

**Board of Social Services
MINUTES
February 8, 2021**

**Hearing Room
First Floor – County Administration Building
10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

In Attendance: Commissioner John Kefalas; Commissioner Shadduck-McNally; Commissioner Kristin Stephens; Linda Hoffmann; Heather O’Hayre; Jan James; Janice Cannon; Thad Paul; Shannon Reiff; Lori Metz

A recording of this work session is available at: <https://www.larimer.org/bocc/commissioners-meetings/internet-broadcasts-commissioners-meetings#/ws/>

Introductions & Announcements

Commissioner John Kefalas welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Director Heather O’Hayre asked if there were any additions to the agenda. There were none.

Introduction to the Executive Leadership Team and Overview to the Department of Human Services

The Human Services Executive Leadership Team introduced themselves and provided a high-level overview of the Department. Director of Human Services, Director O’Hayre, has been the Director for over a year and was previously the Deputy Director for over five years. She has her graduate and undergraduate degrees in Social Work. Deputy Director, Jan James, has been the Deputy Director for almost one year. Previously, she worked with Adams County Human Services. She is a licensed clinical social worker and has her master’s degree in Social Work and Divinity. Unable to appear at the meeting were Jill Maasch, Community Relations and Public Information Supervisor, and Lindy Blue, Executive Assistant. Division Manager of Aging and Adult Services (AAS), Lori Metz, has been with Larimer County Human Services for 15 years. She has a master’s degree in Social Work. Within AAS are three areas: Adult Protective Services (APS), Office on Aging (OOA), and Options for Long Term Care (OLTC). APS is responsible for receiving and assessing reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation for at-risk adults. An at-risk adult is anyone over the age of 18 who is considered vulnerable due to a disabling condition. OOA has three major areas: acts as a pass-thru for federal funding for adults over the age of 60 in Larimer County, Long Term Care Ombudsman program, and Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked if there was an increase in applications and adults over 60 needing assistance during the pandemic. Lori Metz answered that it has been consistent at this point. OLTC is a single-entry point is a contract program for State Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Medicaid). Division Manager of Benefits and Community Support (BCS), Janice Cannon, has been a social worker for over 20 years and has a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in Social Work. BCS has ten program areas: Child Care Assistant Program (CCAP), Cash Assistance (TANF), Chil

Support Services, Adult and Family Medical Assistance, Food Assistance (SNAP), Low-Income Energy Assistance (LEAP), Adult Long-Term Care Financial Assistance, Colorado Works, Employment First, and



Community Services Block Grant. Commissioner Stephens asked for a brief overview the CCAP during the pandemic. Janice answered that CCAP is a challenge for some populations. The challenge is not accessing care, but during the pandemic childcare providers have closed which is where the challenge is. The Early Childhood Council has created a tool for families to find providers based on needs. Commissioner Stephens asked if SNAP applications have increased due to the pandemic. Janice Cannon answered there has been an increase due to waivers being put into place to allow for more people to apply. Since those waivers have now been removed, there is less demand, but it is still steady. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked if the need for childcare is being addressed in unincorporated areas of the County. Director O'Hayre answered there are some areas of Larimer County where it is difficult to find childcare providers. The Department is looking into where those areas are and what strategies can be developed to assist in those areas. Commissioner Kefalas asked for an overview on the pass thru program for child support. Janice Cannon informed the commissioners the pass thru program was designed to ensure the funds go directly to the recipients (custodial parent). It has increased the likelihood that people pay their child support and that families are sustained by those payments. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked how the Grand-families are assisted with COVID funds. Director O'Hayre answered that there is a blended approach for Grand-families. There is the Grand Family Coalition in Larimer County that advocates for the caregivers and they were one of the recipients of emergency funding through the Office on Aging. A large portion of those families also received child only TANF. Division Manager of Operations, Shannon Reiff, has been with Larimer County for almost 12 years and with Human Services for 10 years. She has a Master's degree in Operational Development. The Operations Division consists of Strategic Transformation, Content Management, Program Integrity (includes Recovery and Hearings), Program Assistance, Contracts Coordination, Community and Resource Engagement (CARE) Team, and Accounting/Budget. Division Manager of Children, Youth, and Family (CYF), Thad Paul, has worked with Larimer County since 1997 and has a master's degree in Public Administration. CYF includes Foster and Kinship Teams, Family Partnerships, Child Protection Paired Teams and After Hours, Administrative Support Team, Life Skills Team, The HUB, Community Resource Unit (CRU), and Support Families/Stronger Communities.

Department Activity Report

Jan James presented the 4th Quarter Department Activity Report.

Children, Youth, and Family (CYF): In Q4, a total of 1,780 referrals were received, 793 children/youth were screened in for assessment and 473 children/youth were screened in on the Family Assessment Response Track. Referrals have increased each month from previous quarter referrals (1,680 total in Q3) although still significantly lower than pre-Covid numbers (2,152 total in Q1 of 2020) and this time last year (2,328 total in Q4 of 2019). 45% of referrals were screened in for assessment this quarter. Caseload numbers dropped from the previous quarter to 817, which is consistent with the referral volume. 74.5% of child protection placements were in-home and 25.5% were out of home. Of the 25.5% that were out of home, 86.3% were in a family like setting, 8.3% were in congregate care, and 5.4% were in independent living or runaways. Larimer County in-home placements were 74.5% and 25.5% were out of home. For the Large 11 (minus Larimer), 58.9% of child protection placements were in-home and 41.1% were out of home. Of the 41.1% that were out of home placements, 85.5% were in a family like setting, 11.2% were in congregate care, and 3.3% were in independent living or runaways. Commissioner Kefalas requested an update on the status of policy changes at the state level regarding Child Welfare allocation. Director O'Hayre informed the Board the policy changes are a large part of legislative discussions occurring.



Approval was provided for a Child Welfare 2.0 bill directed to overhaul Child Welfare. This would provide funding for prevention, which is not something that is currently funded. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked if congregate care was out of state and in state congregate care. Director O'Hayre informed the Board there are no congregate care placements within Larimer County. When Larimer County youth go into congregate care, they go out of county because Larimer County does not have the facilities. There may be times when youth go out of state as well based on the specialization of the services needed. There were 435 family meetings held in Q4. There were 1,309 family members who attended a family meeting and 2,103 community members that attended a family meeting.

Adult and Aging Services (AAS): In Q4, 419 adults were referred to Adult Protection Services (APS). Of the 419 adults who were referred, 106 were assigned for assessment. This is a decrease since last quarter (501 in Q3). The percentages of referrals assigned during Q4 is approximately 25%, which is up from 21% last quarter. The types of Adult Protective Services Allegations are caretaker neglect, exploitation, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and self-neglect are broken out by age group. These allegations are both substantiated and unsubstantiated and many assessments include more than one type of allegation. Commissioner Kefalas asked how many of the caretakers in the caretaker neglect cases are family members. Lori Metz answered that it is a large percentage. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked what is considered self-neglect. Lori answered self-neglect is defined as an individual who is unaware of the resources they have available, an individual who is unable to access those resources, or an individual who is aware of the resources available but is choosing not to access them. The number of caseloads in APS were 136 for Q4, which has remained stable from Q3 (134). For the Office on Aging (OOA) Ombudsman there were 497 consults with facilities, 318 open cases, 122 consults with residents/families, and 937 overall contacts made. Commissioner Kefalas asked what role the Ombudsman program has when a person is living in a long-term care facility that may be displaced as a result of a closure. Lori Metz informed the Board when individuals are displaced, the Ombudsman is in constant contact with other placement facilities to ensure another placement option is found for each individual. The number of clients served by service type for OOA were 316 in-home services, 66 chore, and 79 caregiver respite. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked if caregivers were being contacted for assistance. Lori Metz will provide follow up information on this to the Board. For Options for Long-Term Care (OLTC), there were 1,378 client counts. There were a total of 617 assessments. 436 of those assessments were community-based, 133 were assessments in institutions, and 48 were PACE assessments.

Benefits and Community Support (BCS): In Q4, \$9,810,913 in food assistance benefits was issued and \$886,019 in TANF benefits was issued. Both of these were a slight decrease from the amount issued in Q3. For benefits programs caseloads, there were 13,323 food assistance cases, 1,568 financial assistance (OAP, AND, TANF) cases, and 7,176 child support cases. This was also a slight decrease from the previous quarter. The amount of child support collected in Q4 was \$4,448,928. For the Child Case Assistance Program (CCAP), there were 211 applications received. The average number of children served in open cases was 642 and there are zero children on the waitlist. Commissioner Kefalas asked if CCAP was provided to families who were pursuing post-secondary education. Director O'Hayre answered the population of families pursuing post-secondary education were not able to be served, but policy revisions are being done and that population will be reviewed.

The HS Service Provision for Q1 was 43 for Adult Protection, 461 for the Office on Aging, and 2,278 for Community and Resource Engagement (CARE). CARE had 602 cases in prevention, 1,511 cases of youth in conflict/child protection, 128 adoption cases, and 37 child protection childcare cases. Prevention is reserved for service to families that are not open with typical child welfare and are intended to support families, youth, and children to keep them from entering the HS system. Youth in conflict/child protection



are youth and families that may come to the attention of the department because of their behaviors, not because of allegations of abuse/neglect. This typically represents youth in the Juvenile Justice system. Adoption is the specialized service to support children and families adopted out of the HS system. The childcare category represents the children involved in child protection cases or receiving post-adoption support.

2021-2022 Human Services Strategic Plan

Director O'Hayre presented the Human Services Strategic Plan. More detailed information will be provided at the May Board of Social Services meeting.

Vision: We are an inclusive community where everyone thrives.

Mission: Human Services is responsive, providing timely resources in partnership with our community so individuals and families are healthy, supported, and safe.

Staff Statement: Our staff is the foundation of our vision and mission. We are committed to the professional development and wellbeing of our staff. We strive for excellence, promote resilience, and encourage our staff to contribute, learn, and grow.

Values: Excellence – We seek to be the best we can be. We challenge the status quo and strive to innovate and improve our work in the community we serve. Integrity – We take responsibility for our actions. We communicate transparently, regularly, and honestly. We solicit feedback and follow through on our commitments. Partnership – We partner with individuals, families, and stakeholders in the community to create inclusive and equitable processes. We seek out and incorporate ideas and input to define shared goals, plans, and outcomes. Equity – We aspire and advocate for the intentional elimination of discrimination in all its forms, at all organization levels and in our program, policies, and practices. Responsiveness – We listen to find a need or opportunity. We respond to what we learn. We evaluate to understand the impact. Diversity – Diversity in race, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physicality, experience, and thought in all staff, volunteers, and partners is paramount. We are committed to full and diverse participation in all programs, processes, and decision making.

Strategic Planning Timeline: In Q1, an intentional pause for all staff to reconnect within their individual units and reassess how staff and teams are doing following a very difficult year; announce and rollout the new vision, mission, staff statement, and values; complete the approval process; and complete the application process. In Q2, identify goal stewards and objective leaders. In Q3, conduct an inventory of existing projects and initiatives and assess for alignment and prioritization under strategic plan; wrap-up existing projects that need completion; define SMART objective statements; identify objective committee members; onboarding and team building for objective teams. In Q4, wrap-up existing projects that need completion; identify baseline measures; develop measures and reporting structure; define priorities within objective area; identify programs impacted; identify resource needs; and complete work plan.

Other Business

None.

Commissioners requested the Activity Report Guide be posted publicly at the next meeting.
Commissioners requested feedback from staff who receive the remote work stipend.

Next meeting May 11, 2020.

Meeting adjourned.