



## SIoux RIVERS REGIONAL MHDS

### GOVERNANCE BOARD MINUTES

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022

The Sioux Rivers Regional MHDS Governance Board via zoom at 1:30pm. Mavis Anema, Lisa Rockhill, Doug Smit, Dayton Vogel, Kim Wermersen, Tim Shumacher, Ryan Dokter, Jerry Birkey, Carl Vande Weerd, Sheila Martin, Sharon Nieman, Don Kass, Janice Hill, Dennis Vanden Hull, Shane Walter, Kim Keleher, Cory Altena, Nicholle Eaton, Mike Reynolds, Jamison Van Voorst, Gary Jones, Barry Whitsell, Doug Wilson, Denise Driesen, William Leupold, Tim Overmire, Brenda Langstraat, John Pluth, Rob Aiken came on at 1:40pm.

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS-**

Wermersen welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

**2. APPROVE AGENDA-**

Vande Weerd made a motion to approve the agenda. Schumacher seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

**3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 3/22/22 MEETING MINUTES-**

Altena made a motion to approve the March 22, 2022 minutes. Leupold seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

**4. FISCAL AGENT REPORT AND REGIONAL EXPENDITURES-**

Dokter reported on the March fiscal agent report. In March, the region received the second half of the property taxes as well as another payment from the State of Iowa. Schumacher asked about the Emmet County fund balance. Kass made a motion to approve the report. Van Otterloo seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

**5. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS-**

Schumacher asked if the sheriff invoices were about normal. Duhn answered yes, though did state Dickinson County had invoiced for a few months. Schumacher made a motion to approve the claims. Vande Weerd seconded the motion. Schumacher asked about the dollars paid to the Spirit Lake School. Duhn confirmed it was the amount that was previously approved by the board. The motion carried with all ayes.

**6. GOOD LIFE CONTRACT-**

Walter stated he reached out to the providers. Five providers have agreed to work with the Good Life. Van Otterloo asked if the amount provided in the Good Life information was for six providers, and if that amount needed to be paid up front. Walter stated the amount paid would be based on the number of providers participating. Schumacher asked if the five providers were listed in the contract. Hope Haven, Village Northwest, Life Skills, Lakes Life Skills, and Pride Group are the five providers willing to participate.

Vanden Hull asked how long the contract would last. Walter confirmed the contract would be for a year. Birkey asked if some of the dollars could be utilized by the end of this fiscal year. Walter confirmed that some of the dollars could be expended yet this fiscal year. Van Otterloo is concerned that \$75,000 is a lot for one provider. His hope is the benefit is worth it. Walter believes it is a good buy based on what he has learned about the program. Kass stated there are other regions within the state that are utilizing the service. The goal of this program is to provide a lasting positive impact for the providers. Altena asked if the contract with Good Life is to help them retain employees, similar to the next line item agenda of provider employee incentives. Van Otterloo agrees with Altena in that incentives should come from the Good Life program. Walter stated the employee incentive is an immediate impact whereas the Good Life program is a long-term benefit. Vande Weerd asked how much of the money could be spent out of this fiscal year. Walter stated he did not know for sure, but the hope is that some of the services will be provided in this fiscal year. The rest of the dollars will need to be spent in the next fiscal year. Some of this depends on how much time can be spent with providers yet this fiscal year. Schumacher asked about the buy in of the providers. Schumacher wonders if Good Life is being pushed on the providers. Walter stated the program is not being pushed on them. They were asked if they would like to participate if it was provided. Walter asked for their commitment. Schumacher confirmed the benefit to the region is the provider would be available to the remain in the region if they can retain staff. Walter confirmed we need the providers to retain staff in order to keep providers within our region. Schumacher made a motion to approve the Good Life Contract. Vanden Hull seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

**7. PROVIDER EMPLOYEE INCENTIVES-**

Walter discussed the provider employee incentives. This program differs from Good Life in that it provides some immediate relief to providers. Wermersen asked how much the region is looking at spending. Walter would like a similar amount to that of the Good Life. The providers have roughly 1400 employees. Nieman asked about the number of employees at Pride Group. Duhn confirmed Pride Group had not responded to any of the requests. Van Otterloo asked about the employee recommendation they were tasked with at the last meeting. Walter confirmed the staff had originally suggested paying only the full time staff. But, the providers stated their concern in paying only the full time staff is there are a lot of employees that aren't full time and they could potentially feel less important than the full time staff. Walter suggests paying a percentage of the dollars based on the number of hours worked per week. Carl asked how this was sustainable going forward. Walter stated this would be a one-time deal for the providers while we have the money. Kass stated with the number of employees, we would not be making a great impact per employee and suggested the region would be better off seeing how the Good Life works. Nieman states we have many employees that are direct support staff. This is more about telling staff we appreciate their efforts. Whitsell believes his staff would see this as an appreciation to continue to work through a challenging time. Many of which are still wearing masks, have been on full quarantine

since February. Whitsell agreed with Nieman that these little things go a long ways. Hill agreed with Whitsell. Keleher, Driesen, and Smit all concurred. Smit stated that many had to work longer hours and never got to work from home. Whitsell also stated that at many times his staff were working with positive Covid clients and still showed up to work. Eggink-Postma agreed that any little amount would go a long way towards appreciating the staff. Wermersen stated that if the board agreed to \$350,000 at 1600 employees it would be roughly \$200 per employee as an example. Van Otterloo asked if we would leave the decision with the provider to determine how they distribute to their staff. Birkey stated that Lyon County did not feel tax payer dollars should be paid to staff and ultimately they opted not to provide the incentives. Leupold sees the point Lyon County made. However, Leupold does know it is important to give people a pat on the back when they can. Vande Weerd asked which providers would receive the money. Walter confirmed all providers within our region would get money. Anema suggested providers get an amount of money and then the providers decide how to spend it in their agencies. Kass stated that if the region were to give the money to every individual to show the appreciation, if the individuals would even be working for the providers within the year. Kass wonders if we would be better off holding the money and see what rate increase is needed to retain these providers. Hill wonders if bonuses could be made in increments throughout the next year. Wermersen would like to pay the employees the benefit. Van Otterloo would like to table it until next month until we know how much to spend, and would also like to spend enough to make an impact. Walter believes it makes sense to approve an amount and then determine how to distribute it to providers. Rockhill did state the staff could not come up with a great plan to distribute to providers either and that is why it was brought to the board for suggestions. Wermersen believes the fair way is to approve an amount, and provide the same amount per employee to the providers. That allows the providers to distribute those funds. Wermersen sees this more as we need the employees and appreciate the employees for what they do. Vanden Hull asked if the funds get sent to the state would we get any of that money back in Sioux Rivers. Walter confirmed if the dollars get back to the state we would need to apply through the incentive fund and likely would not see them back. Leupold made a motion to approve \$200 per employee to be given to the providers to distribute to the employees as they see fit. Vanden Hull seconded the motion. Vande Weerd asked if there would be a check and balance if the money is given to the providers for their employees. Keleher suggested there be a written agreement that the money goes directly to the employees within the provider organization which could be signed by the provider prior to distribution of funds. It was agreed this was a good idea. Wermersen asked for a roll call vote. Vande Weerd yes, Altena no, Birkey no, Kass no, Vanden Hull yes, Leupold yes, Van Otterloo yes, Pluth no, Wermersen yes. The motion carries on a 5-4 vote. Schumacher was no longer on the zoom (his internet kicked him out, was back in the zoom during the Glenwood closure agenda item).

**8. GLENWOOD CLOSURE/IRSH COSTS-**

Walter discussed the Glenwood closure. Walter stated the regions are being asked to place these individuals in IRSH homes within the state, at the expense of the regions. Walter stated he has talked with Linda at Lakes Life Skills to increase the numbers of beds at the IRSH by three additional beds. Walter

stated Lakes Lifeskills has been working with individuals similar to IRSH in Spirit Lake for some time at an enhanced rate. The state expects the regions to expend their dollars for IRSH. When the dollars are expended by the region the MCO would assume the costs of those homes. Wermersen discussed with the board the need to be aware of the potential costs, but that it is understood funds can be kept back to provide that funding after this fiscal year. Walter and Will met with Linda at Lakes Life Skills. It looks like LLS will have the original beds ready by June. With the intent to add an additional three beds at the potential contracted IRSH rate. Doing the math Leupold stated this could be roughly \$800,000 for the three additional individuals that are not already contracted at the IRSH home.

**9. 28E AGREEMENT-**

Walter stated legal is working on this and will have it to the board next month.

**10. GENERAL ASSISTANCE MOU-**

Walter stated legal is working on this and will have it to the board next month.

**11. MANAGEMENT PLAN-**

Walter stated legal is working on this and will have it to the board next month.

**12. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN-**

Walter provided an update to the strategic action plan. The region is currently working on the next phase of the plan. He thanked everyone on the zoom for their involvement.

**13. INTEGRATED TELEHEALTH PARTNERS-**

Walter met with Integrated Telehealth Partners staff to discuss how that service is being utilized in some of the hospitals. Walter has asked for clarification from ITP as well as the hospitals about this service. Walter is concerned some of the service is redundant in that they have access to services within their hospital network that may be a duplicate to ITP. Walter and Will plan to meet with the CEO of Avera to discuss what they have available. Walter plans to bring the information to the board next month for a decision on how to move forward with ITP.

**14. GENERAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES**

Eggink-Postma provided an update on the Crisis Stabilization Unit/Chairs. Care Connections is meeting with their board today to approve the crisis services. Eggink-Postma did state one person has been served in the community based crisis service that began in March. Wermersen stated he and Walter met with the CEO's of Rolling Hills and Care Connections about the Access Center. Wermersen discussed the positive discussions all regions had during that meeting.



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#### 15. ADJOURN GOVERNANCE BOARD MEETING-

Altena made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kass seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

Sue Duhn, Secretary

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sue Duhn".

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