

Ward County Human Service Zone Board

Minutes

November 16th, 2021 – 7:30 a.m.

Second Floor-Ward County Commissioner's Chambers

PRESENT:

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

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 November 16th , 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 October 19th , 2021 be approved.

MOTION:

It was moved by Rich Berg, seconded by Shelly Weppler and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the October 2021 Expenditures and bills for November 2nd and November 16th, 2021.

MOTION:

It was moved by Mac McLeod, seconded by Hiedi Folstad-Miller and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the Budget Recap Expense Report for October 2021.

MOTION:

It was moved by Rich Berg, seconded by Shelly Weppler and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the October 2021 Budget Revenue Report.

MOTION:

It was moved by Mac McLeod, seconded by Hiedi Folstad-Miller and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the October 2021 Foster Care Recruitment and Retention report .

Old Business:

Melissa informed the Board that the Covid shelter was used one time this past week. Jen Wiechmann from Emergency Management has agreed to take over the responsibility of making arrangements for those needing placement in the Covid Shelter. There was some discussion as to whether the referrals should go directly to Jen and if this is part of Jen's current job description and how to move forward with that determination.

MOTION:

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by John Pietsch and unanimously carried by the Board that it be recommended to the Ward County Commission that referrals for the emergency Covid Shelter go directly to Jen Weichmann in Emergency Management.

Dir. Bliss informed the Board that the Shelter Care facility was closed temporarily due to illness in the Youth Works staff. The Board was provided with a draft copy of the Youthworks Short-Term Care And Assessment Center (STCAC) Placement Protocol. Discussion was held regarding the paragraph about placement from outside the region with Board members objecting to case management by Ward CHS Zone for placements from outside the region.

MOTION:

It was moved by Rich Berg, seconded by Shelly Weppler and unanimously carried by the Board to remove the Placements from Outside of the Region paragraph on page 2 of the Youth Works STCAC Placement Protocol draft.

Additionally, the rate increase of \$450 per day is to be the same for everyone across the board. Melissa stated that the contract should try to be renegotiated for a better rate for Ward CHS Zone placements.

Melissa confirmed that the Ward County Commissioners need to appoint the Ward County Human Service Zone Board members, however, it does need to be advertised for anyone to apply. It is the desire to have a local legislator on the Board . Board member Shelly Weppler indicated she will ask for this item to be added to the Agenda for the Ward County Commission Meeting taking place today.

At this point a 3 year service award was presented to Amanda Garcia, FSS- Foster Care case manager.

In new business, a copy of the proposed General Assistance Policy to become effective 01/01/22, was provided to the Board members for review. It was noted that not all Zones provide the same assistance. Currently, we are budgeted for burials and miscellaneous emergency services. Referrals are made to many other local entities that can assist with needs of clients.

MOTION:

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Rich Berg and unanimously carried by the Board to approve the document as presented without any addendums for providing additional services.

Director Bliss informed the Board that a new Ward County Human Service Zone Board Director will not be in place prior to year's end. She has been instructed by the State to have an Interim Director in place to sign forms on her behalf, be a point of contact for the State and continue to work closely with the Management team in the best interest of the Agency. It is Melissa's recommendation that Karen Schultz be appointed to this interim position.

MOTON:

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Rich Berg and unanimously carried by the Board to have Karen Schultz appointed as Interim Director for the Ward County Human Service Zone effective 12/01/21.

MOTION:

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by John Pietsch and unanimously carried by the Board to request interim pay for Karen Schultz for the additional duties that will be performed, following Ward County guidelines and policies to cover the period of time she will act as Interim Director.

Melissa indicated that if it is the desire of the Board, she would be willing to come back on a temporary hourly basis to assist the new Ward CHS Zone Director.

Regarding current vacancies within the agency, the FSS-Foster Care interviews will be taking place this week; the Eligibility Worker I position is currently advertised as well as an open Family Service Specialist – In Home position. There is a vacant FSS – CPS position which Melissa will be asking the State for reclassification of this position to an additional HSPA IV in the In Home Unit.

Melissa Bliss expressed thanks to the Ward County Human Service Zone Board and the Ward County Commissioners for her support throughout the years of employment and most recently as Zone Board Director. She additionally was thanked by Shelly Weppler for her service which was supported by the Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

Karen Schultz, Interim Ward CHSZ Director

Date

Mac McLeod, Secretary