

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MEETING MINUTES

A recording of this work session is available at: http://larimer.org/bcc/list_worksessions.cfm.

Date: November 4, 2019

Location: 200 W. Oak, Commissioners' Conference Room

In Attendance: Commissioner Tom Donnelly; Commissioner John Kefalas; Commissioner Steve Johnson; Linda Hoffmann; Lorenda Volker; Laura Walker; Lisa Silcox; Thad Paul; Shannon Reiff; Eileen Brittingham; Lori Metz; Tina Barker; Lynda Meyer; Elizabeth Piesman; Sylvia Smith and Ann Marie Grobarek

INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Donnelly welcomed everyone.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN REPORT

Human Services Director Laura Walker introduced Elizabeth Piesman, Ombudsman, to provide an overview of the Ombudsman program per a request from the last Board of Social Services. Elizabeth provided a history of the program, clarification of their role, and other information regarding the work they do, including:

- The partnership they have with Adult Protective Services, law enforcement and the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
- The guideline that adults have a right to make decisions that are not in their own best interest
- The total number of assisted living facility and nursing home beds in the County
- And some numbers regarding the work done in the past fiscal year, including 662 consultations with families or residents and 938 consults with staff

Questions from the Commissioners demonstrated an interest in how different languages impact the care given in facilities and opportunities for elected officials to visit the facilities. Commissioner Kefalas asked how we address concerns of retaliation when someone makes a complaint about a facility, and Elizabeth responded that they should be reported and will be quickly addressed.

Elizabeth reported that Larimer County Human Services is also involved in a culture change project called PEER which acknowledges the loss of someone you have grown close to when working in one of these facilities. This project is only in one other county in the country.



Ombudsmen also participate in involuntary discharges from a facility. They usually get a copy of the notice and they try to help advocate, letting the person know about their appeal rights. For example, there were two residents who were fighting, and one was issued a discharge notice. The fights were a result of hallway collisions as one person had to push themselves backwards down the hall when there was no one to push them in their wheelchair. The ombudsman provided the person with an electric wheelchair and the discharge was rescinded.

Commissioner Kefalas asked how people can submit complaints and Elizabeth responded that they can call, write a note or a letter, send email or a fax. As much as is possible given the situation, the identity of the person filing the complaint is protected. Commissioner Kefalas asked about complaints regarding transportation. Elizabeth responded that those are passed along to the respective agency. Ombudsmen do not generally provide their services to non-licensed care homes.

SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM UPDATE

Laura Walker thanks the Board for providing funding for the Senior Tax Work-Off Program. This program is a real testament of a good use of public funds for people who may not qualify for some of our other public assistance programs so they can work off a portion of their tax burden.

Eileen Brittingham, Senior Human Resources Generalist, provided an overview of the program and recent changes. It was deemed more appropriate for Human Resources to administer the program as the tasks are focused on recruiting, interviewing and job placement. Currently, the budget is \$30,000 and participants can work off up to \$400 of their Larimer County property taxes. People can work up to about 36 hours. This year all applicants were placed in positions, but previous years when there have been more applicants than work available, considerations used to determine who was placed in a work opportunity included the following:

- Lowest income households
- People who did not work the program the year before
- Skills that best matched the job duties
- And requested work locations.

Seniors provided 2,446 hours of work for 15 different departments this year. There were 87 participants.

The efforts to look at best practices will continue in order to streamline benefits to both seniors and the work provided to County departments. The goal is to reach out to more seniors, increase the efficiencies and encourage departments to provide work opportunities that can really help departments and will best leverage the skills presented by the range of applicants for the program. There is a real need for more office work opportunities in the future.

FEDERAL ACF GRANT FOR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

Laura Walker notified the Board of Social Services that the census grant has been awarded which will mean \$103,000. And our Economic and Workforce Development Director notified us that national statistics indicate that \$1800 comes to a community for each person counted in a census, and locally they determined it would be \$1300 for each person counted. Heather O'Hayre, Human Services Deputy Director, and Michelle Bird, Public Affairs Manager, were instrumental in writing that grant application.



But this presentation is about the grant from the Administration for Children and Family (ACF) grant, that Larimer County was awarded. Child Youth and Family Services Division Manager Thad Paul explained that only 9 of these grants were awarded in the entire country. CYF managers Catherine Weaver, Judy Rodriguez and Anthony Silverman submitted the application for \$550,000 annually for up to five years. The goal of these funds is to increase community collaboration targeted at child abuse prevention. It will provide funds to hire 3 service/system navigators who can help families find services and connect people in different circumstances to the services that best fit their needs.

Thad provided a presentation talking about specific highlights of the grant and how it will be implemented. Targeted outcomes included the following:

- Increased access to tangible resources and supports
- Reduce rate of child welfare assessment and case involvement
- Reduce entry into foster care
- Develop shared protocols and data informed process improvements

The grant involves broad community participation, increases access and availability of evidence-based programs (EBP) and will have a focus on research and data through the Colorado State University (CSU) Research Center.

The hope is that the services provided through this grant will show that increased collaboration will be helpful. Linda Hoffmann, County Manager, asked if these would be actual metrics that could be reported to the Board. Thad replied there should be metrics that can be reported.

C-STAT DASHBOARD REVIEW

Laura Walker reported on the C-Stat report. Change in administration at the State level resulted in changes to the C-Stat because Michelle Barnes focused over the last six months on county input and work that is done on behalf of our state partners. There have been as many as 26 measures, but they have been cut down to 16. They are different from last quarter, and if a measure is a cumulative measure then it is grayed out – rather than showing it is not meeting the criteria.

Larimer County is meeting 13 out of the 16 goals, and the other large counties are meeting 9 out of 16 of the goals.

DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

The revised Department Performance Report for Larimer County Human Services shows more specific information based on input from the Board from the last meeting. Shannon Reiff, Operations Division Manager, provided a review of the outcomes, including graphs to show a more visual representation of the data reviewed on the report. The report provided the following information:

- A total of 2,234 referrals regarding potential child abuse or neglect were reported and 980 of those were screened in for assessment. Shannon noted that there are typically less referrals in the summer because schools have mandatory reporters that do not see children in the summer.
- Child Protection Placements indicated where children who were placed outside of their homes were staying. About 175 children who are in kinship care are not reflected on this graph.
- Adult Protective Cases have decreased by about 9 from last year to a total of 167.
- The number of children in need on the wait list for the Child Care Assistance Program has gone down from 206 to 174.



- Child Support collected a total of \$4,419,030 over the quarter.
- \$29,110 was recovered for public assistance program overpayments.

Commissioner Kefalas asked for an example of an “independent living arrangement” for Child Protection Placements. Thad Paul explained that this often happens when a child is renting a place of their own, and usually it is a child renting a room in a home with a trusted adult. Human Services can help with the cost of rent in some circumstances and is usually only for children 18 and older.

Commissioner Johnson asked why our congregate care numbers are increasing. Thad Paul responded that there has been an influx of children who are in a hospitalization or mental health care facility. The federal government considers that as “congregate care”. We are seeing an increase in mental health issues. Mountain Crest is the only local facility but it is often full, so sometimes the children have to be placed in facilities that are further away.

Commissioner Kefalas asked for information on what percentage of people in Larimer County are on private pay versus Medicaid. He also asked for how many of the people in the 18-69 category for allegations of adult protection concerns are regarding people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. These numbers were not readily available but would be provided later.

Commissioner Kefalas asked why the number of people on the wait list for CCAP has gone down. Laura Walker responded that the process we have requires families to do a redetermination periodically in order to stay on the wait list and people drop off as they choose not to do the redetermination or find other means to care for their child. Commissioner Kefalas asked for the amount of funds that would be needed to eliminate the wait list? Laura Walker said it is difficult to estimate due to the range of quality and cost of caretakers but that we could provide the number for the next meeting. Commissioner Kefalas asked about the Governor’s Budget proposal and whether or not it addressed these funding shortfalls. Shannon Reiff answered the question. The Office of Early Childhood has requested an additional \$6.7 million dollars to maintain current level of services for 30,000 children and they are proposing that the county share (match) be increased from 9.4% to 12.4% in order to show local support for the program.

Commissioner Donnelly asked what it would do for our wait list and Shannon and Laura responded that it is intended to maintain the same number. There was some discussion regarding how much it would cost per child in Larimer County to cover the children on the wait list. Commissioner Kefalas proposed that information regarding the cost to Larimer County could be informational to State-level discussions of the budget implications.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Kefalas would like CCAP info before the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING