

CASS COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD MEETING
September 5, 2017

MINUTES

With quorum present, Chair Bennett called the meeting to order at 2:08 pm.

Present: Vern Bennett, Arland Rasmussen, Chad Peterson, Mary Scherling, Rick Steen, Glenn Ellingsberg, Brian Hagen (via phone)

Presenter: Chip Ammerman, Director

I. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rasmussen made a motion to approve the August 7, 2017 Board minutes. Mr. Steen seconded it. Motion carried.

II. Foster Care Overpayment

Mr. Ammerman distributed a letter received from the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Children and Family Services Division, dated July 27, 2017, which indicates an overpayment of foster care was discovered during an audit process. DHS is requesting Cass County refund foster payment charges due to the language used in a court order regarding a situation dating back to 2009 when a child in need of services was removed from a home. DHS is suggesting that overpayments for this situation be refunded through 2017, in the amount of \$337,612.

Mr. Ammerman discussed Cass County Social Service's letter to DHS dated August 23, 2017. The letter shares additional information obtained during an internal investigation into the overpayment situation. Cass County indicates that changes in procedures made by DHS were not appropriately communicated and therefore, staff were unaware of the revised requirement. Additionally, it is Cass County's opinion that a follow-up court order in 2009 had the appropriate language for the situation and the repayment request to 2017 is not required. Cass County Social Service's has formally requested an appeal of the findings to be heard by Mr. Christopher Jones, Director of the Department of Human Services.

There was discussion with Connie Cleveland, Assistant States Attorney, providing additional information and answering questions. Mr. Peterson indicated that it is possible, if a repayment is required, that the Errors and Omissions insurance policy could be used. Mr. Ammerman stated he would keep the board updated on the situation.

III. Remodeling Update

Mr. Ammerman shared he met with Robert Wilson, County Administrator, and Gene Gartner, Building and Grounds Supervisor, to discuss upcoming remodeling creating additional office space for Social Services. The changes discussed will be completed by the end of 2017 to accommodate new staff being hired in 2018. This includes turning an existing file room into two offices, remodeling an existing supply room into an office, and repurposing two existing offices to make the best use of space. Additional changes, including a remodel to the 2nd floor lobby, will be pursued as funding for the remodeling is available and as time allows.

Mr. Wilson informed the Board that these remodeling requests were included in budget discussions and since the changes are relatively minor, he did not seek approval from the Space and Planning Committee. There was discussion on wiring updates to be completed in the Annex Building, as well as potential use of the existing Detention space in the future.

Mr. Ammerman asked for direction on whether the General Assistance burial files could be destroyed after the typical 7 year retention date; some of the files date back to the early 1940's. There is no retention schedule for GA burials identified in Administrative Code since these files belong to the county. It was decided that the States Attorney should review the current policy and Mr. Ammerman will contact NDACO to gather additional information.

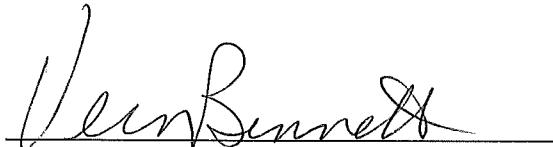
IV. Operations Report

Mr. Ammerman introduced Linda Dorff who was hired as the Family Services Division Manager. Linda has been with Social Services for over 20 years and most recently held the position of Child Protection Supervisor.

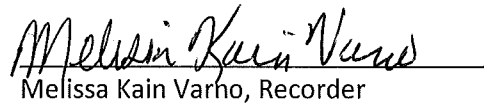
Mr. Steen commented the amount of Federal dollars being provided to Social Services is considerable, \$121,726 year-to-date, which has a large impact on the community.

V. Adjournment

Mr. Peterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ellingsberg seconded it. Motion carried.



Vern Bennett, Chair
Cass County Social Services Board



Melissa Kain Varno, Recorder