



Dakota County

Community Services Committee of the Whole

Minutes

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

1:00 PM

Conference Room 3A, Administration
Center, Hastings

1. Call To Order And Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Slavik, Commissioner Atkins, Chairperson Halverson, Commissioner Droste, Commissioner Workman and Commissioner Holberg

Absent: Commissioner Hamann-Roland

Also in attendance were Heidi Welsch, County Manager; Lucie O'Neill, Assistant County Attorney; Marti Fischbach, Community Services Division Director; Jeni Reynolds, Sr. Administrative Coordinator to the Board; and Colleen Collette, Administrative Coordinator (attended via Zoom).

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by the Chair, Commissioner Laurie Halverson.

The audio of this meeting is available upon request.

2. Audience

Chair, Commissioner Laurie Halverson, asked if there was anyone in the audience who wished to address the Community Services Committee on an item not on the agenda or an item on the consent agenda. No one came forward and no comments were submitted to CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us.

3. Approval Of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

3.1 Approval Of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

Motion: William Droste

Second: Mike Slavik

On a motion by Commissioner Droste, seconded by Commissioner Slavik, the agenda was unanimously approved. The motion carried unanimously.

Ayes: 6

4. Consent Agenda

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: William Droste

On a motion by Commissioner Atkins, seconded by Commissioner Droste, the consent agenda was unanimously approved as follows:

4.1 Approval Of Minutes Of Meeting Held On September 17, 2024

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: William Droste

4.2 Authorization To Execute Agreement With University Of Minnesota For Local Extension Programming And Employing Extension Staff

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: William Droste

WHEREAS, on January 1, 2004, the University of Minnesota (U of M) Extension deployed a new model for Extension programming; and

WHEREAS, Extension Regional Offices were established throughout the state (one of those located in Farmington at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center) and local Extension offices were established in counties where customized local programs, services, and positions are funded with county dollars; and

WHEREAS, this arrangement provided counties more choices in local Extension programming and increased accountability from Extension for its work; and

WHEREAS, since 2004, the Dakota County Extension Committee has recommended programming, and based on current community need, continues to recommend that local programming be offered for the following areas: Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development and Horticulture/Master Gardener; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 22-124 (March 15, 2022), the Dakota County Board of Commissioners authorized the Physical Development Director to execute an agreement with the U of M for the support of the Dakota County Master Gardener (DCMG) program, including \$90,000 for a 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) position responsible for managing Dakota County plant production and DCMG program activities and \$5,500 in in-kind support for DCMG program activities; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 23-528 (November 28, 2023), the DCMG, a volunteer program of the U of M Extension, authorized re-establishing a formal partnership with the County focused on expanding their plant production efforts and associated public services regarding horticulture and environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS, to establish consistency for the rates charged for these local Extension program positions, the U of M works with the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), and the AMC sub-committee for Extension, to establish statewide costs; and

WHEREAS, staff is recommending a three-year agreement with a cost of \$463,750 for 2025, \$477,625 for 2026, and \$491,975 for 2027, for a total not to

exceed amount of \$1,433,350; and

WHEREAS, Minn. Stat. §§ 38.34-38.37 authorizes a board of county commissioners to incur expenses and spend money for county Extension work, states that money in the county Extension fund appropriated by the county board be paid out by orders of the U of M Dean of Extension, and provides that Extension education and program staff must be U of M employees employed according to U of M personnel procedures; and

WHEREAS, this agreement includes salary and fringe benefits for the local programming positions, all travel (mileage, meals and lodging), in-service training and professional development, program supervision, and payroll and accounting services provided by the U of M; and

WHEREAS, all program staff will continue to be U of M employees; and

WHEREAS, the County will provide support for these positions such as office space, telephone, computer, email, support staff, and other general office supplies; and

WHEREAS, all services will be provided exclusively in Dakota County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to execute an agreement with the University of Minnesota for local Extension programming and employing Extension staff in an amount not to exceed \$1,433,350, effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Community Services Director is hereby authorized to amend said agreement/contract, consistent with the amount budgeted, to alter the agreement/contract amount and the agreement/contract term up to one year after initial expiration date, consistent with County contracting policies, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form.

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 10/29/2024.

4.3 Authorization To Accept Minnesota Department Of Human Services Children's Mental Health Screening Grant Funds And Execute Grant Agreement

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: William Droste

WHEREAS, in 2003, the Minnesota Legislature added mental health screening requirements to Minnesota Statutes to include children's mental health screening for specific Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice populations; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the children's mental health screening within the child welfare and juvenile justice populations is to integrate mental health into

current practices and to promote earlier mental health identification and intervention; and

WHEREAS, early identification of mental illness followed by the appropriate intervention and treatment may prevent years of disability and provide improved outcomes for children and their families; and

WHEREAS, focusing on these at-risk populations, and particularly the uninsured and underinsured, grant funding can provide mental health treatment for children who would not otherwise receive these services; and

WHEREAS, children's mental health screenings facilitate referral of children for further testing and treatment using standardized effective mental health screening instruments; and

WHEREAS, the breakdown of the total \$413,911 grant allocation is as follows:

Child Welfare \$123,319

Juvenile Justice \$290,592

; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends the County Board authorizes acceptance of the grant funds in the amount of \$413,911 and execution of the grant agreement for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to accept the Minnesota Department of Human Services Children's Mental Health Screening grant award of \$413,911 and execute a grant agreement for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That unless the grant program requirements change, the Community Services Director is hereby authorized to amend the grant to extend the grant term up to two years after initial expiration date, accept additional grant funds, and continue grant-funded full-time equivalents, consistent with County contracting policies, and inclusion of grant funds in future yearly Recommended and Approved Budgets, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form.

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 10/29/2024.

4.4 Authorization To Execute Contracts For Children And Family In-Home And Community-Based Services

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: William Droste

WHEREAS, the work of Children and Family Services requires access to

in-home and community-based services for children, youth, and families, whether in addressing child protection issues, children's mental health needs, truancy, or youth transitioning from the foster care system; and

WHEREAS, the juvenile protection provisions of the Juvenile Court Act, Minn. Stat. Ch. 260C, reference child protection case plan services and the need for county social services agencies to provide support and services to prevent out-of-home placement, and to assist in family reunification following children being in out-of-home placement; and

WHEREAS, Behavioral Dimensions Inc. currently provides Intensive Behavioral Specialist programming for Dakota County children who meet Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED) eligibility, up to age 18, who have frequent behavioral health crises and are unable to access most services due to frequent and/or severe episodes of unsafe behavior; and

WHEREAS, Lopno and Associates currently provides Psychological Evaluations for Dakota County children who have an open Children and Family Services case and cannot access a complete psychological evaluation through their health plans; and

WHEREAS, staff is requesting a contract with Behavioral Dimensions Inc. for Behavioral Specialist programming for a not to exceed amount of \$200,000, effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026; and

WHEREAS, staff is requesting a contract with Lopno and Associates for Psychological Evaluations for a not to exceed amount of \$180,000, effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to execute a contract for Behavioral Specialist programming with Behavioral Dimensions Inc. in a not to exceed amount of \$200,000 for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to execute a contract for Psychological Evaluations services with Lopno and Associates in a not to exceed amount of \$180,000 for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Community Services Director is hereby authorized to amend said contracts, consistent with the amounts budgeted, to alter the contract amounts and the contract terms up to one year after initial expiration dates, consistent with County contracting policies, subject to approval

by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the contracts shall contain a provision that allows the County to immediately terminate the contract in the event sufficient funds from county, state, or federal sources are not appropriated at a level sufficient to allow payment of the amounts due.

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 10/29/2024.

5. Regular Agenda

5.1 Update On Affordable Housing Aid Spending Options, And Authorization To Allocate Local Affordable Housing Aid to Emergency Rental Assistance And Amend 2024 Social Services Budget

Motion: Mary Liz Holberg

Second: Joe Atkins

The following staff presented on this item and stood for questions: Marti Fischbach, Community Services Division Director; Heidi Welsch, County Manager; and Tony Schertler, Executive Director, Dakota County Community Development Agency. Staff was given direction to work into the Social Services 2025 budget approximately half of the State and Local Affordable Housing Aid funds and develop a model that sets a percentage for building and preserving housing through the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) versus prevention and provide outcomes and results data in conjunction with the CDA work in this area.

A motion and second were made based on amended resolution language. The language was amended and approved as follows:

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners reconvened the Housing Leadership Workgroup to assess the outcomes of the County's Housing Business Plan and make recommendations for future housing initiatives and investments in Dakota County; and

WHEREAS, the workgroup was made up of faith leaders, law enforcement, people who have experienced homelessness, nonprofit partners, Dakota County Commissioners, and staff from the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) and the County; and

WHEREAS, the workgroup recommended investments in three main areas to support the next phase of the Dakota County Housing Business Plan: shelter, homelessness prevention, and affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, staff presented these recommendations to the County Board on October 19, 2021, and staff returned to the County Board throughout 2022 and 2023 with additional information and further defined recommendations in each of the three investment areas; and

WHEREAS, the 2024 County Budget included initial investments utilizing the new State and Local Affordable Housing Aid, including Emergency Rental Assistance, Apartment Services, Prevention and Navigation Services, Family Voucher Program, and Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-Housing Services; and

WHEREAS, on March 27, 2024, Community Services and the CDA proposed an expanded set of Affordable Housing Aid investments during a Board Workshop and the County Board requested that additional eligible activities that can be launched quickly be brought back for formal consideration; and

WHEREAS, on April 16, 2024, Community Services proposed expansion of the Emergency Rental Assistance program by adding \$1,500,000 to the 2024 Social Services Budget; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 24-215 (April 23, 2024), the Dakota County Board of Commissioners authorized \$428,000 of Affordable Housing Aid funds be allocated toward emergency rental assistance and requested that staff return after the legislative session ends to provide an update on Affordable Housing Aid uses and propose eligible activities that can be launched quickly; and

WHEREAS, on July 23, 2024, Community Services presented updates to Affordable Housing Aid statute language and a plan for the 2025 budget as co-developed by Dakota County Community Services and the Dakota County CDA; and

WHEREAS, this plan is based on the Housing Business Plan recommendations and priorities and is built in the 2025 county budget proposal; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 24-379 (July 30, 2024), staff also received authorization to accept the State and Local Affordable Housing Aid funds in 2024 and a portion of these funds were built into the 2024 Social Services Budget and are currently being spent; and

WHEREAS, there continues to be an immediate need for Emergency Rental Assistance funding to support the Housing Clinic at Eviction Court and Social Services' Prevention Services and Navigation Team for prevention assistance prior to an eviction filing and Social Services is requesting an additional \$355,000 in funding for 2024; and

WHEREAS, it is a Board Priority for Community Services and the Dakota County CDA to develop a 5-year plan for allocating Affordable Housing Aid in alignment with Dakota County's Housing Business Plan and this presentation will continue the Affordable Housing Aid discussion; and

WHEREAS, policy direction provided by the Board in this meeting will serve as the basis for 2025 budget development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to allocate up to \$355,000 one-time additional Affordable Housing Aid funds towards emergency rental assistance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the 2024 Social Services Budget is hereby amended as follows:

Expense

Emergency Rental Assistance \$355,000

Total Expense **\$355,000**

Revenue

Affordable Housing Aid \$355,000

Total Revenue **\$355,000**

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 10/29/2024.

Ayes: 6

5.2 Update And Direction On Adult Emergency Shelter Services And Project Planning

Marti Fischbach, Community Services Division Director, and Heidi Welsch, County Manager, presented on this item and stood for questions. This item was on the agenda for informational purposes only. The Committee, unanimously, did give staff direction to pursue a long-term, 3 - 5 year, contract for shelter space and develop a plan to increase staffing hours, which would address the need for more on-site staff outside of usual County business hours.

Information only; no action requested.

6. Community Services Director's Report

Marti Fischbach, Community Services Division Director, referred the Committee to the written report that was provided.

7. Future Agenda Items

Though this may not be a future agenda item, a Commissioner asked if the Disability Advisory Council and/or the Communications department could develop a plan to ensure that standard communications for public meetings include an option to request American Sign Language services.

8. Adjournment

8.1 Adjournment

Motion: Mike Slavik

Second: William Droste

On a motion by Commissioner Mike Slavik, seconded by Commissioner William Droste, the meeting was adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Ayes: 6

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Collette, Administrative Coordinator
Community Services Division

DRAFT