

# Ward County Human Service Zone Board

## Minutes

July 7th , 2020 – 8:00 AM

Second Floor-Ward County Commissioner Chambers

### **PRESENT:**

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

Also present was Zone Board secretary, Karen Schultz.

### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Jim Rostad, seconded by Mac McLeod and unanimously carried by the Board, that the Agenda for July 7, 2020 be approved.

### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Alan Walter and unanimously carried by the Board that the minutes for the regular board meeting of June 2, 2020 be approved with the correction on page 2 of Zone Policy to Zone Plan.

### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Alan Walter and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the June 2020 expenditures and bills for July 7, 2020.

### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Jim Rostad, seconded by Mac McLeod and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the May 2020 Budget Recap Expense Report.

### **MOTION:**

It was moved by Shelly Weppler, seconded by Clayton Fegley and unanimously carried by the Board to receive and file the May 2020 Budget Revenue Report.

Director Bliss updated the Board in regards to the Covid-19 staff reintegration, indicating that all employees are back in the office after working from home. Eligibility workers are not conducting face-to-face interviews except in a circumstance where it is necessary. We continue to encourage online applications and utilization of the drop box. There has been a significant decrease in the number of people coming in to the office. Child welfare visitations are taking place both inside and outside of the office.

An update regarding the emergency Covid shelter, which went into service on 4/24/2020, was provided. The shelter has been used once since opening. There will be a conference call with DHS on 7/8/2020 to discuss the shelter and at this time, it is anticipated that the state will be discontinuing their involvement in the shelters statewide effective July 11<sup>th</sup>.

A personnel update was provided, outlining that there are 2 vacancies in In Home, 1 in CPS and 1 in Economic Assistance.

In reference to the 2021 Budget, Melissa indicated that there will be a conference call today with the ND Dept of Human Services, as the budget is due to be submitted to the State by July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Director Bliss informed the Board that part of the State Redesign for the Zones will include a new HR policy manual, a draft of which has been discussed with the Directors' group. There are areas of the manual in which a Zone may ask for an addendum when it is prudent for the Zone to follow County policy rather than Zone policy. Board Member Wepler asked that Melissa first meet with HR Director Tammy Terras to determine what those addendum areas may be and then bring those recommendations to the Zone Board.

Task Forces are being created to work on other areas of the redesign and Melissa indicated that she is on the task force for General Assistance as well as Zone Director Performance Evaluations.

Director Bliss also wanted to bring the Board's attention to two of our employees who have stood out in recent days. Patti Sather, Eligibility Worker with our agency, was recently showcased in the Minot Daily News for her artistic abilities. Patti supports charitable causes with a portion of the money she raises from her sales of those items. Tom Kempf, Foster Care Case Manager, recently utilized his experience as a trained EMT to perform the Heimlich maneuver on a child's family member who was choking on a food item during a recent family visit. Appreciation was expressed for both of these employees.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

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Melissa Bliss, Ward CHSZ Director

Date

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Karen Schultz, Recording Secretary