

**GUNNISON/HINSDALE BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES
MEETING MINUTES
August 20, 2024**

The August 20, 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) Health, Human & Safety Services
Liz Smith, Commissioner	Matthew Birnie, County Manager
Laura Puckett Daniels, Commissioner	Holly Perry, Clerk to the Board
(ABSENT) Greg Levine, Commissioner (Hinsdale)	Other Persons Present as Listed in Text

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Houck called the meeting to order at 11:41 am.

AGENDA REVIEW: There were no changes to the agenda.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Moved** by Commissioner Houck seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the meeting minutes of June 18, 2024 as presented.

1. June 18, 2024

UPDATES:

1. Management Evaluation (ME) Review – ACM Reynolds explained this review was done by the State Medicaid Department, Healthcare Policy and Finance (HCPF). It began in March but there was recently a site visit and ACM Reynolds is expected a preliminary report in the next couple weeks that will address findings and/or changes in the current practices, policies, or finance procedures. Once the preliminary report is received there will be a CURE period to address anything identified by HCPF and submit evidence back to HCPF. A final report will then be issued by HCPF and sent to the County Commissioners.
2. Child Welfare High-Acuity Data – ACM Reynolds relayed that this has been tracked for about a year from the State Human Service Director Association in relation to if there was availability for youth crisis services within the counties. It was reported there are about 70 youth a month that are in limbo status and unable to access crisis services, with one being in Gunnison County that was ultimately able to get placed for crisis services.

PROGRAM UPDATES:

1. Economic Security – Economic Security Services Supervisor Brian Gage stated that in May they finished processing a medical assistance renewal for every individual in Gunnison or Hinsdale Counties who was on Medicaid or a medical continuous coverage during Covid. The data is still new, but the first couple months are positive with less Medicaid renewals being denied which shows continuous coverage online was successful. ESSS Gage commented that they are getting back to a similar caseload before Covid with 2,600 individuals in Gunnison County and 50 in Hinsdale County. Commissioner Houck asked about policy changes since Covid and ESSS Gage confirmed there has not been anything substantial besides some emergency exceptions or change in protocol. ESSS Gage also explained that there has not been a similar change in the caseload for the Food Assistance Program, which has seen an increase since Covid, but they are reaching more people than they were before. Commissioner Puckett Daniels commented that it is great the service is being accessed but she would like to get to the core of the problem. ESSS Gage replied that cost of living and inflation may play a part. Commissioner Smith stated the examination into self-sufficiency is important. Commissioner Houck noted the utility rates have gone up as well. ESSS Gage relayed that a permanent program called Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (SEBT) now provides assistance with food during the summer months at \$120 per child and approximately 300,000 students in the state will be receiving benefit. ESSS Gage then relayed some staff changes to the Board.
2. Child Support Services – Child Support Specialist Shelley Tucker explained there have been a couple House Bills such as one that licenses legal paraprofessionals which there have been some counties that are pulling away from child support workers but she hasn't really seen it here. Another is an assignment of child support to support foster youth where non-certified kinship homes will receive child support to supplement taking in a child. This is conditional on completing the required CBI background checks. A third bill was work to their Automated Child Support Enforcement System (ACES) which includes a vote from all counties to try to update the system to make it for efficient. CSS Tucker relayed with that system there has been an increase of 5% in Gunnison County and 66% increase in Hinsdale County in current payments and they are on track for their goals.
3. Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP) – Community Health Manager Margaret Wacker relayed that the purpose of this program remains the same but have had some program updates. The State changed the eligibility for this program from 200% of poverty to 185%, as well as having a rate increase for childcare providers happening on October 1st. CHM Wacker stated that the Colorado Department of Education has a three-year plan for increasing rates and meeting new federal guidelines. With this, large counties are going on a waitlist with 85% spent or a freeze with 95% spent. Gunnison County is on a waitlist and Hinsdale County is not. CHM Wacker said the number

of children served is similar to last year, but up from 2022. CCAP Coordinator Cheryl Smejkal elaborated that in 2022 they were on a freeze so they couldn't add additional families. CHM Wacker explained there are currently 12 children, all under 10 months old, waiting for an open slot. She then relayed what the current barriers were that they were facing which included lack of slots for 6 months to 2.5 years, Gunnison County being on a waitlist, need for appropriate child care environments, and evening, before school, and summer childcare. CHM Wacker stated the funding for fiscal year 25 was reduced due to the stimulus funding being reduced, however the base allocation is higher.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting was scheduled for October 15, 2024.

ADJOURN: Commissioner Houck adjourned the meeting at 12:17 pm.

Minutes Prepared By:

Holly Perry, Clerk to the Board

Minutes Approved October 15, 2024:

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson