

## **Ward County Human Service Zone Board**

### Minutes

February 16, 2021 – 7:30 a.m.

Second Floor-Ward County Commissioner's Chambers

#### **PRESENT:**

Melissa Bliss, Zone Director  
Rich Berg  
Mac McLeod  
Hiedi Folstad-Miller  
John Fjeldahl  
John Pietsch  
Shelly Weppler

#### **ABSENT:** Clayton Fegley

Also present was Karen Schultz, Zone Board Secretary designee.

#### **MOTION:**

It was moved by John Pietsch, seconded by Rich Berg and unanimously carried by the Board that the Agenda for February 16, 2021 be approved.

#### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Mac McLeod and unanimously carried by the Board that the minutes for the regular board meeting of January 5, 2021 be approved.

#### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Rich Berg and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the January , 2021 Expenditures and bills for January 19, February 2 and February 16, 2021.

#### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Rich Berg, seconded by Mac McLeod and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the December, 2020 and January 2021 Budget Recap Expense Reports.

#### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Mac McLeod, seconded by Shelly Weppler and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the December 2020 and January 2021 Budget Revenue Report.

The December 2020 and January 2021 Foster Care Recruitment and Retention report was reviewed. No action was required.

The current meeting date schedule of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:30 am has a conflict with Board Member Clayton Fegley's schedule. This will be addressed at a later WCHSZ Board meeting pending further information that Melissa Bliss will try to obtain from Clayton regarding the situation.

Director Bliss indicated that the contract with Youth Works has been approved at a cost of \$12,500 for 50 days. Melissa added that there may be some legislation proposed to assist statewide so that other communities would be able to provide services to youth across the state. She indicated Youth Works wants to grow the program and is looking towards acquiring additional office space. This led to discussion amongst the Board members regarding the

closure of Lutheran Social Services of ND and how it may affect our agency and the community. Melissa indicated that Ward County HSZ did not have any contracts with LSS but their services were utilized. There will be a lot of services to be absorbed within the community but it is not expected to directly affect our agency. There was positive discussion about the Minot community projects in place to assist the homeless and low income families.

An update on the Covid shelter indicated that no one has been placed in the shelter since January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Emergency Management Director Jen Wiechmann informed Director Bliss that this program will now be 100 % funded by FEMA.

The redesign continues to make progress. Child welfare is currently in the midst of those changes. Economic Assistance is still working towards the process of redesign. Two more positions from the agency have recently gone to a centralized Foster Care Eligibility Unit at the State and are no longer employees of our agency.

Director Bliss informed the Board that the agency continues to pay rent for space in the DVCC building in Kenmare, though we have not had a presence there in almost a year. She received input from the State that it would not be an issue to discontinue our monthly presence there as it is not a full functioning office. Kenmare residents can now obtain services in closer proximity to their community.

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Rich Berg and unanimously carried by the Board to recommend to the Ward County Commission, the closure of the temporary Ward County Human Service Zone office located in Kenmare, upon Commission review.

The Ward County Human Service Zone Roles Chart was not made available to the Zone Board members at this time.

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Rich Berg and unanimously carried by the Board to table the discussion and review of this chart, to the next Ward CHSZ Board Meeting.

Director Bliss indicated that the SNAP review will be completed offsite on March 10<sup>th</sup>. There will be a review of 65 cases which will include questionnaires and interviews with clients. The review team will also be looking at making sure that proper security is in place and civil rights are being protected.

The Board was provided with the 2020 Annual Department Report. As shown in the report, some service numbers are down likely due to Covid while others have seen a rise in numbers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 a.m.

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Melissa Bliss, Ward CHSZ Director

Date

Mac McLeod, Ward CSSZ Board Secretary