

**Three Rivers Human Service Zone Board
Meeting Minutes
Three Rivers Human Services Board Room
Mandan
210 2nd Ave NW
April 17, 2025**

Meeting Call to Order:

- Dennis called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM

Roll Call:

Mandan: Dennis Meier, Jackie Buckley, Lori Flaaten, Rose Mary Lawson, Heidi Peltz **Absent:** Karen Rohr, Dawson Holle

Carson: Marty Meyer (Phone), Gerard Kraft **Absent:**

Fort Yates: Absent: Ken Snider, John Pretty Bear

Others present: Jodie Leier, Jenny Wetsch, Mandy Garrett (Online), Tracy Mertz, Vince Gillette

Approval of Agenda

- Moved by Heidi Peltz to approve the agenda seconded by Rose Mary Lawson. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of March 20, 2025

- Moved by Lori Flaaten to approve the minutes from March 20, 2025, seconded by Gerard Kraft. All in favor. Motion carried.

Review and Approval of April 2025 Bills:

- Lori Flaaten and Jackie Buckley came early to review the bills.
- All questions regarding bills were answered.
- Moved by Jackie Buckley, seconded by Lori Flaaten to approve the April bills as presented. Roll call vote.

Name	Roll Call	Bills Approved
Jackie Buckley	P	Y
Lori Flaten	P	Y
Rosemary Lawson	P	Y
Heidi Peltz	P	Y
Marty Meyer	P (Phone)	Y
Gerard Kraft	P	Y
Ken Snider	A	Absent
John Pretty Bear	A	Absent
Dennis Meier	P	Y
Karen Rohr	A	Absent
Dawson Holle	A	Absent

Budget Review

- Dennis went over March Financials. We continue to operate within budget.
- Dennis shared the cost of Strategic Planning for the zone. The total comes to \$31,250.00.
 - The objective of the Strategic Planning Process is to work as a team to develop our agency's mission, vision and values. There will be workgroups made up of staff within the zone to work on items identified for our organization's process of moving forward.
- We have a bill from DBGR that is coming in due to Emergency Shelter Care exceeding the 15 days allowed. The bill has the potential of being more than \$15,000. When Maximus does not approve placements, foster care doesn't pay so it becomes the responsibility of the zone.
- Discussion about TRHSZ \$500,000.00 reserve fund.
- May will be a 3-month pay period with the second being in October.
- We will be meeting with Jason Coffey next week regarding TRHSZ recalculation for this fiscal year.
- Federal Lawsuit costs may be an ongoing financial cost.
- Discussion regarding the breach of confidentiality case regarding terminated employees.
- We are looking at securing secondary trauma training for case workers along with critical incident debriefing after more complicated types of incidents. Lori Flaaten offered to get us information on the program used by the Mandan PD. CHI Employee Assistance program is another resource. We will bring this topic up during our meeting with Jason Coffey next week.

Vince Gillette- Three Rivers Human Service Zone Tribal Liaison Report for March 2025

- There are approximately 50-75 SRST foster children placed in ND foster homes that Vince helps to facilitate visits.
- Standing Rock currently has 41 ND IV-E cases and 33 SD IV-E cases in ND Foster Homes and 21 in paid Foster Care placements.
- Vince attends ND IV-E and Tribal IV-E eligibility meetings. The meetings are about keeping cases current with court orders and paperwork, so the children don't lose their benefits.
- Vince spends a lot of time dealing with Medicaid payment issues for both ND and SD Foster children.
- ND Tribes FMAP available reimbursements are out totaling \$1,292,229.00 for SFY 24-25. The new requests for reimbursements need to be in by June 30, 2025.
- Vince reported the completed F-MAP for Turtle Mountain from July 2024 to September 2024 is \$260,000. There is an additional \$290,000 that can be claimed prior to June 30, 2025.
- Ft. Berthold reached out to Vince 2 months ago for FMAP assistance, but they haven't followed up to confirm the need for his help.
- Dean Sturn, the administrator of the program, sent out an email saying that he will be retiring on June 12, so he wants all reimbursement requests sent in early.
- Vince continues to track the Indirect Expenses for Fort Yates for Jodie Leier to report to the state.
- Vince did 10 Foster Care visits for SRST and 1 for TRHSZ in March.
- Vince explained the Keeping the Culture Alive class for Native Foster Children and Foster Parents is a work in progress. The January, February and March classes were canceled. They are having trouble securing a location for the classes.
- Vince has taken on the project of updating the TCM (Targeted Case Management Billing). There have been numerous changes to what can be billed for, so he is working on sharing that information with the FC/IH team so that we can capture the most money we can for billable reimbursements of Federal money. Every billable quarter of an hour is worth \$22.13, with a whole hour of reimbursable time being \$88.52. Currently we are averaging around 4-5,000 a month with a potential to reach \$10,000 to 20,000 a month.

Tribes can benefit greatly from these reimbursements. Vince explained that the State already funds our programs with State General Funds, so anything we get in reimbursement will probably be withheld from the payments they give to TRHSZ. The advantage is we are replacing State General Fund monies with Federal Medicaid money.

- The HEW Committee had previously expressed interest in having us come down to talk about funding. We responded to them but have not heard back as to when we can come to the meeting. We are wanting to get the MOU re-established.

Mandy Garrett – Income Maintenance/Eligibility Supervisor

The Stats shown on the attached paperwork show the difference between the Power VI System vs Spaces System.

Three Rivers Zone Office Information

- Current Openings: EW, 1 position is filled. Jenna Delorme started on April 7.
- New locks were put on the doors in the Sioux County Office to ensure we are following the IRS guidelines for our Federal Tax Information.
- EBT card issuance will be coming back into the county offices as a Hybrid plan. We will issue them for individuals considered Expedite and Homeless.
- The High Efficiency Accuracy Team (HEAT) State Team will be visiting the Mandan office in June 2025. They will be doing visits in all three offices for the State EBT Team.
- Kudos to the EA unit-we were meeting on the quarterly report for each zone for the months of October, November and December 2024. This was about item processing volume and timeliness.
- Medicaid
 - Total Households: March 2025 – N/A
 - Total Individuals: March 2025 – N/A
 - Total Benefits: N/A
- SNAP
 - Total Households: March 2025 - 1177
 - Total Individuals: March 2025 - 3723
 - Total Benefits Paid: \$643.4K
- LIHEAP
 - Total Households: March 2025 – 81
 - Total Individuals: March 2025 – 277
 - Total Benefits: \$57.5K
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)
 - Total Households: March 2025 – 116
 - Total Individuals: March 2025 – 456
 - Total Benefits: \$54.0K
- Childcare Assistance Program
 - Total Households: March 2025 - 137
 - Total Individuals: March 2025 – 517
 - Total Benefits: \$198.1K
- Call Center February Stats
 - Total Calls Received: March 2025 – 21,810
 - Answered Calls: March 2025 – 17,355
 - Abandoned Calls: March 2025 – 3,712

- Average Wait Time: March 2025 – 5 minutes
- Average Talk Time: March 2025 – 6 minutes
- Swim Lanes
 - Group 4-CCAP/LIHEAP/MA/SNAP/TANF: Nothing to report.
 - Group 2/3-Workers: Nothing to report.
 - Overall, Queues continue to be low in work.
 - Spring Symposium is May 13-15th in Bismarck for EWs across the state.
- Support Specialists (Statewide)
 - Nothing to report. There is no backlog.
- Foot traffic in the three offices has been monitored since May.
 - Sioux County 250 in March.
 - Grant County 17 in March.
 - Morton County 334 in March.

Jenny Wetsch – Child Protection

See the attached Statistical information which was presented during the meeting.

- 108 total reports in March: 0 Reports in Grant County and 0 Reports for Sioux County.
 - 65 assigned as Full.
 - 2 ATP Assessments.
 - 31 Administratively Assessed or Administrative Referrals.
 - 0 Alt Response.
 - 1 Substance Exposed Infant (SEI).
 - 6 Child Sex Cases
 - 1 Prenatal Drug Cases
 - 0 Courtesy Interview Requests from other zones/0 Law Enforcement
 - 0 Conflict cases for another Zone

Tracy Mertz-Foster Care/In Home -

- See the attached statistical information which was presented during the meeting.
- Currently we have 70 cases.
 - 54 Foster Care
 - 16 In-Home Cases, ICPC, Courtesy Case Management & Home Study's
 - 28 Foster Homes/PATH
 - 3 QRTP/PRTF
 - 15 Relative Care
 - 8-18+
 - 0-YCC

Child Welfare Unit Updates

- We are down 1 FC/IH worker but scheduling interviews next week.
- Metrics Reports for Child Welfare:
 - For October to December 2024 97.5% of metrics met, even being short staffed, but still struggling.
 - CPS Timely is at 55.1% but should be at 80%
 - CPS F2F is at 53.4% and should be at 80%

- Dennis asked Jenny to explain why our timeliness is showing low. It was found in Frame cases are still open when they pull the F2F and it isn't in. It then shows we didn't meet the metric. We are now doing daily inputs, but it is still not pulling correctly.
- When cases stay open longer, it appears that they are not timely. For example, if another report comes in on the child, it extends the case. If the report is a new issue and not an issue that is currently being addressed, they are required to do another F2F, which causes us to request another extension. Our state person will then look at the reason for the request and grant or deny. We rarely get denied.
- Staff would like to meet with Dennis to follow up on this and discuss. Jenny will schedule a meeting with staff and Dennis to discuss the protocol.
- Foster Care and CPS need to be 30 days current on their documentation.
- Tardy transaction errors occur when cases aren't open in FRAME within 30 days or closed within 30 days.

Eligibility Redesign Update

- The SNAP review team will be at TRHSZ June 25 and 26.
- Mandy was asked to be on a committee to review the Redesign.

Zone Director Update

- Zone Plan has been approved for 2025.
- Evaluations need to be done by the end of May. We can use the old forms but will need to implement the new ones in 2026.
- Dennis will forward the zone director's evaluation to the board.
- Dennis will be back at the legislature on Monday.
- Other items were covered in the above areas.

Legislative Update

- HB 1450 Prevents Drs. and medical professionals from asking parents to leave the room during exams of children. This passed the house, went to the Senate Committee with a 3-3 tie. There is a fear about children being influenced by providers to be on birth control or gender reassignment. The downside to the bill is the child wouldn't be able to disclose abuse if the subject is present. There was high level collaboration by DHS, Sanford Health, and Zone Directors talking with legislators to kill this bill. This was voted down on the Senate floor 29 to 17 and is going back to conference committee.
- HB 1268 Mandatory Drug testing bill was killed in the Senate. The department has made a policy to address the drug testing of parents.
- HB 1095 CPS Liaison Bill was tweaked. Zones are now required to work with school districts to develop a committee to help open lines of communication between school districts and zones. The responsibility for starting the process is solely with the zones.
- HB 1556 Relinquishment of parental rights. This started as a bill for adoptive parents to relinquish parental rights of an adopted child if it was felt the child is:
 - Has been diagnosed with severe mental health condition or behavioral health disorder be a licensed child psychologist or psychiatrist
 - Has committed an act of violent or sexual nature against another family member living in the household, which if committed by an adult would be considered a crime under the laws of this state.

- Whose parent is unable to provide proper control of the child and is in fear for the safety of a family member living in the same household as child.
- SB 2112 Life Skills and Transition Center in Grafton still houses the most vulnerable DD individuals but would also allow us to place some other noneligible kids there as a safety net. The number of available beds would be limited base on availability at the time.
- HB 1012 is the department's budget bill which includes zone funding. They were looking at a 2 & 2% salary increase but it has changed back to what the governor proposes, 3 & 3%.

Other: Gerard Kraft has been approved to represent Grant County as the community representative to replace Charles Steinkuehler.

Adjourn:

- Moved by Heidi Peltz, seconded by Gerard Kraft to adjourn the meeting at 12:11 PM. All in favor. Motion carried.

Next Meeting May 15, 2025, at 10:00 am, in Mandan

Respectfully Submitted,



**Jodie Leier
Fiscal Services
Three Rivers Human Service Zone**