

Ward County Human Service Zone Board

Minutes

April 7th , 2020 – 8:00 AM

Second Floor-Ward County Commissioner Chambers

PRESENT:

Melissa Bliss –Zone Director
Clayton Fegley
Mac McLeod-watched via livestream
John Fjeldahl
John Pietsch
Jim Rostad
Alan Walter
Shelly Weppler

Also present was Zone Board secretary, Karen Schultz and Account Budget Specialist, Connie Zieske.

MOTION:

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by John Pietsch and unanimously carried by the Board, approval of the Agenda for April 7th, 2020.

MOTION:

It was moved by Alan Walter, seconded by Shelly Weppler and unanimously carried by the Board, approval of the minutes for the special meeting of February 25, 2020 and regular board meeting of March 3, 2020.

MOTION:

It was moved by John Pietsch, seconded by John Fjeldahl and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the bills for April 7, 2020.

Board member Alan Walter questioned the large payment for toner to Monster, Inc., indicating that he would like to see us purchase local. Director Bliss informed the Board that it was at the recommendation of our county IT Dept to purchase from Monster Inc as toner can be obtained at a significant savings.

MOTION:

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Jim Rostad and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the January and February 2020 Budge Recap Expense Report.

MOTION:

It was moved by Alan Walter, seconded by Shelly Weppler and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the January and February 2020 Budget Revenue Report.

Melissa Bliss provided information to the Zone Board which included changes as to how we are able to still serve the community with our doors being closed to the public. Some of those changes include having paper applications available inside the main doors of the Ward County Courthouse, drop box availability outside the building, encouraging online applications, attendance at juvenile court hearing by telephone, skype visits and calls for the foster care unit to connect with children & families as well as other modifications. There are currently 16 employees working from home with the plan to increase that number.

Melissa addressed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and how it was passed by the Federal Government and implemented at the County level but the Human Service Zone is not currently eligible for the benefits of this act since we are to follow the Merit System. There was discussion amongst the Board as to the desire to implement this act for the Human Service Zone employees as well, which resulted in the following recommendation as a motion to show support of implementation.

MOTION:

It was moved by Shelly Wepler, seconded by John Pietsch and unanimously carried by the Board to recommend having the FFCRA in place for the Ward County Human Service Zone employees.

Tammy Terras, County HR Director, was also present and indicated the process of getting an act such as this to be written into Century Code and how the HSZ is governed by State Merit System policies. It is expected that more information regarding this Act and how it affects HSZ employees will be forthcoming in the next week.

Regarding a personnel update, the Board was informed that there are currently 7 vacancies within the county as follows: 1 Economic Assistance case worker, 1 Economic Assistance lead worker, 3 In Home case managers, 1 CPS case manager and 1 CPS intake worker. Interviews are being done this week for an Economic Assistance-Foster Care Payment worker.

Melissa Bliss indicated that the due date for the Ward County Human Service Zone Plan is June 1st with the hope that this deadline will be extended.

Board member Shelly Wepler expressed her gratitude for the employees of the WCHSZ and for continuing to meet the needs of the people.

Mtg Adjourned at 8:57

Melissa Bliss, Ward CHSZ Director

Date

Karen Schultz, Recording Secretary