

**BAYFIELD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes are subject to change before approval at next FSAC meeting

Courthouse Conference Room A-remote  
Wednesday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 4:30 pm

**Committee Members Present via telephone:** Lona Schmidt, Mary Dougherty, Wayne Crozier, Bev Lindell, Dale and Nancy Johnson.

**Others Present:** Mary Anich (Family Services Section Manager), Elizabeth Skulan-Peppy (Human Services Director) and Nina Bucher (Support Staff).

**Committee Members Excused:** Kylie Vadnais.

**Committee Members Absent:** Bev Patterson.

**Introductions and Call to order:** Lona called the meeting to order at 4:30.

**Minute Approval:** Lona made a motion to approve the April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 FSAC meeting minutes as written. Mary D. seconded the motion and the motion passed.

**Public Comment Opportunity:** No public comment.

**Staffing Update:** Mary A. relayed that she has been acclimating to her new position during the last three months since Cheryl Hanson left. Isabel Gregersen, Behavioral Health Social Worker who began work on February 8<sup>th</sup>, has given her notice and her last day is this Friday (7/16/21). This will leave an opening for her position, along with the existing vacancies of Youth Justice Worker. New Behavioral Health Social Worker Lindsey Friederich is fitting in well and partnering with other Family Services staff on all types of child welfare cases, to help cover the staff shortages.

**Program reports:** Child Protective Services and Youth Justice are experiencing similar struggles with intense drug use issues. Staff is working together, yet taxed.

Two complicated child placements have ended and new options are slim to non-existent. The medically fragile child's current placement is closing their doors due to staffing issues, and after much work, she has been placed at a treatment foster home in northern Wisconsin. The aggressive youth justice child is at Winnebago having run out of options that will accept him. After searching nationwide, there is one tentative option in Tennessee considering whether or not they could care for him. He may also end up taking the criminal justice path.

A flurry of mental health/substance abuse referrals in March and April have been followed by a lull. This has given Isabel time to train in Lindsey before she leaves.

**Informational Items:** Mary A. and Peppy completed a six week training on ROOT Compass, which supports a shift of philosophy in child welfare to keeping kids within family and community first whenever possible prior to other out of home placements. This initiative

begins in October. The training was a transformational leadership course that covered how to support your staff during change.

Bev L. asked if anything had changed regarding social worker pay and benefits to attract/retain workers. Skulan responded. The resolution passed by the Family Services Advisory Committee was forwarded to the Human Services Board. The resolution was approved as presented and was forwarded to the Personnel Committee. Skulan presented it to the Personnel Committee. They accepted the information. After many months, the Personnel Committee considered and approved an increase of one grade to all social worker positions. This afforded a higher wage for the recruitment of new social workers and both a small increase and the ability to earn more in the future for existing social workers. This makes Bayfield County more competitive. Skulan also noted the shortage of social workers is not just a local issue, there is a statewide and national shortage of social workers as well.

**Future Meetings:** Meetings will continue quarterly on the second Wednesday of the month with the last of 2021 being held on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment:** Lona adjourned the meeting at at 4:50 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

*Nina Bucher*

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