

**GUNNISON/HINSDALE BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES  
MEETING MINUTES  
August 15, 2023**

The August 15, 2023 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 & HHS Director
Greg Levine, Commissioner (Hinsdale County)	Matthew Birnie, County Manager
Elizabeth Smith, Commissioner	Katherine Haase, Clerk to the Board
Laura Puckett Daniels, Commissioner	Other Persons Present as Listed in Text
Matthew Hoyt, County Attorney	

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Houck called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

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

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Moved** by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Levine to approve the minutes for October 18, 2022, December 20, 2022, February 21, 2023 and April 18, 2023 as presented. Motion carried. Commissioner Puckett Daniels abstained from the vote since she was not present for all of the meetings.

1. October 18, 2022 Regular Meeting
2. December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting
3. February 21, 2023 Regular Meeting
4. April 18, 2023 Regular Meeting

**APPROVAL FOR AMENDMENTS TO GUNNISON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMPREHENSIVE CIVIL RIGHTS PLAN; COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE POLICY & FINANCING (HCPF) APPROVED EDITS.** The Board did not have any questions or concerns about the edits. **Moved** by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Levine to approve the amendments to the Gunnison County Department of Health and Human Services Comprehensive Civil Right Plan. CA Hoyt requested that the motion include authorization of the Chair's signature, and Commissioners Smith and Levine both agreed to the addition. Motion carried unanimously.

**CELEBRATION AND PRESENTATION OF AWARDS FOR GUNNISON AND HINSDALE COUNTIES BY COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.** Colorado Department of Human Services Director of County Relations Laura Strother and several members from the Gunnison County Health and Human Services team were present for discussion.

Ms. Strother presented 2022 Distinguished Performance Awards to Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties, which recognizes those Counties that meet goals for timeliness, safety and accuracy in their work. Gunnison County ranked 10<sup>th</sup> highest in Colorado during 2022, and this represented the fifth C-Stat award given to our organization. Hinsdale County ranked sixth in the State and received its second C-Stat Distinguished Performance award. It was also named "Most Improved Small County" for 2022. ACM Reynolds thanked her team and their incredible work. She also thanked the Board for continued support. Commissioner Levine echoed ACM Reynolds' statements, and he thanked Gunnison County for essential collaboration. Commissioners Houck, Smith and Puckett Daniels thanked staff for all of their work.

**PROGRAM UPDATES:**

1. Universal Pre-K and the Local Coordinating Organization (LCO). Community Health Manager Margaret Wacker and Early Childhood Services Supervisor Lana Athey were present for discussion.
  - a. Slots. A total of 120 children are currently enrolled; 14 are full time (30 hours per week) and 106 are part-time (15 hours per week). This brings a total of \$792,632 into the community. There are 22 openings potentially remaining in four different locations – Wonderland, Tenderfoot, Stepping Stones and Paradise Place.
  - b. Sick Leave Program. The program has supported 78 teachers with paid sick leave (Aug 2020 – Jun 2023) for a total cost of \$61,178 so far. Funding has been provided by the Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley COVID Relief Fund, the Town of Crested Butte, and the City of Gunnison. Enough funding is currently available to continue the program through the end of 2023.
  - c. Stipend Program. During 2021, a total of \$13,100 was awarded to 49 teachers. During Dec 2022 through Jun 2023, a total of \$29,000 was awarded to 58 teachers. The program would need at least \$15,000 to continue to run the program at capacity in 2023. Grant funds will be sought.
  - d. Early Childhood Food Boxes for Teachers Program. Boxes have been provided to over 80 early childhood teachers and home providers on a monthly basis. A total of 686 food boxes were delivered between Oct 2022 and Jun 2023, for a total cost of \$36,000. This program was made possible by grant funding, and that funding has been exhausted.

- e. Family, Friend, Neighbor Caregiver Support. The Colorado Health Foundation provided grant funds of \$18,900 annually, and the grant ends 9/15/2023. Other funds have enabled continuance of this work through September 2024.
- f. Workforce Retention. Commissioner Puckett Daniels asked for any data related to whether or not the initiatives are helping to retain the workforce. ECSS Athey stated that data does show some level of retention, but not as much as was hoped. She also opined that the Sick Leave Program was very helpful to the workforce, especially during the pandemic when employees were forced to remain isolated at home. She also stated that raising teacher salaries would be a great step toward retaining this workforce. The work that the team has done and is doing has resulted in lower turnover in the valley as compared to other areas of Colorado.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION; MARILYN CHEEVER, CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES MANAGER.** ACM Reynolds outlined Child and Family Services Manager Marilyn Cheever’s 16-year career timeline at Gunnison County, beginning with an internship. She noted that Marilyn has worked with hundreds of families in the community, and she presented her with a bouquet of flowers. The Board expressed thanks for all that Marilyn has done for the organization and the community.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting was scheduled for October 17, 2023.

**ADJOURN:** Commissioner Houck adjourned the meeting at 9:14 am.

Minutes Prepared By:

---

Katherine Haase, Clerk to the Board

Minutes Approved April 16, 2024:

---

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson