

CASS COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD MEETING
February 1, 2016

MINUTES

With quorum present, Chair Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Present: Arland Rasmussen, Ken Pawluk, Chad Peterson, Rick Steen, Brian Hagen, Mary Scherling

Presenter: Chip Ammerman, Director; Sarah Heinle, Auditor's Department

I. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Steen made a motion to approve the January 4, 2016 Board minutes. Mr. Peterson seconded it. Motion carried.

II. 2015 Year End Budget Review

Ms. Heinle reviewed the 2015 year-to-date budget, which will not be finalized until March. This included a description of expenses and revenues. She reported the 2015 budget was \$14,055,538.00 with actual revenues totaling \$14,044,163.65. The budgeted expenses for 2015 were \$14,702,367 with the actual expenses estimated is \$14,363,496.61. The question was asked if the new budget cap in place would negatively impact Social Services' future budgets. Mr. Ammerman responded the board the caps will be based on the budget, not the actual expenses, for 2017 and will have little to no impact in the future.

The unaudited balance of the Social Welfare Fund coming into 2016 was \$2,065,855.19 with the budgeted ending fund balance anticipated to be \$1,419,026.19 as of January 28, 2016. With the actual adjustments to the 2015 budget, the ending fund balance for the Social Welfare fund is \$1,746,522.23. Commissioner Peterson stated the balance of the Social Welfare Fund ideally cannot be more than 10% of the gross budget. With the budget cap in place, the Social Welfare Fund will be accessible but Social Services would need approval from the Department of Human Services in order to access any of the reserve money.

It was asked what the formula would be or if Social Services would be penalized should the state take over the costs for Social Services. Mr. Ammerman stated the group is still in the process of creating a formula for the initial proposal, which would be for the state to take over most expenses with the exclusions of certain costs, such as burials. The formula will be based on caseloads from 2016, and it is believed that should the proposal pass, Cass County Social Services would be sufficiently funded to continue current level of services from the proposal or at the very least, not be hindered by it.

It was suggested that Mr. Montplaisir present to the Board in the next few months to better explain what the proposal will look like and how it will affect Social Services.

III. 2015 Work Plan

Mr. Ammerman reviewed the 2015 Work Plan stating most objectives were accomplished in the past year, with the biggest accomplishment being the Work Flow Study completed by Eide Bailly. Because of the work done with Eide Bailly, Mr. Ammerman stated the need for measurable metrics and a more structured training program for new staff is needed for each division. These

will be an objective for each division to develop for 2016. In review of the work plan, most objectives were achieved and completed with two items being carried over to the 2016 work plan.

IV. 2016 Work Plan

Mr. Ammerman explained each division will have two primary objectives for 2016. The first will be the review of unit practices and defining a measurement tracking system; the second is review of orientation/training plan for new staff.

He explained Qnomy will become effective March 7, 2016 in the Economic Assistance division. The first phase of SPACES will be implemented February 8, 2016, with the second phase taking place in the summer of 2017. This program will assist in completing Affordable Care Act applications. The first phase will take the place of two programs and when fully implemented in 2017, five other programs will be replaced with it.

V. Operations Report

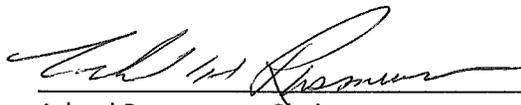
Mr. Ammerman pointed out approximately \$2,100,000.00 of financial assistance distributed by Economic Assistance is spent within Cass County's local vendors, grocery stores, etc. Cass County serves approximately 25% of all North Dakota residents receiving services.

He then referred the Board to an additional handout regarding Social Services Staff Replacement. This outlined vacancies within Social Services for the last three years. The Board's attention was brought to the number of resignations in Economic Assistance in 2015, which was seven out of a total of 13 resignations agency-wide. Currently, Cass County Social Services employs approximately 149 employees. An employee survey was completed with a common theme amongst staff of quite high workloads that created excess stress. The most recent workers who resigned stated their main reason was due to feeling they were no longer able to deliver the best service to their clients as they once could due to the workloads and expectations put upon the workers.

During discussion, it was suggested a possible formal exit interview be done with Cindy Stoick, Human Resources Director, in order to obtain more accurate and honest reasons for resignation that could then be reported to the Board for further discussion and possible changes to correct the issues.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Steen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:07 pm. Mr. Peterson seconded it. Motion carried.



Arland Rasmussen, Chair
Cass County Social Services Board



Melissa Kain Varno, Recorder