

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, ROOM 113  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2013  
11:30 A.M. OR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF THE REGULAR  
COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

Commissioners Present: Brent Smoyer, Vice Chair  
Deb Schorr  
Jane Raybould  
Roma Amundson

Commissioners Absent: Larry Hudkins, Chair

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Dan Nolte, County Clerk  
Cori Beattie, Deputy County Clerk  
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

*Advance public notice of the Board of Commissioners Staff Meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, web site and provided to the media on December 9, 2013.*

The Vice Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 11:41 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1 APPROVAL OF THE STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 5, 2013**

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Schorr seconded approval of the Staff Meeting minutes of December 5, 2013. Schorr, Amundson and Smoyer voted aye. Raybould abstained from voting. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried 3-0, with one abstention.

**2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None were stated.

**3 CITIZEN'S INSTITUTE FOR RURAL DESIGN - LANCASTER COUNTY WORKSHOP** - Sara Hartzell, Planner, Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department

Sara Hartzell, Planner, Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department, discussed an opportunity to apply for a Citizen's Institute for Rural Design (CIRD) grant (\$7,000 plus to up to \$35,000 in services provided) to assist rural communities with design and planning efforts. Possible partners include the rural communities, County Extension, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), Southeast Community College (SCC), Center for Rural Affairs, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development, and community newspapers. She said local match, cash or in-kind, is required. Hartzell asked the Board to consider making a cash contribution that could be used to rent space for an intensive, two-and-a half day design workshop, noting 20-30 individuals with strong interest in their communities will be recruited to participate.

In response to a question from Raybould, Hartzell said projects vary widely, citing downtown revitalization, sidewalk repairs and economic development projects as examples. She said the challenge will be to make it broad enough that each of the towns will find something they can use.

Raybould then asked whether any other communities in Nebraska have been recipients of the grant. Hartzell said Nebraska City has received two, the last in 2001.

Schorr suggested the Keno Fund as a possible funding source. It was also suggested that discussion of the grant and workshop be scheduled on the agenda for the County Board's meeting with Lancaster County Villages. Hartzell said she also intends to meet with the village boards to discuss the project and see if they would be willing contribute funds to the effort.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

**A. Meeting with Lancaster County Villages**

There was consensus to schedule the meeting on January 16, 2014.

**4 EXECUTIVE SESSION (PENDING LITIGATION)** - Doug Cyr, Chief Administrative Deputy County Attorney; Sue Eckley, County Risk Manager; Kari Wiegert, Risk Management Specialist

**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Amundson seconded to enter Executive Session at 11:56 a.m. for the purpose of protecting the public interest with regards to pending litigation.

The Vice Chair restated the motion for the record.

**ROLL CALL:** Amundson, Raybould, Schorr and Smoyer voted aye. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.

**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Amundson seconded to exit Executive Session at 12:05 p.m. Raybould, Amundson, Schorr and Smoyer voted aye. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.

## **5 COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER (CMHC) TRANSITION ISSUES**

Drafts of a press release stating the County and Lutheran Family Services (LFS) have entered into a cooperative agreement for staffing and management of the Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) and a letter to CMHC employees informing them there will be no layoffs of CMHC employees on December 31, 2013 were disseminated (Exhibits A and B). The following revisions to the letter were requested: 1) Change transition to full transition in the second paragraph; and 2) Change transition date to transition dates in the third paragraph. There was consensus to send a similar letter to employees of The Heather (community transition program), who are County employees. Staff will also work with LFS on drafting a letter to consumers.

It was noted Ron Sorensen, Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) Executive Director, has resigned his position, effective December 11, 2013, and there was consensus to appoint Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, as Interim Director of Administrative Support. A salary of \$94,676, which is comparable to Sorensen's salary plus a 2% increase, was suggested in recognition of the additional duties. The Board will formally approve the appointment and Thorpe's new salary at the December 17<sup>th</sup> County Board of Commissioners Meeting.

## **6 ACTION ITEMS**

There were no action items.

## **7 CONSENT ITEMS**

There were no consent items.

**8 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

A. Meeting with Lancaster County Villages

Item was moved forward on the agenda.

**9 PENDING**

There were no pending items.

**10 DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

A. Public Building Commission (PBC) Meeting with Mayor - Hudkins

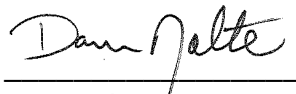
No report was given.

**11 EMERGENCY ITEMS**

There were no emergency items.

**12 ADJOURNMENT**

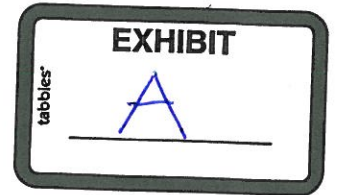
**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:18 p.m. Amundson, Schorr, Raybould and Smoyer voted aye. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.



Dan Nolte  
Lancaster County Clerk



**DRAFT**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 9, 2013**

**For more information contact Gwen Thorpe: 402-441-7447**

**LANCASTER COUNTY AND LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES ENTER INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER DURING TRANSITION**

With the approval of an agreement under which Lincoln Family Services (LFS) will provide staffing and management services, the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners has taken an important step forward in the transition of the Community Mental Health Center to LFS. This cooperative agreement will allow the LFS management team to begin the process of implementing its service model at the CMHC, while at the same time guaranteeing that adequate staffing will be available to serve consumers during the transition process. The CMHC has been operated as a County agency since its creation in 1976, and plays a crucial role in our community's behavioral health system. The County Board believes the CMHC can be operated more efficiently by LFS, making community-based behavioral services more sustainable in the long-run. The Lancaster County Board is hoping to complete transition of the CMHC to LFS in a few months.



**DRAFT**

Date

Dear Community Mental Health Center employees:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you there will be no layoffs of Lancaster County employees from the Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) on December 31, 2013. Although the transition to Lutheran Family Services (LFS) is underway, there are a number of legal and administrative obstacles which must be overcome before the transition can be completed. To help facilitate the transition process, the County and LFS have entered into a cooperative management agreement to address staffing, administrative, and other issues. It is anticipated a full transition may be completed in a few months. As more information about the timing of the transition becomes available we will notify you. Until the transition is completed, your employment at the CMHC as a County employee will continue.

The number one priority of all parties is that CMHC clients continue to receive the same excellent care and service before, during and after the transition. In this regard, CMHC staff should continue working with clients as usual, continue accepting appointments and new clients after December 31, 2013, and assure clients there will be no interruption of services. We would also encourage you to apply for employment with LFS.

After the transition date is firmly established, employees will be notified and group meetings will be arranged by the Personnel Department to explain the benefits and rights available to you at the time of separation from the County.