

LANGLADE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE  
Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
10:00 a.m. – Health Service Center Board Room

MINUTES

PRESENT: Joe Novak, Vern Cahak, Holly Matucheski, Richard Hurlbert and Robert Benishek

ALSO PRESENT: Sheila Rine, Ron Barger, Craig Hotchkiss, Patsy Rolo, Robin Stowe, Gary Olsen, Tracy Chernetski, Rylee Bricko and Dan Bauknecht

1. H. Matucheski called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Attendance as listed above.
4. Approve agenda – Motion by V. Cahak, seconded by B. Benishek to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
5. Minutes of the February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 board meeting were approved with motion by D. Hurlbert, seconded by J. Novak. Motion carried.
6. Public comment on agenda items, and consideration of requests for items to be added to future meeting agendas - None.
7. Reviewed the Budget Summary Report and bills paid.
8. The next meeting will be Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. at the Health Service Center Board Room.
9. Update from Dan Bauknecht on community drug activity – Dan gave a update on what has been happening around Langlade County in regards to the drug issues. Bath salts is coming back with a vengeance, along with Meth and Heroine. The demand for the drugs is there and so is the money. B. Benishek questioned where people are getting the money to pay for the drugs. Drug seekers typically turn to crimes such as stealing to pay for the drugs. People are finding syringes laying around especially now with the snow melting. Law enforcement are picking up syringes every day. Law enforcement and social workers are working a lot of hours doing what they can do in regards to this problem. They are called out throughout the night in regards to taking children out of the homes due to drug issues. Discussed diversion programs such as drug/family courts. This may lessen out of home placement costs and decrease trauma for children but the problem doesn't go away. Need to have everyone on board with this to make it happen. We would need to write a grant for this type of program but eventually the county would need to sustain this. Treatment is another problem as it sometimes takes 30-60 days to get outpatient treatment. So if someone says they are ready for help now, they still can't get in for treatment. In patient treatment takes months to get in and costs a lot of money. Dan also mentioned that the drug issues are generational. Dan has dealt with the parents and now is dealing with their adult children.

## 10. Correspondence and Reports:

- a. Updates from Economic Support and Energy Assistance – Patsy mentioned that today is Kelly Koepfel's first day back. She was an ES worker for quite some time and transferred to dispatch and has now returned. She will be going through training as it has been about a year since she was last here. The ES vacancy has been posted and advertising. Applications are due by this Friday. It takes approximately 6 months to be fully trained. Currently, there are 4 ES workers and the caseload is 2261. D. Hurlbert asked if the department was doing drug testing. Patsy stated that anyone who is a convicted drug felon that applies for foodshare, has to have a drug test done. Energy – there have been 1160 households that have applied. Tara and Sheila are currently booked until the end of April. May 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to apply. We did receive additional funding from the state for heat and electric and we will target elderly and disabled to help avoid disconnections. B. Benishek would like to see an end of year report once the season is done and a comparison for the last 3 years. Patsy will provide this.
- b. Updates from Children and Family Services – Tracy shared her report. 23 cases were closed. There have been 21 kids removed from their home so far this year and in need of services. Last year at this time, it was 4. We are without foster homes as they are full, so we have to place kids out of the county or in treatment homes because no one can take them or we find a relative that is appropriate but that also takes time. Foster home licensing process once they take these kids must be done within 30-60 days. The foster care worker we have is only 16 hours/wk. Which then puts the other homes on a waiting list for foster care certification. The social workers are dealing with a lot of parents who are aggressive and act out and so the workers request law enforcement to provide security. The social workers feel they have a good collaboration with law enforcement, the school staff and juvenile workers. Rylee passed around a copy of what her case load looks like. 26 kids are placed out of home and all but 1 was removed from a non-drug home. Rylee reviewed her case load. B. Benishek would like Rylee and Tracy to come to the next county board and share this same report. B. Benishek stated he couldn't believe what is happening in Langlade County until he heard the reports today and feels the rest of the county board doesn't have a clue what is going on either. No one realizes what the social workers do or how much time is involved. We need to start focusing on what is happening. The state is concerned that case loads are high in Langlade County and reports are not getting filed on time. The community needs to be aware of this and we have to be responsible to the community needs. Ron would like to include in the 2018 budget another full-time social worker position; ½ for foster care coordinator and ½ under Tracy for case management. We need to respond to the community need.
- c. Updates from Juvenile Court – Craig passed around his report. Cases were reviewed.
- d. Legislative Update – Ron stated in the WI Counties Magazine, it explains what the Governor is proposing including raising foster care reimbursement and funding opiate related treatment programs. The state budget will be reviewed and acted on at a later date. Much could change before the budget is finalized.

## 11. Personnel Update

- a. Update on vacant positions – The ES position applications are due this Friday.
- b. 2018 Budget planning related to staffing requirements in CFS and ES – Gary stated the county needs to look at priorities. Out of home placements have increased over the years. Gary, Ron, Carlene and Tracy have started to meet monthly to discuss these issues. We need

to have a plan in place that will be sustainable and give CFS the needed resources. Out of home placement costs are the highest expenditure in the budget. We need to look at how to keep more families together. Ron stated he doesn't want the social workers to get burnt out and leave. We need to be there for the children – it's our responsibility. B. Benishek stated that 1 social worker to do foster care and assist with the caseload is what we need to do. B. Benishek stated we took care of the dispatchers, law enforcement, now the social workers are at the top of the priority list. Ron stated at the time, before he was here, the master social worker position was seeing a different need at the time. Now the need has changed and we can't keep most children in the home. B. Benishek stated one thing he has learned today is "Priorities". The county as a whole needs to be on board with this. Gary said the last time the county board looked at priorities was in 2010. We may need to take a meeting to look at priorities. B. Benishek stated we don't listen to the management team – we are policy makers. We hear you but we don't listen. We need to start listening. Robin stated the National Drug Endangered Children conference is in Green Bay this year. Someone from the DSS oversight should be attending, as well as law enforcement, social workers, Ron and Robin

12. Old Business:

- a. Will continue to keep the social worker discussion on the agenda.

13. New Business:

- a. Conference/Workshop attendance – Motion by B. Benishek, seconded by J. Novak to allow any Social Services member to attend necessary meetings with per diem and mileage. Motion carried.

14. Referrals/Recommendations for April – Social workers.

15. Motion D. Hurlbert, seconded by B. Benishek to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m. Motion carried.

Submitted by:

Sheila Rine