

GUNNISON/HINSDALE BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES
MEETING MINUTES
August 17, 2021

The August 17, 2021 meeting of the Gunnison/Hinsdale Board of Human Services was held in the Board of County Commissioners' meeting room located at 200 E. Virginia Avenue, Gunnison, Colorado. Present, either in person or via Zoom, were:

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson
Roland Mason, Commissioner
Liz Smith, Commissioner
Greg Levine, Hinsdale Co. Commissioner

Joni Reynolds, Health and Human Services Director
Matthew Birnie, County Manager
Melanie Bollig, Clerk to the Board
Other Persons Present as Listed in Text

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Houck called the meeting to order at 9:17 am.

AGENDA REVIEW: There were no changes to the agenda. **Moved** by Chairperson Houck, seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the agenda, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Moved** by Chairperson Houck, seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the February 16, 2021 meeting minutes, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

1. April 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes
2. June 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

PROGRAM UPDATES: Early Childhood and Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Early Child Care Program Coordinator Margaret Wacker was present to give the update and answer any questions from the Board.

ECCP Coordinator Margaret Wacker started by explaining that CCAP provides payments to child care providers on behalf of parents, for families on TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), which is for very low-income families. She added that all licensed child care centers in Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties accept these payments. For the CCAP 2021 budget, Margaret Wacker reported that the State budget had been reduced, but that stimulus funding monies were helping to reduce this shortfall for both Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties. For last fiscal year, Gunnison County had been 12% over budget, even though they were on an enrollment freeze all year. Hinsdale County reported that they finished under budget.

ECCP Coordinator Margaret Wacker then outlined the cases and community programs they are receiving aid and funding for, and touched on the recent turn-over in staffing. She explained that this was a challenge, as the program takes a long time to learn and be able to administer correctly. Currently, they were trying to hire a coordinator for the CCAPP Administrator/Coordinator position.

She closed with the observation that the State budget for CCAP does not really cover the needs. HHS Director Joni Reynolds then added the State's cost of living formula for CCAP, along with a very small base of funding (\$5,000 for a small county, which is way too low a base to meet needs for any county), meant that the revised formula benefitted larger counties only, with smaller counties actually seeing slightly less funding.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES: HHS Director Reynolds presented the Board with the following topics for updates.

1. **Child welfare reforms.** HHS Director Joni Reynolds informed the Board that the State is still working out the child welfare reforms, based on the federal changes needing implemented at the state level. She advised that this will mean an adjustment to child welfare allocations as well as reimbursements for out-of-home placements. Both of these could have a negative effect for Gunnison County, as one of the smaller counties. She went on to explain that the intent is to reduce the work done for interventions, and to do more upstream, prevention-type of work. Director Reynold added that this approach is still very limited at the federal level as to what programs qualify for prevention funding. DHHS is implementing prevention training, but there is still not a federally-approved program for parenting and parenting prevention-type programs, other than the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), which Gunnison County already utilizes. This program only has 30-35 families who qualify for it yearly, and therefore does not help a large number of those needing assistance.
2. **Adult protection services.** HHS Director Reynolds explained that a similar strategy will apply in this area as well; instead of looking for who's at fault, they will focus on identifying solutions that can positively affect the situation. She added that Gunnison HHS already utilizes this approach.
3. **Childcare assistance program.** HHS Director Reynolds let the Board know that legislation had added a statute to do a market study analyzing the cost of implementing this type of program; however, this was postponed in 2020 because of the pandemic and it was not rescheduled until 2023. She warned that if this market analysis was not performed sooner, then they would really begin to see a disparity in what the rates are, versus what the actual costs are for families in that program. There was currently conversation in the legislature pushing for an earlier analysis, and Director Reynolds asked the Board to exercise any opportunity they might have to help influence an earlier date outcome.

4. A bill passed supporting protection of public health workers. HHS Director Joni Reynolds let the Board know that public health workers' information can now be requested to be suppressed through the County or the public records. She added that she was presently compiling a list of those public health worker requesting this be done.
5. Creation of a Department of Early Childhood. HHS Director Joni Reynolds wanted to flag this for the Board's attention, noting that the addition of another department will create another set of administration and bureaucracy at the state level which will impact her small department of HHS. Commissioner Smith added that she had an invitation to sign up for an open-forum "transition advisory group" working on development of this new department. She asked if Director Reynolds had someone who would be interested in also joining the open forum. Director Reynolds acknowledged that she and two other persons would be interested in joining.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting was scheduled for October 19, 2021.

ADJOURN: Moved by Chairperson Houck, seconded by Commissioner Mason to adjourn the Board of Human Services meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 am.

Minutes Prepared By:

Melanie Bollig, Clerk to the Board

Minutes Approved October 19, 2021:

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson