

**GUNNISON/HINSDALE BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 16, 2024**

The April 16, 2024 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	Joni Reynolds, Assistant County Manager (ACM)
Greg Levine, Commissioner (Hinsdale County)	Matthew Birnie, County Manager
Elizabeth Smith, Commissioner	Holly Perry, Clerk to the Board
Laura Puckett Daniels, Commissioner	Other Persons Present as Listed in Text

**CALL TO ORDER:** Commissioner Houck called the meeting to order at 9:07 am.

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

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Moved** by Commissioner Puckett Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the minutes from August 15, 2023, October 17, 2023, November 7, 2023, and December 19, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

1. August 15, 2023
2. October 17, 2023
3. November 7, 2023
4. December 19, 2023

**CONSENT AGENDA:** **Moved** by Commissioner Puckett Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Levine to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Memorandum of Understanding; Colorado Department of Human Services; Colorado Works Program; Gunnison/Hinsdale Board of Human Services; 7/1/2022 to 6/30/2025

**FINANCIAL UPDATE:**

1. Gunnison/Hinsdale Department of Health & Human Services Financial Report; 12/31/2023 – ACM Reynolds presented the 2023 year-end financial report. **Moved** by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Puckett Daniels to accept the financial report with a period ending 12/31/2023 and authorize the Chair's signature. Motion carried unanimously.

**PROGRAM UPDATES:**

1. Early Childhood Services and Local Coordinating Organizations (LCO)/Universal Pre-K (UPK) – CHM Wacker stated that the strategic plan will lead efforts in the valley to stabilize and increase early childhood education. ECSS Athey noted 115 families applied for UPK this year so far and are expecting at least 20 to 30 more families to apply by the beginning of May.
  - Increasing number of licensed family childcare homes – Gunnison Valley now has its first licensed Spanish speaking daycare open with Paula Tapia. CHM Wacker stated this was a huge accomplishment that took three years of work that involved outreach and connecting Paula to everything she needed.
  - Sick leave program – ECSS Athey explained that this program is limited to \$1,000 per teacher per year for sick leave and they have supported 84 teachers since August 2020. A large portion of the funding has come through multiple grants.
  - Early childhood educator credential stipend program – This year there have been 32 teachers that have applied, and they are expecting 20 to 25 more applications. The stipends range from \$100 to \$800 depending on the teacher's credentials.
  - Early childhood food boxes for teachers – With partnership with Mountain Roots, 80 teachers were given food boxes monthly, and 686 food boxes were delivered from October 2022 to June 2023 with 200+ boxes being delivered September 2023 to December 2023. The boxes delivered from September to December 2023 were fully funded through Mountain Roots Food Project. The program is currently on hold pending new funding.
  - Family, Friend, Neighbor Caregiver Support – ECSS Athey stated that they received a 3 year grant from Colorado Health Foundation that ended 9/15/23, but have since received an additional 2 years of funding of \$18,900 annually to continue work through 2025. She noted there are 6 licensed childcare homes in the county right now. A licensed childcare home can serve up to 6 children during the day and 2 after school, with no more than 2 children under 2 years of age. The County does not have any UPK home providers.
  - Workforce retention – ECSS Athey reported that there was a 26.2% increase of teachers that expected to stay in the Early Childhood Education field for the next 5 years and 23% increase they would stay with their current employer for the next 2 years. Commissioner Puckett Daniels asked if they could research what circumstances are helping to keep teachers.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATES:**

1. Current Status on Key Bills –

- Senate Bill 191 – ACM Reynolds explains this bill was reviewed by CCI last Friday and it intends to solidify the safety when adolescents leave their home to live elsewhere due to conflict or issues in their family. She stated Human Service Directors are concerned with this bill causing more problems than solutions.
- Senate bill 200 – ACM Reynolds noted this bill looks at the child welfare system and the disproportional impacts (demographics). Commissioner Puckett Daniels asked for clarification that this bill is to check if people are using their authority more on families with particular backgrounds and ACM Reynolds responded that was part of the concern.
- Interim Committees – ACM Reynolds stated there are 7 letters for Intersession Legislative Committees that have been submitted. A couple letters are directly around child welfare and the Colorado Benefit Management System. She commented that there is a strong interest from CCI and others to fix the State IT systems. ACM Reynolds then stated there is a letter for the Indian Child Welfare Act that would have direct connection to child welfare as well as a letter for mental health services for individuals who are incarcerated or in jail.
- Child Welfare Allocation Committee (CWAC) – ACM Reynolds reported the funding formula for allocation determines the funding for child welfare services for the county, and they determine it from one source. The State conducted a study for child welfare funding. The results of the study came in with a new proposal on how the funding should be allocated and there is quite a bit of controversy between the old way and the new way that have significant impacts on the funding allocation. She commented that the new formula looks at different factors and moves in positive direction, but there is a campaign on staying with the old and looking at flaws in the new version. Commissioner Smith stated the new program takes in the actual costs and prevention whereas it's not calculated in the old formulas. ACM Reynolds praised Commissioner Smith for her work with CWAC and that they would not have had the correct information if she did not advocate.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting was scheduled for June 18, 2024.

**ADJOURN:** Commissioner Houck adjourned the meeting at 10:04 am

Minutes Prepared By:

---

Holly Perry, Clerk to the Board

Minutes Approved June 18, 2024:

---

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson