

Marathon County Social Services Board Minutes
Wednesday, June 15, 2022, 3:30 p.m.

Attendance:	Present	Absent
Julie Bollmann	X	
Allen Drabek	X	
Kody Hart	X	
Christy Keele	X	
Yee Leng Xiong		X

Julie Bollmann and Christy Keele attended the meeting via WebEx. Supervisors Drabek and Hart attended the meeting in person.

Staff Present: Vicki Tylka

1. Board Chair Christy Keele called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.
2. Welcome and Introductions

There were no visitors in attendance; therefore, no welcome and introductions.

3. Public Comment – There was no public in attendance; therefore, no public comment.
4. Approval of the May 18, 2022, Meeting Minutes

DRABEK MOVED, HART SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE MAY 18, 2022, MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE REVEALED FOUR IN FAVOR AND ZERO OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Educational Presentations

- A. Status of 2022 out of home care cases and plan for permanency for children – Vicki Tylka reported to the board that there are twelve cases pending scheduling of court hearings, and there are two petitions under review by corporation counsel. Numerous other cases have been specific to move to permanence.
- B. Family Keys: Child Welfare Housing Demonstration Project and Grant – Vicki presented on this new initiative. Marathon County has been chosen as one of three counties to participate along with La Crosse and Wood Counties. The objective is to decrease out of home care days due to unsafe housing. Our long-term goal is that no child will be removed from home or delayed in return because of unsafe housing.

An invitation was provided to participating counties to submit a grant proposal for a project that would immediately provide housing to families receiving child welfare services. Marathon County received approval very recently that it is awarded \$327,100 for a two-year project

providing multiple families with transitional housing. These will be families that have completed their court ordered conditions and their children could be returned to their care, except they do not have a safe or appropriate place to live. Affordable housing in Marathon County is very limited, especially for individuals with poor rental history. The transitional housing will offer families an opportunity to work on barriers in locating longer term housing without the additional stress of being without their children or in inadequate housing.

Board members expressed interest and support of this project, noting that there is no levy contribution required. If this demonstration project is successful, there is a likelihood it will decrease out of home care days and lead to overall reduction of out of home care costs through levy. The director will present to the County Board and Health and Human Services at their next available meeting dates.

- C. DSS work from home and office blend status update – Vicki shared with the board results from a recent staff survey. We had a good survey response with 89 employees participating in the survey. The survey results indicated that staff are satisfied with their current work from home/in-office blend: 72 percent Very satisfied and 26 percent satisfied. An area of continued focus will be our positive work culture as 28 percent of staff responded that the work-from-home blend has made teamwork and sense of belonging challenging.

6. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

- A. 2022 DSS Work Plan mid-year updates – Vicki reviewed the status of individual work plan items and provided the board with progress updates on specific items, noting the new initiative Family Keys as a mid-year addition.
- B. New position request for 2023 Family Engagement Specialist – Vicki presented this new position request to the board. By using this position to work with families, it is anticipated that our out of home care budget would decrease by at least \$100,000, the cost of the position. If it is determined that the position is not effective, it would either be discontinued or repurposed. No new levy is being requested for the position.

DRABEK MOVED, BOLLMANN SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE 1.0 FTE NEW POSITION REQUEST FOR 2023 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE REVEALED FOUR IN FAVOR AND ZERO OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 7. Announcements and possible items for next agenda – next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 20, 2022, at 3:30 p.m.

8. Adjournment

There being no further items to be discussed **DRABEK MOVED, BOLLMANN SECONDED, TO ADJOURN MEETING. VOICE VOTE REVEALED FOUR IN FAVOR AND ZERO OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.