

BENTON COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 16, 2019

The Benton County Human Services Board met in regular session on April 16, 2019 in the Benton County Board Room in Foley, MN with Board members Ed Popp, Jake Bauerly, Spencer Buerkle and Warren Peschl present and Board member Steve Heinen absent (excused). Call to order by Chair Buerkle was at 9:38 AM.

Peschl/Popp unanimous to approve the agenda as written.

Popp/Bauerly unanimous to approve the Consent Agenda: 1) approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 2, 2019 as written.

Nicole Ruhoff, Public Health Nursing Supervisor, explained that a Family Home Visiting Expansion Grant was awarded to the four-county collaborative (Benton, Stearns, Sherburne and Wright) to expand evidenced-based home visiting programs in the four-county area. She noted funding of \$3.3 million, effective May 2019-December 2022; due to this being a regional effort, a Joint Powers Agreement is requested to support this expansion. Popp/Bauerly unanimous to approve the Joint Powers Agreement, by and among Benton, Sherburne, Stearns and Wright Counties, for a Coalition Advancing Healthy Families, and authorize the Chair to sign; also to appoint Board member, Warren Peschl, to the Central Minnesota Home Visiting Coalition (Governing Board).

Bruce DeGrote, Human Services Supervisor, provided an update on the Child Protection Program. Highlights of the report:

- Review of Child Protection Team
  - Child Maltreatment Assessments (approximately 800 child protection reports are received each year; in 2018, 186 of these reports were screened in—67 screened in as Traditional Investigations (more serious in nature) and 119 were screened in as a Family Assessment (less serious in nature, but meet the statutory definition to screen in)
  - Children in Out of Home Placement (in 2018, 122 children were placed in out-of-home care—on any given day, there are children placed through child protection, mental health, developmental disabilities, or delinquency—there are also children up for adoption due to termination of parental rights)
  - Out of Home Placement Costs (in 2018, out of home placement costs totaled \$1,765,590)
  - Reasons for Out of Home Placement 2017 (parental drug abuse is the leading reason)
  - Factors Leading to Increase in Child Protection Reports (substance abuse—increase in heroin and meth; media attention; mandated reporter training; change in screening tool—must consider all previous reports; must look closer at threatened sexual abuse/predatory offenders and sex trafficked youth)
  - Children’s Services Cost and Revenue Shares—2017 Census
  - Challenges (address changes in screening tool; meth and heroin—community issue; team stability)
- Board member Bauerly stated “...thank you for what you do...it’s a tough job...the training and turnover has got to be challenging...”

Bob Cornelius, Human Services Director, stated that, as part of a broader effort to provide better reciprocal communication with the County Board, and as noted in the Human Services Study Action

Plan, he is requesting Board approval to schedule quarterly Committee of the Whole meetings; this would encourage content-related conversations between the County Board and the Human Services units in a more informal environment and also decrease the need for presentations during the Human Services Board meetings. Peschl/Bauerly unanimous to schedule quarterly Committee of the Whole meetings between the County Board and Human Services staff.

Chair Buerkle adjourned the meeting at 9:57 AM.

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Spencer C. Buerkle, Chair  
Benton County Human Services Board

ATTEST:

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Montgomery Headley  
Benton County Administrator