed by NDDHS to all households currently receiving TANF as well as those who did so since April 2021.

Currently 21 Eligibility Staff are managing their work remotely while several others find themselves both telecommuting and occasionally on-site.

Applications filed for the 1915i program continue their gradual increase. While CMS (the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services) has yet to rule on our efforts to expand utilization by lowering the requisite mean-score from 50 to 25 points, local staff continue to actively search out community service providers to enroll in the program.

The re-write of the General Assistance Policy has been completed and will be presented for Board Action. The goal to standardize this program across all Zones has resulted in some changes to our rules related to Indigent Burial.

In October 2021, Eligibility Staff

- 1) were assigned 871 applications, 865 of which were filed through the Self-Service Portal [SSP] and the Federally Facilitated Marketplace [FFM] along with 908 applications for services extended through the Energy Program. In addition, some 2,891 Periodic reviews were processed for a total of 4,670 filing.
- 2) managed a total of 12,761 Health Care cases. Local staff currently support the access to health care of more than 20,000 individuals in our community.
- 3) issued \$861,155 in SNAP benefits to 5,095 families comprised of c. 12,298 individuals.
- 4) Authorized 2021 YTD benefits in Energy Assistance totaling \$1,501,560 to some 3,100 families. Unfortunately, details related to the monthly reimbursement to Cass County Utility providers remains unavailable.
- 5) supported 173 families through the TANF, TANF Kinship Care, and TANF Diversion / Transition Programs. Assistance in basic grants, Special Items of Need, and Supportive Services that further efforts of participants in securing employment totaled \$69,469.00
- 5) reimbursed Cass County Child Care Providers \$861,155.00 for the care of 1,096 children living in the homes of some 700 families. Cass County manages nearly 38% of all Child Care Assistance Program cases in ND and authorizes nearly 40% of the Program's Funds.

CASS COUNTY HUMAN SERVICE ZONE

STATISTICAL REPORT

2021

CLIENT SERVICES	2020			2020			2020			2020			Program Description				
	JAN	FEB	MAR	1st Q. Avg	APR	MAY	JUN	2nd Q. Avg	JUL	AUG	SEP	3rd Q. Avg		OCT	NOV	DEC	4th Q. Avg
FAMILY SERVICES																	
Child Protection Reports																	
CPS Assigned	151	127	174	151	141	150	94	73	84	96	97	87	133			102	CPS = Child Protection Services
CPS Closed	79	65	109	115	107	121	138	87	104	107	84	70	77			69	
CPS Admin Assessments	101	115	189	144	192	171	160	137	128	150	205	134	167			130	
Total FBS Case Management	251	266	257	246	270	263	253	230	257	262	266	257	256			262	FBS = Family Based Services-Foster Care/In-home
FBS cases assigned	9	18	21	16	19	20	7	4	15	16	21	20	11			10	
FBS cases closed	1	4	8	7	6	3	1	10	3	2	6	3	7			8	
Parent Aide Services	41	33	36	30	34	33	35	35	37	33	32	39	39			42	
In-Home Case Management	25	33	20	9	17	17	21	24	23	24	16	27	19			20	Short term-intensive case management
CC children served	46	66	39	34	32	27	52	37	56	47	40	43	44			27	CC = Crisis Case Management
Total Cass Custodial Children	225	235	251	209	261	254	240	176	231	256	257	218	254			223	
Total Child Placements	192	227	221	211	238	227	222	188	222	206	206	218	228			225	
Entered Placement	4	12	16	13	16	19	3	3	11	14	17	15	11			8	
Exit Placement	17	8	16	9	7	11	6	11	12	12	21	5	10			15	
Kinship Placement	70	73	76	55	77	69	61	45	68	65	67	56	68			69	Kinship = placed with Relatives
Residential Placements	4	---	---	6	---	---	---	5	---	---	---	5	---			6	Therapeutic/psychiatric secured placement
Foster Care Payments	---	---	---	141	---	---	---	131	---	---	---	143	---			152	Foster Care Homes
Total Post TPR Children	50	58	62	71	66	63	63	68	54	63	62	265	56			55	
Total Term. Parent Rights	4	4	6	0	1	1	0	2	3	6	7	3	1			1	
Subsidized Adoptions	492	---	---	486	---	---	---	486	---	---	---	484	---			494	Special needs Foster Care children adopted
Safety / Permanency Funding	3	8	11	6	2	3	8	4	2	7	3	0	4			5	
Foster Care License	90	87	85	90	87	91	90	89	91	92	91	89	90			90	County Foster Care Homes
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE																	
TANF Grants	215	213	201	165	191	189	193	181	196	206	193	177	173			308	TANF = Temporary Aid to Needy Families
Food Stamps	5,354	5,322	5,416	5,106	5,350	5,283	5,214	5,274	5,263	5,261	5,149	4,853	5,095			5,182	No referred to as SNAP
Health Care, All Coverage Group	*13,290	*13,312	*13,436	*	*12,736	12,664	12,550	12,448	12,377	12,673	12,966	12,849	12,761			11,988	Non-ACA
HCBS/Medicaid Waiver	436	408	364	527	~886	816	959	554	1,036	1,070	1,065	550	676			493	Home/Community Based Services (Medicaid for Special Needs Kids)
Child Care Assistance Program	850	833	883	876	899	918	941	923	995	1,041	1,067	877	1,065			923	Assisting families with cost of Child Care
General Assistance - Applications	6	7	9	7	4	4	6	10	4	4	13	6	7			11	Applications for Burial
Burial Approvals	4	7	8	7	2	2	4	6	2	3	9	3	6			8	Burial Applications approved for payment
LIHEAP / Fuel Assistance FY20-18																	
Applications (current period)	176	156	132	191	122	111	85	57	61	51	222	67	908			436	LIHEAP Applications filed and approved/month
Applications (cumulative)	**1,633	**1,789	1,921	2,573	2,043	2,154	2,239	2,412	2,300	2,351	2,573	2,599	908			1,176	A cumulative total for fiscal year (beginning 10/19)
Approvals (cumulative)	1,240	1,417	1,553	1,679	1,643	1,719	1,798	1,935	2,709	^^ 2,709	^^ 2,709	2,007	649			562	Cumulative approvals fiscal year (beginning 10/19)
LIHEAP Pending	13	13	12	20	11	9	10	7	8	-	9	27	259			10	
Children Special Health Services	76	76	76	77	76	76	76	77	<+> 0	-	0	77	-			76	
1915i Applications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	4			-	
New Screenings	1,110	1,101	1,107	1,110	1,124	1,070	1,162	985	1,013	1,116	1,169	1,155	1,779			1,352	New Applications for Economic Assistance Programs
Basic Care	^ 46	^ 45	^ 45	-	^ 45	^ 45	^ 45	-	7	4	4	-	^ 0			-	Management of Basic Care is gradually being absorbed by the State's Long Term Care Unit.
Total Cases Managed	***21,025	21,218	21,604	21,933	20,971	20,849	20,741	21,000	21,540	21,894	22,090	21,454	20,006			20,483	Excludes LIHEAP, HCBS Waiver, and New Screenings
Electronic Applications Received - FFM/SSP	699	646	701	476	631	568	566	634	593	711	603	672	865			972	

* 1 October marks the opening of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). These numbers include 'Regular' and 'Emergency' services as well as Applications for the Summer Cooling Program.

^ All cases for Cass County residents residing in a Basic Care facility are now managed by the State Long Term Care Unit.

~ The sudden increase in HCBS numbers result from recent enhancements to the COGNOS reporting system that identify specific Coverage Groups. The sudden decrease in 10/2021 is the result of problems with that self-same system.

<+> Case Management for Children's Special Health Services has been assumed by DHS. Local efforts now focus on identifying appropriate providers of services for particular medical conditions needing treatment and managing the Referral process.

** The dramatic increase in LIHEAP "approvals" reflects the one-time Pandemic Assistance payment issued to those eligible for traditional Energy Assistance during the 2020 & 2021 FY's.

^^ NOTE: No report of LIHEAP cases approved in August and September is available and so no changes were made to the most recent verified numbers.