

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MEETING MINUTES

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

Date: February 11, 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; Heather O'Hayre; Shannon Reiff; Laura Sartor; Thad Paul and Ann Marie Grobarek

INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Donnelly welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions to the agenda.

UPDATE ON HUB OPERATIONS

Thad Paul, Child Youth and Family Services Division Manager, provided an update on outsourcing the answering of referral calls to a call center, which was a pilot last summer. Did make some adjustments as discussed last quarter, 56% of calls were coming in between 5pm and 7pm so office hours were extended to 7pm on week days, starting January 1st. All staff is now doing 5 eight hour shifts instead of 4 ten-hour shifts in order to cover the schedule.

Savings in excess of \$150,000.00 by having the State Hotline take those calls. After Hours staff has picked up the element of responding to detention screens that come in the off-hours.

Commissioner Kefalas asked for clarification on how a call taken by the State Hotline gets a response. Thad Paul explained that the After Hours supervisor screens the call shortly after it is completed and makes a decision on whether or not it needs an immediate response by an After Hours Social Caseworker or can be reviewed in the morning by the team responsible for doing so. Either the local number or the State Hotline number will get you to the correct place no matter what day or time.

Laura Walker wanted to highlight the partnership established with Community Corrections to provide transportation for juveniles has been expanded to provide staff if law enforcement needs to bring a juvenile to the Hub for screening. Tim Hand and his Department have been very helpful in making sure security staff is available for any screenings required after hours.



Commissioner Johnson asked how much it costs for the hotline to take a call and what happened to the staff that used to work nights and weekends. Thad replied that a referral call runs about \$22 per phone call and general queries are \$10 per phone call. There was natural attrition in the Hub staff as some of the staff rescheduled to day shifts and others left who could not work daytime hours, and the positions that turned over were not backfilled.

CCAP STATUS UPDATE

Human Services Deputy Director provided an update for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) program. No new clients added to the waitlist since September of 2016 so the term “waitlist” is a misnomer as people have reduced applications because they are not able to be put on the waitlist at this time.

Heather O’Hayre presented on the current status of CCAP.

- Currently there are 781 children receiving CCAP, 430 of whom are in school
- As of September 2016, there are 205 children on the waitlist
- It appears CCAP will be overspent by about 10% of our allocation of \$5 million
- 2018 was overspent about 20%. The reduction for this year is a result of families exiting the program as they get older or move out of Larimer County
- The only new children covered are families that receive TANF and need childcare as part of their activities with the Workforce Center

Commissioner Donnelly asked about Estes Park feedback indicating that there is a shortage of providers who accept CCAP and whether or not that was a problem in Fort Collins and Loveland. Heather replied that Larimer County Human Services has not been recruiting providers because there is no funding for additional spots.

The implementation of HB18-1335 will have a big impact on CCAP. The legislation

- Sets a standard tiered entry rate for eligibility
- Sets a standard exit rate shifting to 85% of the State median income
- Extends care after exiting the program from six to twelve months
- And it changes the allocation formula providing six factors that the State Board can consider and weight in order to optimize the distribution of funding

The changes in the allocation formula are projected to give us a 6 to 10 percent cut in our allocation. Larimer County has the second smallest eligible population out of the Big Ten counties in the State which has a big impact on the new formula. Additional fiscal analysis will be done, but our provider rates are the third highest in the Big Ten counties, behind Denver and Boudler. Our rates are 6 to 11 dollars higher than Weld and up to double the rates of Pueblo, El Paso and Mesa counties. This may be due to Larimer County having higher quality providers than other counties. Larimer County will still have to increase rates from 5 to 24% for providers due to the new market rate analysis. Jerene Peterson, the Deputy Executive Director of CDHS is willing to come up to talk through our specific issues, but there will be a reduction in our allocation and program capacity.

Commissioner Johnson asked for clarification regarding the rates being paid to providers. The mandated State rate is not implemented yet as it has been projected that it will cost an additional \$5 million. Currently Larimer County Human Services can pay either the providers’ private rate or the highest market rate, but there can be no direct negotiations with providers regarding what rate they are paid.



Commissioner Johnson said there was a lot of discussion at the State Board of Human Services and they said they were looking at potential solutions.

With increased rates, mandated participants and reduced funding, Larimer County Human Services will be overspent. Historically overspending has been covered by purchasing leftover allocation dollars from Pueblo County but that resource may not be available moving forward. If there are no leftover allocation dollars, then funds would come out of the TANF reserves although they may be required for TANF expenditures. There is no other way to reduce expenditures as staffing is currently at minimal levels. All other expenses are mandated by law. Commissioner Johnson asked if there would be allocation money leftover at the State at the end of the fiscal year. Shannon Reiff explained that there is no close-out but counties are expected to use your TANF funds. Historically, the State has had no remaining allocation funds.

Commissioner Kefalas asked how the CCAP increase proposed by the Budget Committee for the next fiscal year would impact this situation. The State Department documented a need for 23 million but the Request For Information (RFI) asked for a ten million dollar increase. There is some confusion about whether the RFI will serve as the supplemental, but they have not submitted a request for a supplemental yet.

C-STAT DASHBOARD REVIEW

The Colorado Department of Human Services tracks a number of performance indicators to determine how the Larimer Department of Human Services is doing which is also sent to the Commissioners. This dashboard goes through 2018. Two measures were changed in October of 2018 and made more challenging. Larimer County Human Services met 18 out of 25 goals in comparison to the 14 met by the other Big Ten Counties.

TANF IMPACT OF BCA INCREASE FOR YTD 18-19 FISCAL YEAR

Laura Sartor and Shannon Reiff reported on the impact of the 10% increase in Basic Cash Assistance for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program mandated by the State Board of Human Services in September of 2018.

- Larimer County is projected to be overspent by \$500,000.00 at the end of the fiscal year
- There has been a 14.1% increase in the cost of each case as a result of the household composition which requires a different rate
- Decline in total number of cases by 3%

Commissioner Johnson has been asked by a State Board of Human Services member to provide information on what the impact of the increase has been on Larimer County in terms of additional spending, the TANF balance and our ability to fund transfer programs like the Workforce Center. Laura Sartor will provide a summary by next week.

Commissioner Kefalas would like more information on trends related to family composition and how well Larimer County Human Services is engaging families where one parent is not in the household or families where grandparents are raising their grandchildren.

Laura Walker added that the MOU with the Workforce Center commits to keep the funding the same as the previous year, but there may have to be a decrease in the total committed to the Workforce Center



for 2019-2020. January statewide numbers and considerations of leftover allocations should be available for an estimate can be provided and plans can be made for the impact on the Economic and Workforce Development Department. Commissioner Johnson recommended a Work Session meeting with Jacob Castillo.

Commissioner Kefalas asked about the C-Stat report measure of Colorado Works Entered Employment. Laura Walker explained that this goal was cumulative for the fiscal year, so there is still time to meet the goal. Commissioner Kefalas asked for information on what kind of wages people are getting when they leave TANF and whether there is any follow up or data on six months after they leave TANF. The State goal of 35% seemed low to Commissioner Kefalas. This may be a result of challenges in finding and keeping steady employment including obtaining child care or it could be a result of them hitting their limit of 60 months on TANF. The national average of time that a family spends on TANF is 18 to 24 months.

For the May Board of Social Services there will be agenda item on where we stand with funding and better information on why people are exiting the TANF program and what is happening to them.

DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

Heather presented an overview of the department's client activity. Heather reviewed monthly average caseloads, program activity and complaint totals from October 1, 2018-December 31, 2019.

During the 4th Quarter of 2018:

- The Food, Medical & Financial Assistance Program caseload has decreased to 59,897.
- Child Support collected over \$4,591,944 dollars this quarter.
- Children, Youth and Family received 1,649 referrals, 529 of which were assigned for assessment.
- We received 3 formal complaints during the 4th Quarter.

The decrease in Food, Medical & Financial Assistance cases is attributed to over 9,000 cases decreasing in Medicaid. SNAP and TANF increased by 1,000. We can break these out into Medicaid, Food Assistance and TANF. They may have been combined in order to show the number of households since programs often overlap.

Options for Long Term Care and Adult Protective Services have increased over the last 18 months, most likely due to mandated reporting. Commissioner Kefalas asked for a breakdown of the types of abuse. Child Protection numbers show a 15% increase in error due to duplicate reporting. It is actually a 9% increase, showing fewer referrals and more assessments which a reflection of the more complex cases coming into the office. Please bring the number of children who remain home and stay safe for future meetings, which is specific for those children who had an original plan to remain home. The majority of our cases are neglect as opposed to abuse and are driven mostly by poverty.

BI-ANNUAL FISCAL UPDATE

Shannon Reiff provided a budget update giving a snapshot of major allocations in February and at the end of the fiscal year. Major points included:

- The County Administration allocation, used to fund administration costs for Food Assistance, Medicaid and Adult Financial Assistance, is at 57% and should be at 50%. This allocation has been overspent statewide by at least 10% since 2014. HCPF requested a supplemental of \$10.6



million this year, \$3.8 million of which is local dollars and the rest is federal funding. HCPF is also requesting that counties increase their share to match the statute requirements from 17.21% and 8.6% to 20% and 10% respectively. The County Administration Allocation group voted to approve and it will go to the Finance Sub-PAC and the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) to be voted on.

- Adult Protective Services is overspent but there may be leftover funding at close out that will cover counties that are overspent.
- Child Welfare is 2% overspent but there is flexibility between funds for child welfare and core services allocations so mid-year adjustments can be made. Statewide, 68 new caseworkers were approved. Larimer County was approved for 3.25 new employees. Currently there are some limited term positions that allow new employees to spend six to seven weeks in the State Academy that can backfill positions that become available via turnover.

Commissioner Kefalas asked if there was a problem with hiring due to the competitive hiring market. Laura explained that there is more turnover due to people finding jobs more closely tied to their professional goals and objectives.

SYNERGY UPDATE

Heather O'Hayre reported on the 18 months into this three-year project to build a computer tool to help us with case management function, automating forms and business processes. It is currently on hold while we look at over-arching needs and State changes regarding their perspective on interoperability. Some other counties like Boulder and Arapahoe have systems that can help increase efficiency, but they rely upon information pulled down from the State systems. But the State has put a ban on any more counties being able to access that data, so we may not have the access we need to continue.

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING