

**GUNNISON/HINSDALE BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 20, 2022**

The December 20, 2022 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 [REMOTE]  
Liz Smith, Commissioner  
Greg Levine, Hinsdale Co. Commissioner [ABSENT]

Joni Reynolds, Assistant County Manager for  
Health & Human Services  
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 10:17 am.

**AGENDA REVIEW:** There were no changes to the agenda.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GUNNISON COUNTY, HINSDALE COUNTY, AND PROWERS COUNTY; HOT LINE CALLS FOR CHILD WELFARE AND ADULT PROTECTION SERVICES; 1/01/2023 TO 12/31/2023:** Assistant County Manager for Health, Human, and Safety Services Joni Reynolds explained that this agreement was for the call center to cover incoming hotline calls for Child Welfare and Adult Protection in Hinsdale and Gunnison Counties. She noted that they are wanting the Chair for the Gunnison/ Hinsdale Board of Human Services to be the one who signs.

ACM Reynolds went on to say that they cover a relatively limited amount of calls for our joint communities; however, they cover after hours and weekends for us, as they do for the whole state. It is a preferred service because those who answer have been trained to ask the correct questions so that our team can have the base information to follow up with.

With no questions from the Board, it was **moved** by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Mason, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Gunnison/Hinsdale Board of Human Services and Prowers County for hot line calls for Child Welfare and Adult Protection Services, from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to December 31, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

**GUNNISON / HINSDALE DHS FINANCIAL REPORT – PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2022:**

Senior Accountant Kelly Weak was present in the room to give a report. She explained that the budget was at 72% through October; they were usually somewhere around 82% by this time of year, so it was somewhat under budget. SA Weak then noted that part of the county administrative expenses were still being paid for by continued pandemic funding, so this may account for the lower figures. Further, she pointed out how amounts for food assistance in the county have increased dramatically. In 2019, prior to the pandemic, food assistance totaled \$1.3 million; in 2020 it went up to \$2.4 million; for 2022, in October it was already at \$2.6 million – projected to be over double what it was in 2019.

ACM Joni Reynolds observed that the federal public health emergency – which had put a lock on eligibility for those who had applied and been eligible in 2020 – was set to be lifted shortly, somewhere around January 2023. At that point, as renewals came due per each family, the county would be going back to determining eligibility for benefits, which would definitely impact many in the system. Commissioner Mason asked if there might be some change in eligibility guidelines to account for inflation and higher costs of food and energy. ACM Reynolds affirmed that there would be state legislation introduced in January that would seek to adjust for rising costs. The Board then briefly discussed with ACM Reynolds what gaps in funding the county might expect to see.

After this discussion it was **moved** by Commissioner Smith to approve the Gunnison/Hinsdale DHS Financial Report for the period ending October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Seconded by Commissioner Mason. Motion carried unanimously.

**BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES PLANNING:** Chairperson Houck stated that this planning has typically centered around what topics the Board would want to discuss, in terms of drafting an agenda for the next year. ACM Reynolds replied that she would be reaching out to each of them for input on what they would like to see on the agenda. She shared some of the financial items which would be upcoming in future reports, including state assistance details and a possible income for supplemental environmental projects, which she promised to share as more information became available.

Chairperson Houck asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board. Commissioner Smith asked about where Universal Pre-K fit within the boards. ACM Reynolds replied that this did fit in well with the regional area of the Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties Board of Human Services. Commissioner Smith and ACM Reynolds discussed for several minutes how the roll-out has been very unclear, and how they could best communicate the details of it to their communities. ACM Reynolds agreed with Commissioner Smith about advocating for additional information from the state in a timely manner, but felt confident that her staff would be able to work through this, commenting that, if anything, the pandemic had strengthened their skills for this.

Chairperson Houck then asked, in wrapping up the meeting, if there was anything else for the Board's consideration. He thanked ACM Joni Reynolds for all her extra work throughout the pandemic up to now. ACM Reynolds stated that her dedicated team had been doing an incredible job in integrating from crisis back to normalizing for their community programs, noting that this "normalizing" will take place well into

the next year. Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Smith, and ACM Reynolds discussed briefly some of the upcoming state legislative issues. ACM Reynolds highlighted that one of the biggest challenges was the need for gaining stability in funding – crucial to giving longevity to the talent they acquire.

**ADJOURN:** Chairperson Houck adjourned the Gunnison/Hinsdale Board of Human Services meeting at 10:41 am.

Minutes Prepared By:

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Melanie Bollig, Clerk to the Board

Minutes Approved August 15, 2023:

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Jonathan Houck, Chairperson