Date: **Monday, February 07, 2022**
Time: **10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**
Location: **Commissioners' Conference Room, 2nd Floor, 200 West Oak Street, Fort Collins, CO 80521**

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MINUTES

This meeting will be recorded, broadcast online and archived.

Introduction and Announcements – Heather O'Hayre

- In attendance: Commissioner of District I John Kefalas, Commissioner of District II Kristin Stephens, Commissioner of District III Jody Shadduck-McNally, County Manager Linda Hoffmann, Assistant County Manager Lorenda Volker, Director of Human Services Heather O'Hayre, Division Manager of Aging and Adult Services Lori Metz, Division Manager of Benefits and Community Support Vanessa Fewell, Interim Division Manager Gordon Coombes, and Executive Assistant Lindy Blue.

Additions to the Agenda – Heather O'Hayre

- None.

Facilities and Program Enhancement Update

Link to presentation: [Facilities and Program Enhancement Update]

- In August of 2021, significant changes began for the facilities of Human Services. The lease at 2601 Midpoint Drive in Fort Collins has been vacated and the lease at 2573 Midpoint Drive in Fort Collins will be vacated in the future. There will be three main buildings where the community can access all services within Human Services. These buildings are located at 200 Peridot Avenue in Loveland, 1501 Blue Spruce Drive in Fort Collins, and 2555 Midpoint Drive in Fort Collins. There is still a small satellite office in Estes Park.
    - All locations will have a public lobby.
    - All program areas within Human Services will be housed in the three buildings.
    - Over 450 staff have been reassigned to new locations
    - The Loveland office modifications have been completed. Renovations for 1501 Blue Spruce and 2555 Midpoint are starting within the next few months and will take 3-4 months to complete.
        - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked if safety measures are being taken into consideration with the renovations. Director O'Hayre answered that meetings have occurred with Safety Manager, Tim Fox, and security cameras have been installed internally and externally in the buildings. He is looking at renovation plans to assess further safety needs. Under desk panic buttons have been installed at all buildings, Narcan will be available for access when needed at each building, and additional training is being provided to staff.
        - Commissioner Kefalas asked what the renovations at 2555 Midpoint will look like. Director O'Hayre provided clarification of 2555 Midpoint. The HUB will shift to the backside of the building and the public lobby will be located at the front. Adolescents are brought into the HUB by law enforcement and the change will allow for them to enter the building through a secured separate entrance from the main public entrance. This will increase privacy and discretion for the adolescents. 2573 Midpoint is currently being used for family meetings and being shared with the Health Department and Criminal Justice Services.
        - Commissioner Kefalas asked for more explanation on the staffing of the Estes Park location. Director O'Hayre answered there is a full time Benefits and Community Support staff member due to the historical need for community support in the area. Much of the work in Estes Park is shared with the Loveland office. Children, Youth and Family staff and Aging and Adult Services staff are in the Estes Park area frequently and are located in the field. Commissioner Kefalas suggested

        he participate in a Red Team meeting and a site visit for the facilities. Director O'Hayre informed the Commissioners there will be open houses scheduled in all three buildings once the facilities are complete and open.
    - There is exploration being done for a centralized call center tool in partnership with IT.
    - The lobby team in the buildings is being centralized and significant enhancements to the client experience are being examined.
        - PEAK kiosks will be located in all buildings.
        - Expansion of child support kiosks currently located at Blue Spruce to Loveland and Midpoint.
- In addition to the facilities changes, a project included in the 2022 budget is being worked on to have staff more integrated into the community through co-location with community partners and having a more robust mobile approach.
    - Child Welfare Prevention is entering into the third year of a federal grant. The grant was focused on one zip code in Loveland and another zip code in Fort Collins. Due to the success of the grant and need for the grant, Human Services received support from the Feds to expand County wide. An additional staff person has been added and will focus on needs in Wellington. The team is working with the school district on parent support and referrals to prevent families from entering the Child Welfare system.
    - Further information will be provided at the next Board of Social Services meeting in May.
    - Commissioner Kefalas asked for highlights on what the grant has done to be successful. Director O'Hayre answered that the underlined resource navigation is the greatest need. Statistics show that poverty is a factor that drives Child Welfare cases. On the team, there are now four case managers who have tremendous lived experience, are bi-lingual and are able to connect with different community partners in different ways to provide resources. There is qualitative success that is being seen. CSU is working on evaluating the grant by creating a committee with families with lived experience to help with the evaluation.
    - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally commented on the upstream approach being a good approach and asked if any of the lived experience strategy is being shared with the public. Director O'Hayre responded that Jill Maasch, our Communications Supervisor, has been working with the community partners to message out the success. Human Services has teamed with Visualize Results to share success with the public.
- Expanding Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Approach
    - Developing an internal EDI committee.
    - The Bridges Out of Poverty training is being brought to 800 individuals (Human Services employees, Larimer County employees, and community partners) in May. A lifetime certification of Train the Trainer will be provided to 75-80 individuals. A contract was created with consultants to develop an action plan focused on poverty/social economic equity.
    - American Public Human Services Association/CO HS Directors Association assessment and technical assistance resources will also be provided to Human Services' teams.
    - Commissioner Kefalas suggested EDI is the best acronym for Human Services to use since that is what Larimer County's team is using.
    - Commissioner Stephens asked if the Bridges Out of Poverty training talks about the barriers and systemic racism. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally responded that she has taken the training and the barriers and systemic racism are addressed. Director O'Hayre invited the Commissioners to attend the training.

Semi-Annual Fiscal Update

Link to presentation: [Semi-Annual Fiscal Update]

- Every February, the mid-year budget update is provided to the Commissioners and provides an overview of changes that have occurred throughout the fiscal year.
    - Child Welfare Block is used for administration and for some community services. There was a $19M reduction in funds for the second half of SFY. This resulted in a $1.1M reduction in what was planned for. Human Services will still be underspent but is working closely with CDHS to determine what the long term situation will look like.
        - Commissioner Stephens asked if there was any help the Commissioners could provide. Director O'Hayre responded there are some legislative areas where advocacy could be helpful.
    - Core Services and Child Welfare Workload Staff Funding is overspent purposefully to maximize allocation. The overspending is covered by the Child Welfare Block.
    - Office on Aging funding includes $730,021 SFY 20-21 carry forward. ARPA, CARES and SB290 funds are not included.
    - Options for Long Term Care is on target because a rate increase was received.

- Adult Protective Services is on target but is expected to be overspent at the end of the year due to County provided market increases.
- HB-1223 Aid for the Needy and Disabled Navigator was a piece of legislation from 2019 that provided the option to implement a Navigator for the needy and disabled. A staff person was added. The funds weren't received until October so a carry over is being requested.
- County Admin (Adult Financial, Food Assistance (SNAP), Medicaid) is overspent due to overtime that was required because of issues with the Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS) upgrade and volume of work. This is normally overspent because funding is insufficient.
  - Commissioner Kefalas expressed exasperation with CBMS issues.
- Child Care (CCAP) is on target and includes CARE and CRSSA funding.
  - County Manager Linda Hoffmann asked if eligibility could be redefined to allow for funds to be used for families. Director O'Hayre stated policies have been changed at the local level as much as possible but state regulations do not allow for any more modifications or uses.
- Colorado Works (TANF) is on target.

Legislative Preview

Link to presentation: Legislative Preview

- A Legislative and Policy Analyst position was added to Human Services to track legislation and be a point of contact for the State Board of Human Services and Medical Services Board.
- HB22-1131 - Reduce Justice Involvement for Young Children ("Raise the Floor")
  - CCI Position - Oppose
  - This bill would change the juvenile justice system so youth 10-12 can no longer be charged with a crime and youth that are 13,14,and 15 years old could not be sentenced to the Department of Youth Services. Philosophically, Human Services agrees with this approach, but Child Welfare is not the appropriate place for the youths to be sent. The appropriate services should be provided by juvenile justice and/or restorative justice services. This would create a large fiscal impact and statute does not allow cases to be open for these circumstances.
  - Human Services is advocating for a study to be done to focus on significant needs to be addressed prior to bill passing.
  - Commissioner Shadduck McNally commented that an emergency room is also not an appropriate place to take youth and requested to know how she can help with advocacy.
- HB22-1056 - Emergency Temporary Care for Children
  - CCI Position - Amend
  - The bill would permit the county department of human services to enter into an agreement with one or more facilities to provide emergency temporary shelter to children who are neglected and dependent, who are taken into temporary custody, or who have had contact with law enforcement and are unable to return home.
  - Amendments are coming and the bill will look different when completed.
  - Commissioner Kefalas asked if ARPA funds could be used for youth experiencing homelessness. Director O'Hayre stated yes and funding from this bill could help support locally. Needing to get clarification on what population and age group this bill is attempting to support.
- HB22-1003 - Youth Delinquency Prevention and Intervention
  - CCI Position - No Position
  - This bill is being presented as 'the fix' to HB22-1131, but this is an optional pilot program and will not provide a solution.
- HB22-1042 - Teen Parent Driving Instruction Course
  - CCI Position - Amend
  - The bill requires CDHS to reimburse a county department of human services for costs paid by the county department to a public or private driving school for the provision of driving instruction to an individual who is a teen parent (between 15 and 18 years old) and qualify for the Federal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).
  - The bill would create a new program within the Department of Human Services and that is not the best place. Looking into creating a voucher program and aligning it with when the teen driver goes to pick up their child's birth certificate.
- HB22-1038 - Right to Counsel for Youth
  - CCI Position - Monitor

- The bill would be a practice shift for the type of advocacy the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) provides to children 12 years old and over. Right now, the GAL presents to the Court what the child's best interest is. This bill would have the GAL present to the Court what the child wants.
    - There is not a significant fiscal note because GAL services are already being provided but it is a shift in how the services are provided.
- HB22-1035 - Modernization of the Older Coloradans' Act
    - CCI Position - Not taking a position
    - The Office on Aging Advisory Council has reviewed and provided input.
- SB22-102 - Transparency Out-of-Home Placements Developmental Disabilities
    - CCI Position - no position yet/unsure if a position will be taken
    - This is a Weld County bill and addresses a placement situation Weld experienced recently with a youth receiving services at the CDHS Laradon facility, a residential placement for youth with developmental disabilities. Laradon determined that the youth was ready for discharge because the cost of care and services was no longer manageable by CDHS. Over 50 placement providers were sought nationwide and no other placement could be found for this child. The issue the legislation addresses is that there is no appeal process for counties who experience this and there is no county representation on the limited appeals panel that exists for other issues.
    - Addresses the appeal process and where the child should go if services are not able to be provided at a specific facility.
- SB22-106 - Conflict of Interest in Public Behavioral Health
    - CCI Position - No Position Yet.
      The bill addresses conflicts of interest in regional organizations responsible for public behavioral health services. The bill would require a competitive selection process by July 2025 to select Managed Care Entities (MCE) responsible for the statewide system of community behavioral health care. The bill further details requirements regarding conflict between being the MCE and also a provider responsible for providing services.
    - Counties have raised concerns with CCI that a regional approach will replicate the challenges already experienced through the HCPF Regional Accountable Entity structure.
- Potential Bills
    - Creation of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood
        - This bill is required as a follow up to HB21-1304 that passed last session, creating the new Colorado Department of Early Childhood. A robust but fast process has occurred over the last year to make recommendations to the Governor's office and Legislature on what programs should move to the new department and how to implement Prop E funds and Universal Preschool.
        - The recommendations call for an advisory governance structure rather than a Title 2 board that would establish a true rulemaking board.
            - It would be the only place where an Executive Director would have financial authority over County funds.
        - CCAP will still be administered by counties and new lead agencies would be created and required to brain and blend funds. The details of this would need clarity.
        - Child Welfare prevention service would be moved but the program is crucial to child welfare funding and the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act.
        - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked if local stakeholders were included when conversations surrounding the bill were occurring. Director O'Hayre answered there were four seats included (two Human Services directors and two CCI members). Their feedback was outweighed by other stakeholders. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked how to best advocate. Director O'Hayre will provide updates as more information comes in. Commissioner Kefalas suggested having further conversations with local representatives.
    - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) bill
        - Potential legislation is expected that will seek to increase the amount of basic cash assistance given to families, remove many of the time-limited and other program requirements, and remove penalties from the program for not complying with the requirements.
            - The plan is to use County reserves and reserves are already used to pay for overspending in Child Welfare so reserves are not available.
    - Unionization of State and County Employees/Collective Bargaining

- Potential legislation is expected that would allow more county, municipal and other public employees to unionize.
  - Human Resources is working on this bill from an employee perspective.
  - This could impact our ability to support staff and clients locally given the allocation methodology and that we would not receive more state or federal funds to cover additional expenditures.

Department Activity Report

Link to presentation: [Department Activity Report Q4 2021]

- Children, Youth, and Family
  - In Q4, 2,303 referrals were received which is more than when COVID began but not at pre-pandemic numbers. Assessments are also up to 899, which is lagging behind assessments pre-pandemic. Family Assessment Response (FAR) track is increasing and is closer to pre-pandemic numbers
  - Child Protection caseloads are decreasing but complexity and administrative burden of cases is increasing. Rules and regulations continue to increase with changes at the State level. This is being looked into to see what can be done.
  - Community Resource Unit (CRU) held 376 family meetings, which is a decrease since COVID began and is looking more similar to pre-pandemic numbers.
- Aging and Adults Services
  - Adult Protection Services referrals have slightly decreased since last quarter but are higher than Q4 of 2020.
  - Allegations have changed slightly for Q4. For adults aged 18-69, pre-pandemic primary allegations were self-neglect and caretaker neglect. It is now physical abuse. For adults aged 70 and older, self-neglect was primary and exploitation was second. Caretaker neglect is now second.
- Office on Aging - Ombudsman cases are stabilizing and looking similar to pre-pandemic numbers.
- Benefits and Community Support - Food Assistance and TANF benefits have increased significantly. This is because there was a 23% increase in funding provided in October of 2021 because the program had not kept up with the cost of living.
- Child Support collected has decreased and is more similar to pre-pandemic numbers because unemployment benefits are not being collected.
- The Child Care Assistance Program has received 215 applications and work is being done to look into whether or not providers are able to be located by families.
  - Commissioner Kefalas asked what is needed and can be addressed through CCAP to meet needs. Director O'Hayre answered that statewide only 9% of families that qualify for CCAP are being served. Uniform eligibility is being addressed and needs are continued to be monitored as it is difficult to find providers. Director O'Hayre provided the idea of viewing childcare providers as small businesses so they can benefit from small business resources.
- Changes in the types of services provided in Adult Protection Services are significant because the housing need is the highest level seen and continues to increase.
  - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked who questions can be directed to. Director O'Hayre answered she can be contacted or Aging and Adults Services Division Manager, Lori Metz.

Other Business

- Commissioner Kefalas requested an update on the PEER program at the next Board of Social Services meeting.

Per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Larimer County will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with a disability who need assistance. Services can be arranged with at least seven (7) business days' notice. Please email us at ohayrehj@co.larimer.co.us, or call (970) 498-7719 or Relay Colorado 711. "Walk-in" requests for auxiliary aids and services will be honored to the extent possible but may be unavailable if advance notice is not provided.