



Board of Social Services

MINUTES

May 8, 2017

**Commissioners' Conference Room
Second Floor – County Administration Building
10:00 am – 12:00 am**

In Attendance: Commissioner Lew Gaiter; Commissioner Steve Johnson; Commissioner Tom Donnelly; Linda Hoffmann; Lorenda Volker; Neil Gluckman; Laura Walker; Heather O'Hayre; Laura Sartor; Bev Thurber, Executive Director of the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County; Katy Mason, and Ann Marie Grobarek.

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

Introductions & Announcements

Commissioner Gaiter welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Commissioner Gaiter asked if there were any additions to the agenda and Laura said she had one.

Early Childhood Council of Larimer County

Bev Thurber, Executive Director of the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County, presented on the work that they do with Larimer County Human Services. Beverly provided a brochure and a slideshow that provided information including the following:

- The background and mission of the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County (ECCLC),
- An overview of their services and initiatives,
- And a description of the data that the ECCLC tracks.

Bev explained that ECCLC ranks child care provider quality on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest. 65% of children receiving CCAP are with child care providers who are high quality, meaning they rank at a 3 or above. The number of licensed providers willing to accept CCAP has declined over time, which is challenging for the community because of the increase in people needing child care. For example, ECCLC estimates 4,456 children from infants up to 2 years of age need care because approximately 65% of families have both parents in the workforce, but there are only 1,117 places available at licensed child care providers that accept CCAP. There is a waiting list for Early Head Start but that Early Intervention is required by the State to take all infants through 2 years of age.

ECCLC is telling people to put their names on a wait list for child care once they know they are pregnant, and Bev observed that it is more difficult for people who are reliant upon CCAP to pay for child care costs. In response to a question from Commissioner Johnson, Bev reported that the ECCLC believes Larimer County is not able to keep pace with the demand for child care providers due to the increase in population. Commissioner Johnson asked if the additional funding from the State for CCAP providers is helping to address that issue. Bev said that the ECCLC has seen an increase in the providers interested in getting more information, and she is optimistic that we could see an increase in providers over the next two years. Kelly Morrison, the Deputy Division Manager responsible for CCAP, works with the ECCLC in order to educate interested providers.

Larimer County Human Services worked with the ECCLC on a grant to get funding to improve the quality



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and availability of child care for infants through toddlers. DHS and ECCLC also partnered with the Larimer County Health Department via another grant from the State to support providers who serve students with challenging behaviors. Last year the toolkit created through these joint efforts won a Larimer County Innovation Award. ECCLC currently uses the toolkit. Kelly Morrison sits on the ECCLC board.

Senior Tax Work-Off Program Update

Katy Mason, Senior Tax Work-Off Program Coordinator, provided a presentation describing the program, its budget and how it works. Information included the following:

- Eligibility requirements for age, property ownership and income,
- How applications are prioritized,
- And the number of applicants versus people successfully placed for the past four years.

Applications were down to 104 from 128 in the past year, and Katy believes that is a result of not having coverage in the Coloradoan this year. The Clerk & Recorder's office and the Commissioners' office both have added workers through this program for 2017, which has been a great help. Katy explained that the Office on Aging was careful to listen for concerns about limited opportunities to volunteer outside of Fort Collins, but they did not have anyone call to complain about that specific issue. It helped to have a few opportunities to do surveys for Natural Resources at Soapstone Prairie. The program would have more opportunities if there were more volunteer positions that did not require much in the way of computer skills. Katy placed so many volunteers at the Fair last year that there were many who did not have enough hours to work off the \$400 towards their County property tax bill. We anticipate an increased number of applicants for 2018 due to the property tax increases from this year.

Employment First – Program and Funding Changes

Heather O'Hayre reported on the Employment First program and funding changes. More counties will be running Employment First programs in the State, but there will be no increase in Federal funding. Larimer County anticipates a 50% decrease in our allocation. The State convened a task force to look at the program and make recommendations. The task force recommends that people who are eligible for the program but who have dependents should be able to choose whether or not to participate in Employment First. Laura Walker added that she has been very pleased with the willingness of Workforce Center management to engage in planning a pilot program to serve as many people as well as they can.

Commissioner Gaiter asked if we had any metrics to track how many people become self-sufficient through this program and other assistance programs as it would be encouraging to participants to see how effective it can be. There was a discussion about not being able to find effective reports to show the churn of people who come off the program and whether or not they come back on the program later. CBMS tracks this individually but obtaining the information in aggregate has not been accessible so far. The Workforce Center does track participants' wages over time through the Department of Labor. Marcy Kasner tracks how many people get employment through Employment First. Heather will get a copy of the most recent report and work with Marcy to distill that report into a presentation for the next quarter Board of Social Services meeting.



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SB-190 Update

Laura Sartor, Benefits Planning Division Manager, provided an update on the three work groups created as a result of SB16-190. The Incentives and Sanctions Work Group will be issuing a policy memo describing incentives and sanctions. The County Administration Work Group selected Deloitte Consulting to do data collection and analysis. Their next step will be to complete efforts to collect information from 55 counties. It is essential to provide correct information to this survey as it could potentially increase or decrease our funding for staff. The Continuous Quality Improvement Work Group (CQI Work Group) will meet to develop a CQI vision for the State.

Laura Walker added that the recommendations from the County Administration Work Group will be of particular interest as there is no way to tell if it will recommend that we need more funding than the \$16.5 million of County Administration funding recently approved. Approximately \$800,000 of that will come to Larimer County, which may just provide enough funding for us to cover over-expenditures.

CCAP Program & Waitlist Update

Laura Sartor reported that CCAP currently has 381 children waiting for child care in Larimer County, and the CCAP budget will be overspent by \$1.4 million. Laura Walker has three options to cover the overage. Plan A would be if the State as a whole is able to cover over-expenditures with funds under-utilized by counties. This is not likely. Plan B, which is the most likely to happen, is that we have requested to purchase allocation funds not used by Pueblo County to cover the cost. Larimer County Human Services will have to pay the county share. Even if this plan does not work, it will still be beneficial as it will strengthen our relationship with Pueblo County. Plan C would require covering costs from the TANF reserves; however, this is the least desirable as these funds are earmarked to help if TANF or Child Welfare is overspent. If CCAP continues to be over budget due to statutory requirements for the program, we may have to resort to selecting groups that currently receive child care and remove them from the program.

Legislative Review

Heather O'Hayre provided the review of current legislation for six bills and four budget requests that impact Larimer County Human Services. The handout provides explanations including:

- HB17-1284, a bill requiring background checks through the Adult Protection system for employees working with at-risk adults. This legislation is concerning as there is not enough detail on how a person would appeal substantiated claims, what it would look like if a record is expunged, and other due process issues.
- HB17-1207, a bill preventing children aged 10-12 from being put in detention unless they committed a violent crime. There were 84 youth in detention for non-violent behavior in the past year. There is a concern that these youth would be ordered to congregate care, but Larimer County Human Services believes there needs to be a fair assessment of the child's needs in order to ensure the family is kept whole if possible.
- The County Administration funding was approved and is beneficial for us.
- And the budget request for additional staffing has resulted in an additional 3.25 new employees. Linda Hoffmann verified that the County will match 10% of those funds, which have already been approved in the budget.



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C-Stat Dashboard Review

Laura Walker provided the C-Stat Dashboard, noting that there has been improvement in almost all the outcomes that have been a challenge. Larimer County Human Services met 18 of 21 outcomes and had an average of 15 out of 21 for the year. In general, our county performed well in comparison to the average outcomes of the Big Ten Counties.

Client Activity Report

Ann Marie Grobarek, Business Operations Coordinator, presented an overview of the department's client activity. Ann Marie reviewed: monthly average caseloads, program activity, complaint totals, and results from the client follow-up survey regarding complaints from January 1, 2017 to March 31, 2017.

During the 1st Quarter of 2017:

- The Food, Medical & Financial Assistance Program caseload has increased by 4.7% to 68,638.
- Child Support collected over \$5,031,120 dollars.
- Children, Youth and Family received 1,823 referrals, and 94% of children with a case plan to remain home did.
- We received one formal complaint during the 1st Quarter.

The increase in Food, Medical & Financial Assistance programs is due to open enrollment in January of 2017 and increased outreach efforts with our Community Based Organizations to ensure they are properly educated on how Food Assistance works and how the people they help can apply via PEAK. Child Support collections reached over \$5 million for the first time, most likely due to collections made from intercepted tax returns.

Other business:

Jim Drendel, Child & Family Services Manager, will be retiring in January of 2018.

Meeting adjourned.

