

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113 - BILL LUXFORD STUDIO  
THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018  
8:30 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Todd Wiltgen, Chair; Jennifer Brinkman, Vice Chair; Deb Schorr; Roma Amundson; and Bill Avery

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Ann Ames, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Dan Nolte, County Clerk; and 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 April 11, 2018.*

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES FOR APRIL 5, 2018**

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Brinkman seconded approval of the April 5, 2018 Staff Meeting minutes. Amundson, Brinkman and Wiltgen voted yes. Avery abstained from voting. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 3-0, with one abstention.

**2. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – Joe Kohout, Brennen Miller and Gordon Kissel, Kissel, Kohout, ES Associates, LLC (Legislative Consultants)**

Joe Kohout, Kissel, Kohout, ES Associates, LLC, gave a legislative update and presented legislative bill summaries (Exhibits A-C).

Schorr arrived at the meeting at 8:32 a.m.

Kohout said the provisions of Legislative Bill (LB)1112 (Change provisions relating to placement and detention of juveniles and permit an additional use of funds under the Community-based Juvenile Services Air Program) were amended into LB670 (Change provisions relating to the juvenile justice system) on Monday. He said the bill will be read on Final Reading next Wednesday. Amundson said Bruce Prenda, Chief Deputy County Attorney, emailed her with concerns that the omission of certain language removes the option for a judge to detain a juvenile for their protection and welfare. It was noted the County Board had submitted a letter supporting LB1112 to the Legislature's Judiciary Committee. The Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) also supported the bill and the Nebraska County Attorneys Association took a neutral position. Wiltgen said it is too late to do anything at this point other than to try to "kill" LB670 on Final Reading. Sara Hoyle, Human Services Director, appeared and said although she shares Prenda's concerns, LB670 also contains all the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) principles which the Board voted to implement. Pat

Condon, County Attorney, appeared and said the intent of supporting JDAI was to try to avoid having those types of treatments mandated. Hoyle said sometimes a juvenile who is at risk of harming themselves does not meet the medical necessity to be placed in the psychiatric residential unit at Bryan Medical Center. The only other safe alternative is detention. Wiltgen noted the legislation would not take effect until July of 2019 so the County has time to try to identify a legislative or administrative "fix".

## **DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

### **A. Region V Meetings**

Wiltgen said he attended the Region V Services Governing Board Meeting and said they discussed concerns that clients are not getting the services they need with the reduction in funding from the State.

Wiltgen also attended the Region V Systems Governing Board Meeting and said Jon Day, Executive Director, Blue Valley Behavioral Health, appeared and expressed concern that capacity access grants that are used to help fund his agency's programs may be eliminated. Wiltgen said it is unlikely the State will reallocate excess funds this year, noting Region V had used those funds to buy down excess service units. He said there are several providers in the community that are projected to have excess service units: Lutheran Family Services (\$175,000), Houses of Hope (\$200,000), and CenterPointe, Inc. (\$185,000). Wiltgen said they also discussed funding and service definition issues involving The Bridge Behavioral Health.

### **3. PUBLIC DEFENDER SOCIAL WORKER – Joe Nigro, Public Defender; Rebecca Meinders, Public Defender Social Worker**

Rebecca Meinders, Public Defender Social Worker, discussed her position as a social worker in the Public Defender's Office, explaining she has to be "welcomed" to work with a case by the attorney. She said one of her main goals is to help clients address the needs that brought them into the criminal justice system. Meinders said many of her clients have a dual diagnosis (mental illness and chemical dependency) and said much of her work involves getting them into treatment. She added, with her licensure, she can provide a diagnosis for clients with mental illness who are being held at the Lancaster County Adult Detention Facility (LCADF) which allows them to go to treatment. Her other duties include helping clients find a case manager so they can get their medications on a regular basis, preparing bond plans, mitigation, data tracking and, in some cases, preparing an alternate sentencing proposal. An example of one of her social work reports was provided (Exhibit D). Joe Nigro, Public Defender, noted that judges may be more likely to consider reducing a bond or consider probation if there is programming in place.

Schorr asked how she interacts with Correct Care Solutions (CCS) which provides inmate health care and behavioral health services at LCADF. Meinders said she collaborates with the discharge planners at LCADF and the Lincoln Regional Center (LRC) to make sure discharge planning isn't duplicated. She added that if a patient who is being held at LRC is restored to competency, she collaborates with LRC and CCS to make sure their medications are continued when they are returned to LCADF so there isn't decompensation.

Wiltgen asked if she also facilitates the transition from CCS to a Region V provider when a client with mental health issues is released from LCADF. Meinders said she does, adding she tries to get the Region V provider in to meet with the client before they are discharged. She said funding is a barrier as many of the individuals she is working with are not on Medicaid so the only options for services are Lutheran Family Services (LFS) or Targeted Adult Service Coordination (TASC). Both have waiting lists.

Brinkman asked Meinders whether she reviews every case that comes through the Public Defender's Office. Meinders said she does not. Brinkman then asked whether Meinders can provide assistance when the Public Defender's Office has a conflict and the County has to engage outside counsel. Nigro explained that would be a conflict. Brinkman felt that providing access to the same services is an area that needs work.

Meinders said she has seen 422 cases in the 15 months she has worked in the Public Defender's Office. She said 111 cases were deemed to have significant social work impact by the attorneys and 40 mitigation plans that had alternative sentencing proposals had an impact.

Amundson inquired about Meinders' work with juveniles. Meinders said she has worked with 60 juveniles and done placement checks to ensure that the juveniles are safe and the judge's order is being followed. She said she might also be asked to provide support and resources to the families.

Schorr asked what percentage of her caseload are females. Meinders said she can pull that data and provide it to the Board.

Wiltgen inquired about Meinders' interaction with Community Corrections. Meinders said she tends to get pulled into cases where Community Corrections can't provide supervision, such as out-of-county treatment. Wiltgen then inquired about the failures to appear. Meinders said she has assisted clients who need support to get to court, such as those who lack transportation.

Nigro said he will explore setting up a contract with Dr. Mitchel Herian, PhD, University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, to measure the success of having a social worker in the Public Defender's Office. He estimated the work would take 150-200 hours, noting Dr. Herian charges \$90 an hour. Nigro also indicated plans for an internship program that will allow them to serve more clients.

**4. LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS APPLICANT – Jeffrey A. Witt, Sr.**

Jeffrey A. Witt, Sr., candidate for appointment to the Lancaster County Board of Zoning Appeals, shared his background and reasons for seeking appointment.

**5. COUNTY ATTORNEY INVESTIGATOR – Pat Condon, County Attorney**

Pat Condon, County Attorney, noted his department hired former Lincoln Police Detective Sergeant Greg Sorensen earlier in the year as a temporary special investigator to assist with a specific criminal

case in which a lot of background work was required. He said he would like to expand Sorensen's role to investigate other criminal and civil matters that come into the County Attorney's Office through the end of the fiscal year. Sorensen would work 20-24 hours a week at an hourly rate of \$31.00. Condon said he plans to include a permanent part-time investigator position in the upcoming budget. In comparison, the Public Defender's Office has two full-time investigators and the Douglas County Attorney's Office has one part-time and four full-time investigators.

In response to a question from Schorr, Condon said Sorensen must maintain his law enforcement certification and can attend the Lincoln Police Department's (LPD's) training at no cost. He said Sorensen can also participate in a process through the Governor's Office to be named a special deputy.

**6. ABBOTT MOTOCROSS ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT – Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer**

**NOTE:** The County and Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD) were co-applicants for the Recreational Trails Program Grant that funded construction of the track and under terms of their contract with the Nebraska Game and Parks Department for the project, they must operate and maintain the track for not less than 20 years following completion of the project (see County Contract No. C-08-0531).

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, presented the following documents (see agenda packet):

- 2017 Statement of Activities, Abbott Motocross Track
- 2017 Abbott Motocross Park Revenue
- 2017 Daily Public Riding Numbers

Meyer said he will finalize the statements and send it to the other partners in the project.

In response to a request from the Chair, Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer, agreed to provide an update on how the County has benefited from its investment in the motocross facility.

**DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

**D. Public Building Commission (PBC) – Amundson/Brinkman**

Amundson said the remodel of space in the Courthouse Plaza Building for the Public Defender's Office is complete and the architect has requested final payment. She said they also received updates on deck repair for the Justice and Law Enforcement Center and security matters. Amundson also reported that the State's contract for leasing space in the K Street Building expires in 2019.

Brinkman said she doesn't understand why the City is "driving" the process to empty and dispose of the 233 Building if the PBC budgets for its operations. She said she requested further clarification regarding ownership of the building. Brinkman said Kerin Peterson, Facilities & Properties Director, requested clarification as to whether there is a desire for redevelopment of the K Street Building.

She said there isn't consensus on the PBC so they will try to exact flexibility from the State regarding notification and contract renewals.

**7. BREAK**

The meeting was recessed at 10:06 a.m. and reconvened at 10:17 a.m.

**8. INTRODUCTION OF JASON VARGA AND OVERVIEW OF HUMAN SERVICES FEDERATION (HSF) – Jason Varga, Human Services Federation (HSF) Executive Director**

Jason Varga, Human Services Federation (HSF) Executive Director, discussed HSF's mission to strengthen nonprofits to better serve the community through collaboration, education and advocacy. He noted rebranding plans and invited the Board to attend the launch event on May 3rd. The Board was also encouraged to sign up for The Collaborator, HSF's free bi-monthly newsletter.

Schorr thought it might be difficult for nonprofits to provide insurance benefits for their employees and said the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) offers group insurance to small groups of related employees. Varga said HSF partners with UNICO to provide a group plan for dental and vision and said they hope to expand services.

Amundson exited the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Brinkman said Colleen Medill, Professor of Law at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), informed her there is new legislation that provides small employers affiliated with associations better access to health care. She agreed to provide Varga with Medill's contact information.

**9. GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

- A. Denton Town Talk Newsletter Renewal (\$12.00)

There was consensus to approve the renewal.

**10. DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

- A. Region V Meetings – Wiltgen

Item was moved forward on the agenda.

- B. Public Building Commission (PBC) Chair Meeting with Mayor – Amundson

Meeting was cancelled.

- C. Lancaster County Board Chair/Vice Chair Meeting with Mayor – Wiltgen/ Brinkman

Meeting was cancelled.

D. Public Building Commission (PBC) – Amundson/Brinkman

Item was moved forward on the agenda.

E. Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health – Avery

Avery said they had a briefing on vaping.

F. Lancaster County Mental Health Crisis Center Advisory Board – Avery

Avery said the lock issue is still not resolved and felt the Board should schedule discussion of the issue on the next Staff Meeting agenda. He also reported the Crisis Center's new Credible electronic health records (EHR) software will be fully implemented on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

**11. SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

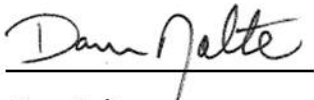
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**12. EMERGENCY ITEMS**

There were no emergency items.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Brinkman seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:46 a.m. Brinkman, Schorr, Avery and Wiltgen voted yes. Amundson was absent. Motion carried 4-0.



Dan Nolte  
Lancaster County Clerk

