



SIoux RIVERS REGIONAL MHDS

GOVERNANCE BOARD MINUTES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2022

The Sioux Rivers Regional MHDS Governance Board via zoom at 1:30pm. Those in attendance included: Kim Wermersen, Beth Will, Sue Duhn, Kim Scorza, Christina Eggink-Postma, Doug Smit, Don Kass, Shawn Scholten, Ryan Dokter, Melissa Weeks, Lisa Rockhill, Mark Sybesma, Kim Keleher, Tim Overmire, Jerry Birkey, Abby Wallin, Sharon Nieman, Cindy Wilde (Goodwill Great Plains), Shane Walter, William Leupold, Kasey Fear, Denise Driesen, Mike Van Otterloo, Barry Whitsell, Nicolle Eaton, Mavis Anema, John Pluth, Cory Altena, Carl Vande Weerd, Jamison Van Voorst, Dennis Vanden Hull, Mike Reynolds, Tim Schumacher, Amanda Olson, Mike Strouse and Megan Todd with Goodlife Innovations joined at 2pm.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS-

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

2. APPROVE AGENDA-

Sybesma made a motion to approve the agenda. Altena seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 1/25/22 MEETING MINUTES-

Vande Weerd made a motion to approve the January 25, 2022 minutes. Pluth seconded the motion. Motion carried with all ayes.

4. FISCAL AGENT REPORT AND REGIONAL EXPENDITURES-

Dokter reported on the January 2022 expenditure report. Schumacher asked how much money was received from County Social Services for Emmet County. Dokter reported the amount was \$155,000. Van Otterloo made a motion to approve the fiscal agent report. Schumacher seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes. Dokter corrected the Emmet County revenue. The money received from County Social Services was \$219,907. The \$150,000 was the Emmet County payment to the region.

5. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS-

Altena asked a question asking the voc/day services and what those were. Walter explained those were the employment grant dollars. Vande Weerd made a motion to approve the claims. Altena seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

6. MARKETING PLAN-

Walter explained staff have been in discussion regarding how to market ourselves. Walter asked each person what marketing may look like, to think about that, and share their ideas with him in the next few weeks so a policy can be written. Wermersen encouraged providers to suggest ideas as well. Schumacher sits on the Iowa Workforce Board with similar issues with marketing. Schumacher believes it will likely

take something innovative and “out of the box thinking” to get our word out there. Schumacher believes getting into the schools should help some, but there does needs to be more done. Wermesen even believes a better partnership with hospitals and cities is a great place to start as well. Schumacher believes the stigma is something that needs to be worked through. Wermersen believe the more we bring it to the forefront the better we will be. Amanda Olson stated KILR Radio just did a radio piece with Estherville Schools and Champion State of Mind. Reynolds believes going to places where people are struggling such as churches and food banks with the information is a great place to start.

7. 2PM GOOD LIFE PRESENTATION-

Megan Todd with Good Life stated their agency is currently in the area providing assistance to employers to help retain employees. They are a provider in Kansas of disability services. Mike Strouse is the CEO with Good Life Consulting Firm. The firm currently works with approximately eight providers in Iowa. Good Life has been partnering with the University of Kansas for the last four decades. Kansas and Iowa share similar services in that they each have managed care. Good Life University helps providers get more work stability from direct support staff. The goal is to achieve higher direct support, increase direct service pay, lower turnover, fewer people involved in care, bigger pipeline of talent, few staff vacancies among other things. They are averaging \$1.69 per hour pay increase in those providers they work with. They have been able to decrease the total number of staff needed by ten percent. The goal is to deliver good care through openings. Good Life promotes three-day work days to limit needed shifts. Individuals are looking for attractive schedules and pay with more time off. Whitsell with Village Northwest asked what the region was looking at doing. Walter stated the conversation has been utilizing Good Life to assist all of our providers that want to participate. Strouse explained all the up-front work is done with the first step. Smit with Hope Haven is utilizing Good Life Innovations currently. Hope Haven is looking at 50 plus staff shortages. Whitsell at Village Northwest believes this would be a valuable investment to the region and would be very interested in region helping with this. Altena asked how the format would work. Walter explained he thought it may be a benefit to the region to partner with Good Life Innovations to work with our providers. Walter would like permission to visit further with Good Life to work on a contract and discuss further details to bring to the Governance Board for a decision next month. Leupold asked Whitsell what skill level his employees need to have. Whitsell said his employees need to have a HS diploma or GED qualification to be DSP. Strouse stated the schedule is the biggest challenge in many of these homes. Wermersen asked if the contract is based on number of providers, or more of a blanket amount. Strouse stated he would work with Walter to come up with an innovative way to work with the region. Kass did state he wants to know how many providers are interested before committing dollars. Van Otterloo would like Walter to continue discussions to find out what it may cost and see where this goes.

8. FY22 PROVIDER FUNDING REQUESTS-

Walter discussed the one time funding items. Whitsell from Village Northwest Unlimited discussed their request to use digital advertising. Village Northwest would like to utilize Geofencing. Essentially, geofencing pings your device and notifies you about the possible job openings. VNW would like Sioux Rivers to partner in paying the costs of the geofencing. Currently VNW has 39 staff openings. Walter believes the request from VNW and Creative Living is more marketing than paying employee incentives. The employee incentives may need to be tabled in order to discuss the consultant further. Kass likes the approach VNW is taking with this. He does believe VNW will touch the younger population of employment with this approach. Vande Weerd asked if it continues to ding if it will do more harm than good. Will asked if we will be duplicating services if we go with Good Life in the future. Walter does not believe this is a duplication of services. Whitsell confirmed he needs employees now and that is what the advertising is for. Atena said we were encouraged to think outside the box. With that, Altena made a motion to approve the \$6,000 to VNW for geofencing. Schumacher seconded the motion. Kass is concerned this could be an invasion of privacy. Schumacher believes this is a positive thing as we are looking to promote employment and not out seeking individuals with mental illness. The motion carried with all ayes.

Creative Living Center would like \$10,000 for marketing their services. Rockhill did state as a staff we did talk about partnering with providers to include our name in their marketing. Sybesma made motion to approve the \$10,000 marketing to Creative Living. Birkey seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

Walter moved to discussing Hope Haven. Leupold made a motion to approve the \$12,000 to pay Good Life. Schumacher seconded the motion. Kass stated he is not opposed to backfilling, but believes it may be premature to decide to backfill today without knowing what our decision will be moving forward. Van Otterloo agrees with Kass. Wermersen asked for a roll call vote. Kass nay Sybesma aye, Vande Weerd aye, Birkey nay, Altena nay, Overmire nay, Van Otterloo nay, Pluth nay, Leupold aye, Scumacher nay. Vote was 6-3 nay. Motion did not carry. The rest of Hope Haven's requests will be tabled until next month.

Walter discussed the Lakes Lifeskills proposal. The money requested would be for the purchase of a dedicated home and training of staff for IRSH. The requested amount is \$50,000. Sybesma made motion to approve the request. Altena seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

Walter discussed the proposal from the Crittenton Center. The request will be split between three regions. Van Otterloo wonders if we have utilized the Crittenton Center in the past. Walter confirmed it has been used in the best. Scorza stated they did open the beds January 1. They have a 20-bed facility. At this time, they are looking to accept their sixteenth child. Sioux Rivers cost would be \$11,666.66. Kass did state the need for beds for juveniles is absolutely needed at this time based on his role in the YES Center.

Kass made a motion to approve the request. Van Otterloo seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

Walter presented the Seasons Center requests. In looking at their proposal we have already approved dollars towards ACT. Walter is supportive of a respite care coordinator in the amount of \$28,250. Seasons Center is also asking for some dollars towards transportation. Staff did have some conversation as staff about other creative ways to provide some transportation. One idea was contracting with RIDES to provide some transportation costs. Eggink-Postma discussed the requests they still want to see approved. The refrigerators for the substance use disorders, mobile crisis marketing, and wellness baskets for adults. For kids they are looking for funding at Camp Autumn. Typically families do not pay for respite at Camp Autumn. In meeting with the director this morning, there are 13 funding streams they are looking at utilizing to pay for the camp. There are very few families that have waiver to pay for respite services because the waiver wait lists are so long at this time. The request for kids include respite care coordinator, transportation, and grounds updates. Vande Weerd asked if Seasons Center would cover the entire region. Eggink-Posma did state all counties have kids at Camp Autumn and the entire region is served. Anema believes Camp Autumn is needed for families. Rockhill did state the staff did talk about wanting to know what Care Connections would pay. Respite services has been approved by Care Connections, but at this time transportation has not been approved by that region. Kass made a motion to table the request. Leupold seconded the motion to table. Motion carried with all ayes. Kass believes we need to wait to see how many dollars we have left before making decision. Will believes some of the requests need to be tabled to be in line with our marketing plan.

Walter did ask Olson to present on the Lil Champ Day Camp Champion State of Mind is looking at holding. The summer camp is for skill-based services. It would be a four-day camp held in five locations to include Rock Rapids, Sioux Center, Primghar, Spirit Lake, and Estherville. Will did state the staff have asked for this to be billed at cost, and should be less than the proposed amount. Leupold asked how this camp was different than Camp Autumn. Olson stated the difference is the camp will go to different towns to go to the kids. Van Otterloo asked why there was not a camp in Plymouth County. Olson confirmed they were trying to find locations that were within a certain drive time. Altena asked if Olson was looking for funding for the entire camp or if there were other funding options. Olson did confirm it is a regional cost at this point, but they are looking at involving the local communities to get donations and dollars to pay for the camp. Walter stated some of this could be paid yet this fiscal year, while some of it needs to be built into next fiscal year. Vande Weerd asked if we are being fair to Seasons Center by looking at this request now when we tabled the Seasons Center request. The estimate at this time is twenty campers per camp. Olson did state delaying the cost would take away from the dollars we could spend this year, as well as the time needed to get into the communities to provide the program. Postma-Eggink would like to work with Olson to make sure the kids are being served in as many weeks as possible by partnering and discussing those options. Altena asked if we could offer some dollars to get the process started. Van Otterloo would be more in favor of tabling. Leupold asked about dollars for next year and if the state is ok with us



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spending the dollars. Vande Weerd made motion to table until next meeting. Van Otterloo seconded the motion. Altena is ok with tabling but would like a decision next month so we can make sure kids are being served. Motion passed with all ayes.

Walter would like to table all wage incentives. Van Otterloo made a motion to table Pride Group request. Vande Weerd seconded. Motion carried with all ayes.

Walter explained a proposed transitional housing budget was in the board packet. We are not yet ready to discuss this, but will visit more about it next month. It has been built into the FY23 budget as a placeholder for dollars though. Will did state at this point, it will not be ready until July 1, 2022 but there may be a need for start-up dollars yet this year.

All FY23 proposals will be discussed next meeting.

9. **CRISIS SERVICES PROPOSALS AND BUILDING-**

Walter explained at this point we are still in a holding pattern. Keleher did state they have a proposal that will go to their board tonight with the hopes to submit a proposal to our board after that. Seasons Center is also working on deciding if they could provide services.

10. **FAMILY SOLUTIONS FY 22 CONTRACT-**

Vande Weerd made motion to approve the FY22 contract with Family Solutions. Vanden Hull seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes.

11. **STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE-**

Walter did provide an update to the strategic plan that went out in the packet. There has been some progress and we continue to work towards those goals. Walter plans to provide an update each month. Kass asked if Vande Weerd would be able to assist with the next step in the strategic planning process as the board member representative. Vande Weerd agreed to participate.

12. **FY23 BUDGET UPDATE-**

Walter has asked the board to look over the FY23 budget and ask questions and make suggestions towards it. Walter did state the staff had a recent meeting with providers to discuss school services. There will be another meeting scheduled soon to continue that conversation. Van Otterloo does have some questions regarding specific line items. He will reach out to Walter on those.

13. **COUNTY RENT EXPENSES-**

Walter did state we have people housed in county offices that will be taking up space. It will ultimately be up to the county to decide if they want to charge rent or provide in kind. Walter needs to know more



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from counties so it can be built into the budget. Dickinson County will put on their agenda next week to discuss. Wermersen asked supervisors to get these decisions made at the county level and let Walter know the decision made by the county.

14. **UPDATE ON REGIONAL POLICIES-**

Walter stated the policies have been completed. Walter has asked each Governance Board member to reach through them carefully, bring back any questions if needed, so that a decision can be made on those at the next board meeting.

15. **FY21 UPDATED ANNUAL REPORT-**

Rockhill did state the FY21 annual report had a few minor changes due to updates requested by DHS. It has been approved at the state level.

16. **GENERAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES-**

Walter did state the next meeting will include the Annual Budget and Service Plan which is due April 1 which does include the FY23 budget. Champion State of Mind will be hosting an open house in Spirit Lake from 11am-1pm on Wednesday, February 23, 2022. There will be food, merchandise and tours provided.

17. **ADJOURN MEETING-**

Vande Weerd made motion to adjourn the meeting. Altena seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes. The meeting ended at 4pm.

Sue Duhn, Secretary

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Duhn".

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