

## BAYFIELD COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING

EOC & Virtual  
February 24, 2022

Meeting Notes Only  
Due to a lack of Quorum

**Board Members Present:** Larry Fickbohm, Marty Milanowski (virtual), Jeremy Oswald, David Zepczyk (phone)

**Board Members Not Present:** James Crandall, Stephanie Defoe Haskins, Mark Ludeking, Susan Rosa, Lona Schmidt

**Others Present:** Elizabeth Skulan, Stephanie Eder, Tom Croteau (virtual), Jeanine Spuhler (virtual), Carrie Linder, Sarah Traaholt (virtual), Karen Bodin (virtual), Richard Kamm (virtual), Val Levno (virtual), Mary Dougherty (Core Executive Director)

### Call to Order and Introductions

Due to a lack of a quorum, an official meeting could not be held.

### Opportunity for Public Comment

No Public Comment

### Discussion and Possible Action – Review of the December 7, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Minutes were not reviewed or approved due to a lack of quorum.

### Program Presentation – Annual Satisfaction Survey Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Program, Val Levno, CCS Administrator

Satisfaction and impact surveys were distributed to CCS participants who have been with the program for more than six months. Participants were asked about the quality of service and their impact. Results were compiled and presented. Surveys received a 65% response rate and scored much higher in every domain than the previous survey. Feedback is presented to the local and regional coordination committees for review and any recommendations they may have for improvement.

Last two years have been tough on clients, staff and participants alike. All contracted services were lost during the start of the pandemic. Providers are slowly beginning to build capacity. CCS is contracting with two new vendors, North County Independent Living and Innovative Services. This allows for some of the service array to be provided to Bayfield County CCS clients by contractors, rather than Bayfield County CCS staff.

### Workforce Issues –

Identifying qualified individuals to work continues to adversely affect Bayfield County and its contractors. Staff are struggling as they attempt but cannot locate appropriate community

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resources to refer individuals to who might ensure their health and safety. This is negatively affecting staff and the individuals we serve. Administrator Mark Ables-Allison asked Skulan to develop a written summary to present to Secretary Karen Timberlake, Department of Health Services during Superior Days. The issue paper is included in the packet.

Richard Kamm, Youth Justice Social worker, presented an example of how the pandemic has negatively affected services to one youth in the youth justice system. Kamm reported how the increasing severity in offenses of the youth added to the intensity of services and time invested in just one case. Anich reports that they are seeing this progression across the board.

Karen Bodin, Adult Protective Service (APS) worker, reported on how the pandemic, the workforce shortage, and a growing elderly population in Bayfield County are all negatively affected the ability to assist the elderly in need. Paid caregivers have been difficult to locate in the last couple of years. In-home services to keep people in their homes are not available. Needs continue to increase. Bodin provided an example of an individual who wanted to continue to live at home. Staff were unable to identify enough supports to assist the individual's family to safely return to their residence. Linder reported that Bodin's example is just one of many that her staff continue to struggle with.

Through all of this, children, individuals, and families are struggling and more desperate. The inability to successfully help them is negatively affecting staff.

Fickbohm inquired on Kamm's case load. Kamm reported he is carrying 21 juvenile cases and three ongoing CPS cases.

Mary Dougherty, Core Executive Director, reported CORE is currently conducting a feasibility study on developing a caregiver cooperative. Dougherty said CORE hopes to partner with Bayfield County on many of their projects.

### **Monthly Section Reports**

#### **Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) – Tom Croteau**

CCS is performing well. Enrollment in the program continues to increase. Croteau reports that after an intake call on Monday, Bayfield County CCS will have 38 active participants. In December of 2020, there were 19 participants. There are currently two full-time CCS Service Facilitators. Recruitment is continuing to hire a third service facilitator. The referrals rate is two to three per month. Innovative Wisconsin just notified CCS they will have an additional 20 hours per week of service available to clients. Croteau comments good provider relations are key to keeping needed services for participants. Croteau gave kudos to the service facilitators and service array staff.

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**Aging & Disability Services – Carrie Linder**

Linder, and several other staff, participated in Compassion Fatigue training from North Central Tech College. Training included self-care techniques; how secondary trauma affects people; and how important taking care of yourself is to successfully take care of others. The training provided practical information. Linder gave kudos to her staff.

Congregate meals are reopening. A chart of meal site openings is available and posted on the DHS website. COVID protocols are in place to help protect workers and participants.

The next Living Well Newsletter will be issued in March.

Jon Berthel was hired in January as a Home Delivered Meal Driver. The two home delivered routes were restructured into three routes. DHS is still recruiting a fourth driver. The Bayfield County Food Service will begin providing some congregate meals and the meals for one home delivered meal route.

BayCo Door2Door has been launched. BayCo Door2Door is a Bay Area Rural Transit (BART) van service that provides public transportation from a person's door in Bayfield County to another location in Bayfield County, City of Ashland, or the City of Hayward and back.

New services and supports are now offered by the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Program. Due to a lack of resources and providers some of the services are not offered. Linder is contacting vendors to determine their interest in expanding to provide the new services.

The state is beginning to unwind some of the COVID related rules. Functional screens can now be completed in person. Children's programs and Birth to Three services are beginning to be held in person. One silver lining to the pandemic has been the ability to provide remote services and finding out what works and what does not. This has allowed children and youth to access services that may have been inaccessible before due to this format.

AARP Tax Aid Services are being provided again this year.

**Family Services – Mary Anich**

Anich was excused. Anich provided a written section report, but Skulan did not bring it to the meeting. Anich will provide her report at the next meeting.

**Support Services – Stephanie Eder**

There are many changes in support services. Sarah Traaholt rejoined the team. She transferred from the Treasurer's Office back to Human Services. Ashley Bayliss was hired as a new part-time Clerk. Ashley started today. Stephanie Kent-Wargin, an Intern Receptionist has joined the team for ninety days.

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Kathy Wolfram-Moran was on vacation this week. Heather Gilbertson is out for a few weeks on medical leave. Nina Bucher and Deanna Reagan have been working extra hours due to vacancies. They will resume their regular schedules next week.

**Economic Support – Jeanine Spuhler**

Mary Hamel, Economic Support Specialist, resigned. Some interviewing and job testing has been completed. DHS is currently recruiting for two positions.

Foodshare will continue to provide emergency pandemic funds through March.

Pandemic healthcare benefits will also be available through March. Economic Support is also preparing for the state to begin to unwind their COVID19 policies. When complete normal processing and benefit levels will resume. This will create a large workload for staff.

In December, the Call Center Anyway (CCA) software was terminated, and communication was transitioned to the new call center software, Genesys. Staff continue to work through the changes.

There have been many requests for energy assistance lately, including some after-hour furnace calls in the last few weeks. For emergency heating situations, staff are on call 24/7. Propane costs have jumped to \$2.65/gallon and another increase is projected soon. Propane companies are also dealing with driver shortages which is causing delays in delivery, even in emergency situations. Outreach letters were mailed to encourage people to be aware of their propane levels. Due to the need, the State funds are quickly being expended. Staff are encouraging participants to contact DHS for crisis funds as soon as they realize their fuel levels are low to avoid running out of fuel completely before a delivery can be made.

Fickbohm expressed his gratitude to DHS staff.

**Monthly Reports**

Monthly Financial and Training reports were reviewed and placed on file.

**Discussion and Possible Action** – Due to the lack of quorum, the appointment of Cecelia Webb to the Comprehensive Community Services Coordination Committee will be added to the next meeting agenda.

**Other (Informational Items)**

None

**Future Meetings**

- A. March 24, 2022
- B. April 28, 2022
- C. May 26, 2022

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**Adjournment**

Meeting disbursed at 5:05 p.m.

Submitted by Sarah Traaholt, Clerk III