

BENTON COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
April 19, 2016

The Benton County Human Services Board met in regular session on April 19, 2016 in the Benton County Board Room in Foley, MN with Board members Spencer Buerkle, Warren Peschl, Jim McMahon, Jake Bauerly and Ed Popp present. Call to order by Chair Peschl was at 9:33 AM.

Popp/Bauerly unanimous to approve the amended agenda: add item—invite to MDH video conference.

Buerkle/McMahon unanimous to approve the Consent Agenda: 1) approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 5, 2016 as written.

Nicole Ruhoff, Public Health Supervisor, invited Board members to the MN Department of Health video conference—*Protecting the Water and Health of Communities*, to be held on May 3rd from 12:00 noon to 1:30 PM in the Human Services third floor conference room.

Sandi Shoberg, Social Services Supervisor, explained that Benton County Human Services provides case management services to adults with a severe and persistent mental illness. Tori Blonigen and Lauree Gunderson, Benton County case workers, provided case examples of clients who suffer from a severe and persistent mental illness and the services available in our community to assist these clients. Gunderson reported on a 57-year old female client, mentally ill and chemically dependent, and the challenges experienced in finding placement for her because of her record of assaults. Blonigen reported on a 56-year old male client, suffering from depression and suicidal, as well as a number of other medical conditions; this client has now started working with home health and community support services and has been able to live independently in the community.

Bob Cornelius, Human Services Director, explained that the 2014 legislature appropriated \$138,400 to Benton County for child protection services; the legislation allowed for two bonuses to be earned by meeting monthly visits and by meeting child protection timelines. He noted that Benton County can reasonably expect to earn the monthly visit bonus annually, but the second bonus is harder to meet—Benton County missed last year by .3 percent. Cornelius requested Board approval to hire a child protection social worker position, with the rationale that 1) transition of the child protection investigative process to the much more time-intensive traditional investigations; 2) will provide back-up intake and relative custody searching/licensing to improve efficiency and consolidation; 3) will provide flexibility and revenue-generating opportunities (TCM Hit Rate); and 4) help alleviate the burden of so many new workers who are not able to carry a full caseload. Cornelius stated that this position is fully funded by the funds received from the appropriation, bonus and the TCM revenue; in the unlikelihood this funding would ever end, the county would end these positions through attrition. Popp/McMahon unanimous to authorize the hiring of a child protection social worker position.

Cornelius explained that Benton County Human Services records interviews for child protection and fraud investigation; the current recording equipment is not compatible or HIPAA compliant with new computers. He stated that Benton County Human Services would like to purchase recording applications that would be loaded onto worker smart phones; although the application itself--owned by *Loffler*--meets all HIPAA needs (*Loffler* has signed a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement ensuring that they will follow HIPAA requirements), the application uses a "cloud" from Japan and that "cloud" may or not be HIPAA compliant as they (*Olympus*) refuse to sign a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement.

Cornelius suggested that, in the remote chance that there is an issue with a transmission of data and Loffler is not able to retrieve the data, the county would just not use the "Japan connection". He pointed out that the Mayo Clinic, as well as a number of other known entities, uses this new technology. McMahon inquired if those entities have a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement with Olympus (staff would need to research). Bauerly stated his concern with the county's long term liability if this information system were "hacked". McMahon stated his belief that "...I don't think the question is whether or not somebody can get hacked...because anybody can get hacked...it's whether or not they will sign this agreement...the business agreement is for them to state that whatever data they release to us...they are being HIPAA compliant..." Buerkle asked how MCIT coverage would apply in this case. Bauerly inquired how other counties are recording interviews. Following brief discussion, McMahon/Buerkle unanimous to table this item to the next meeting.

Chair Peschl adjourned the meeting at 10:08 AM.

Warren Peschl, Chair
Benton County Human Services Board

ATTEST:

Montgomery Headley
Benton County Administrator