LARIMER COUNTY | Human Services

1501 Blue Spruce, Fort Collins, Colorado 80524, 970.498.6300, Larimer.org/humanservices

Date: **Monday, February 7, 2023**

Time: **10:00 AM**

Location: **Commissioners Conference Room Second Floor - County Administration Building**

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES AGENDA MEMORANDUM

This meeting was recorded, broadcast online and archived.

Introductions and Announcements

- County Manager Lorenda Volker, Commissioner Kristin Stephens, Commissioner Jody Shadduck-McNally, Commissioner John Kefalas, Human Director Heather O'Hayre, Division Managers Thad Paul, Lori Metz, Jill Maasch, Gordon Coombes, Executive Assistant Kaylee Strouse, Human and Economic Health Director Laura Walker

Additions to Agenda

- SNAP Max Allotment
  - February 2023 will be the last month for SNAP Max Allotment due to changes at the Federal level. This means anyone who has been receiving additional funds during the Public Health Emergency will now be receiving the normal allotment beginning in March 2023.
  - This information will be communicated via the Larimer County website, Human Services' website, and our community partners. Additionally the State is communicating with the recipients directly.
- Medicaid PHE Changes
  - During the Public Health Emergency individuals were locked into Medicaid. This meant a person could not be disenrolled in the program even if they no longer qualified. All existing cases will be reworked so that it can be determined if people are still eligible for Medicaid. This will begin in May and all cases will be reworked over the following 14 months.

- Transition of Long Term Care Ombudsman to the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)
    - This team is led by Amber Franzel and has transitioned to the CDHS. We believe this reassignment is beneficial as it will be better aligned with the other programs serving adults under CDHS' structure. It will however impact the data and how tasks of the team are quantified in the state database so we'll keep the Board informed as that information evolves..

Senior Tax Update: Laura Walker

- The Senior Tax program has existed for several decades within our County. It has been previously funded by thirty thousand dollars. The finances have been used to help older adults who own their homes to help offset some of the property tax burden.
- Through the programs there have been challenges including our worker's compensation did not cover the volunteer employee who worked about thirty hours. Additionally, throughout the past few years the County has been giving grants because the State statute states people must come into work in order to earn the benefits.
- It has been recommended by Risk Management to only have in office assignments due to the increased risk, liability, and required supervision. Most people want to work outside at the Fairgrounds, and parks.
- At this point we think it best to end this program. Notice has been provided to the participants along with other resources that can help offset some of these costs. Those that were in the 2022 program will be getting their checks soon.
- Laura Walker also provided a recommendation for the thirty thousand dollar in funds to be rerouted to Neighbor to Neighbor, the Thompson School, Larimer County Home Improvement, and 211. Laura Walker will bring a budget proposal to the Commissioner for the 2023 budget.

Update 2020-2023 Strategic Plan - Heather O'Hayre

Link to Presentation: Strategic Plan

- The purpose of this presentation is to review where Human Services currently is in our strategic plan while giving an update as to where we are going in the next eighteen to twenty-four months. It is important to us that our strategic plan also overlaps with the Commissioners goals, particularly the second goal regarding expanding community based services.
- During the Spring for 2020 we rewrote our Vision, Mission, and added our Staff Statement to reflect our prevision work, helping the vulnerable with the help of our partners, and our commitment to our staff.

- Another big change we have made is to make sure staff's workload is manageable. By doing so we have added new positions which include additions to our procurement, communication, strategic planning, and legislative teams. Currently some staff are 100% in the office, while most work in a hybrid work model with 1 required day in the office, time in the community, and time working remotely. Additionally, each office is now integrated with each program and has a presence at each location with the exception of Estes Park.
- Regarding our locations, 1501 Blue Spruce is being renovated so that it is a better experience for our staff and clients. The lobby will have safety and security in place for our staff; it will be similar to 200 Peridot. It will also have more family-friendly spaces While the renovation is taking place, there are two trailers available onsite at 1501 Blue Spruce where our Welcome Center and mail operations take place until the renovation is complete, in about six months.
- The other location that is going under renovation is 2555 Midpoint in Fort Collins. The biggest change is to have a full public facing lobby (or Welcome Center).. The HUB will be moved to the back of the building and the front of the building will be our public facing lobby so that individuals can get EBT cards, and other public benefits and child support services.
- Our Estes Park location is a small office.. Our hope is to have a mobile approach with community partners. By doing so, it will allow us to go to different places within the community that we otherwise would not be able to go.
- Our recruiting and hiring process is different then it was before. There have been changes to the language, job titles, and descriptions, and using the TEXTIO tool for inclusionary language. We have noticed this has helped with recruitment significantly. Furthermore, the onboarding process has changed drastically. From day one our staff meets with someone called a 'PEER Navigator'. This person helps our new staff throughout their first year with the County. Even before the first day the new staff member received a swag box, our mission statement, and an email that gives them information about what to expect on their first day.
- Resilience Alliance is a curriculum developed by New York University and New York University Children's Services that Human Services is using as a model for our department. We recognize secondary trauma can happen regardless of your role in the department. Therefore one of the resources that we offer our staff is the Resilience Alliance program. This allows our staff to speak with someone confidentially for thirty minutes per month.
- Two other programs that we offer staff are Nectar and Sigbee. Nectar is a tool that our staff truly enjoy. This allows our staff to recognize each other while also earning points that can be redeemed for various uses. The other tool is SigBee which allows our staff to check-in through an app. This helps supervisors know how their team is doing based on their answers. We are also planning to

incorporate some of the questions from our recent survey so that we can learn more and get more insight regarding particular topics.

- Over the next 18 months we have 4 different committees working together; PEER, EDI, Emergency Preparedness and Safety, Community Access and Outreach Committee.
    - PEER Committee: This is led by Lori Metz and Lindy Blue. This committee’s focus is to help with retention, employee engagement, and the PEER Navigators for new staff.
    - EDI (Equity Diversity Inclusion) Committee: This is led by Thad Paul and Vanessa Fewell. Our desire is to be a department that is inclusive to everyone. This committee's role is to have an open dialogue about where we are as a department, and how we improve. To do so, we have been working with the American Public Human Services Association Advancing Racial Equity Organizational Assessment to help provide common language. Then in a couple of weeks we will review the results from this assessment.
    - Emergency Preparedness and Safety Committee: This is led by Gordon Coombes and Jill Maasch. The role of this committee is to help our department to be prepared when an emergency happens. We recognize Human Services is often one of the first departments that is needed when an emergency happens and we want to be better prepared to help when it does occur. It is important to mention that Gordon and Jill recently attended a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Training to help with the structure of this committee and to know what programs are available to us.
    - Community Access and Outreach Committee: The purpose of this committee is to help with client engagement. One of the ideas has been to have a mobile HS team that goes to places that HS does not have an office. Another option is to have one representative from BCS, AAS, and CYF go to our community partners locations. We hope this will help our clients not have to travel to different locations, rather we can be a one stop shop for them. It is important to us to remember what might be easy for us might not be easy for clients because they may not have the resources that we have (a car, childcare etc.)

Semi-Annual Fiscal Update - Gordon Coombes

Link to Presentation: State Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget Update

- Adult Protection Services we have spent about sixty-five percent. We will be overspent in the administrative category but will not overspent in Client Services. There is a workload study taking place at CDHS that will affect this greatly. This is an issue statewide.

- Child Welfare has spent fifty-two percent spent. There is a lot of complexity in the many funding streams in child welfare.
- CCAP the reason why we are forty-percent spent instead of fifty-percent is because of the emergency funding. When that goes away we will be right at our allocation amount however there are many rule changes coming that may change the situation.
- TANF is at sixty-three percent which is trending high. We have reserve funding saved but this is something we are continuing to monitor particularly as House Bill 22-1259 is implemented.
- Community Service Block Grant a new plan has to be submitted by October 2023 and will go into effect in 2024. This program operates on a calendar year budget.
- County Administration will be overspent but is normal for us.
- Employment First this runs on the Federal Fiscal Year. The numbers only reflect October, November, and December.
- The Office on Aging will have current flexibilities removed as we stabilize from the pandemic, including spending restrictions and carry over funds. Regarding the Rescue Stimulus Act Funds we are working through an RFP. There will be future requests to allocate these funds out to the community.
- OLTC showed a deficit and required some shifting of funds due to a lot of changes going on. The State is working through a contract on how the funds will be allocated in the future.
- AND Navigator is continuing to show great success as a new program. We have recently created a regional model as we are providing services to Grand County while we are under spent.

Department Activity Report - Heather O'Hayre

Link to Presentation: Department Activity Report Q4 2022

- Regarding the Benefits and Community Support Division's activity there has been a significant increase in caseload, and those that need the assistance. The Food Assistance was over twenty-four million dollars this last quarter but this does include the max allotment and the pandemic EBT.

Other Business

- None