



# MINNESOTA PRAIRIE COUNTY ALLIANCE

COMMUNITY SERVICES OF DODGE, STEELE & WASECA COUNTIES

## Adopted Minutes of the Joint Powers Board Meeting held May 26, 2015

Waseca County Human Services, 299 Johnson Avenue, Waseca MN  
Museum Room

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- I. The Minnesota Prairie County Alliance joint powers board met in regular session on May 26, 2015, in the Museum Room at the Waseca County Human Services building, Waseca, MN. Commissioner Blair Nelson called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm CST. Call to order
- II. Introductions were made and Commissioner Huntington established that there was a quorum: Roll call and introductions

Members present:     Tim Tjosaas                     Dodge County Commissioner  
                                 Rodney Peterson             Dodge County Commissioner  
                                 John Glynn                     Steele County Commissioner  
                                 Nina Huntington             Steele County Commissioner  
                                 Blair Nelson                   Waseca County Commissioner  
                                 James Peterson               Waseca County Commissioner  
                                 (left at 1:41 pm)

Members absent:     None

Also present:           Jane Hardwick             MNPrairie Executive Director  
                                 Heather Oconnor           MNPrairie Executive Assistant  
                                 Charity Floen               MNPrairie Adult & Disability Services  
                                                                     Manager  
                                 Laura Elvebak               Steele County Administrator  
                                 Jack Kemme                   Waseca County Administrator  
                                 Julie Johnson               MNPrairie & Steele County Human  
                                                                     Resources Director  
                                 Linda Johnson               MNPrairie Eligibility Supervisor  
                                 Cathy Skogen               MNPrairie Eligibility Supervisor  
                                 Ann Ruedy                   MNPrairie Interim Finance Manager  
                                 Amy Roessler               MNPrairie- Waseca site  
                                 Leah Moriarty               MNPrairie- Waseca site  
                                 Jodi Clayton               MNPrairie- Waseca site  
                                 Sarah Mann                   MNPrairie- Waseca site

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Shauna Hoelscher	MNPrairie- Waseca site
Cindy Barden	MNPrairie- Waseca site
Ronda Morehead	MNPrairie- Waseca site
Shelia Pokorny	AFSCME Council 65

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| <p>III. Motion by Commissioner Tim Tjosaas seconded by Commissioner Blair Nelson to adopt the agenda as amended. <i>Motion adopted unanimously.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Agenda and motion</p>                      |
| <p>IV. Motion by Commissioner Rodney Peterson seconded by Commissioner John Glynn to accept the final meeting minutes as presented for the May 12, 2015 meeting of the Minnesota Prairie County Alliance joint powers board. <i>Motion adopted unanimously.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>Meeting minutes and motion</p>             |
| <p>V. Ann Ruedy, MNPrairie Interim Finance Manager, presented the board with the administrative bills. A discussion resulted on the purchases of batteries, Logitech filters, and the Zayo bill.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>Payment of administrative bills</p>        |
| <p>Motion by Commissioner R. Peterson seconded by Commissioner Tjosaas to authorize payment of \$23,650.51 in administrative bills. <i>Motion adopted unanimously.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>Motion</p>                                 |
| <p>VI. Jane Hardwick, MNPrairie Executive Director, and Julie Johnson, MNPrairie and Steele County Human Resources Director, presented the board with a compensation plan noting that as MNPrairie is in the process of bargaining the terms and conditions of employment for staff represented by AFSCME and that MNPrairie needs to establish a pay scale for non-union staff. Ms. Hardwick stated the approval of the compensation pay scale would apply except where superseded by a collective bargaining agreement or statute and recommended January 1, 2015 as the effective date.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Non-union employment compensation plan</p> |
| <p>Motion by Commissioner Glynn seconded by Commissioner R. Peterson to approve adopt the compensation pay scale effective January 1, 2015. <i>Motion adopted unanimously.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>Motion</p>                                 |
| <p>VII. Jane Hardwick provided the board with the job establishment and classification policy noting the purpose of the policy is to have control over the number of jobs we’ve budgeted for, to have classification for them as personnel costs are a significant part of our budget, and that MNPrairie will review job descriptions on a regular basis --every three years. Ms. Hardwick stated that the Systematic Analysis and Factor Evaluation (SAFE<sup>®</sup>) System will be utilized when job descriptions are evaluated to determine the classification and grade relative to other jobs and recommended January 1, 2015 be the effective date for the policy. A discussion resulted which entailed inquiries on whether union and or non-union staff would be affected and if employees would be paid retroactively.</p> | <p>Job establishment and classification</p>   |

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Motion by Commissioner R. Peterson seconded by Commissioner Nelson to adopt the job establishment and classification policy effective January 1, 2015. *Motion adopted unanimously.*

Motion

VIII. Jane Hardwick provided the board with the policy committee charter noting that it clarifies the purpose and authority of the committee. Ms. Hardwick informed that the charter had been reviewed and recommended by the policy committee to be adopted by the joint powers board. A brief discussion ensued about a component requiring annual review on the duration of the committee.

Policy committee charter

Motion by Commissioner R. Peterson seconded by Commissioner Tjosaas to adopt the Joint Powers Board Policy Committee Charter.

Motion

IX. Jane Hardwick provided a director's report that included the following topics:

Director's report

a. Facilities and Infrastructure

i. Dodge site move

1. The move was successful and a lot of time and energy has been put into it.

ii. Employee moves

1. Jane Hardwick is in the midst of moving to the Steele site.
2. Charity Floen, Adult and Disability Services Manager, has moved to the Dodge site.

b. Payroll

i. Waseca payroll and insurance

1. Erroneous information had been submitted to MNPrairie's payroll unit so union-represented staff at the Waseca site received an overpayment and Waseca's insurance premium withholding had been on a different schedule than MNPrairie. A remedy is in process to resolve both of these issues.

Jane Hardwick, Linda Johnson, Eligibility Supervisor, and Cathy Skogen, Eligibility Supervisor, provided the board with information on the challenges the eligibility unit is currently facing. Ms. Hardwick stated a challenge can be seen in the caseload-to-staff ratio due primarily to program changes that have resulted in a 32 percent increase in cases –predominately health care-- since January 2014 and the lower caseload capacity of eligibility workers within their first two years.

Eligibility caseload and staffing

Ms. Johnson informed the board that since the DHS has implemented changes in their systems, it takes more time to complete some tasks. For example, to enter a newborn baby into the system it would take five to ten minutes prior to the change. Now, to enter the same information it takes 30 to 45 minutes..

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Ms. Hardwick reported there are four current vacancies in the eligibility unit noting that the current eligibility worker-to-case ratio is 1 to 307; however, when taken into account the number of eligibility workers that have been here less than two years, the ratio is 1 to 417 and the ideal ratio is 1 to about 270 with a fully functioning electronic document management system in place.

There was some discussion of the decisions each member county had made about whether to increase staffing in preparation for the implementation of MNsure.

A discussion resulted with inquiries on the duration of filling a vacancy, whether or not there is a solution in which we could hire six new staff at a time, if the number of cases would decrease, the most cost-effective way to train new staff, and the turnover of staff within the first year of hire. Commissioner Glynn inquired why action is not being taken on increasing the number of eligibility workers today. Ms. Hardwick informed that this is a significant increase in staffing and she needs to figure the fiscal impact as well as space. Laura Elvebak, Steele County Administrator, recommended that MNPrairie reach out to other counties to help fill the gap in this area until staff are in place and can carry a caseload.

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| X. Charity Floen provided the board with statistics on MNPrairie’s Tuesday evening hours noting there have been 43 phone calls, 48 walk-ins, 14 appointments, and 105 contacts. Ms. Floen reported that the Dodge and Steele sites have the technology in place to complete interviews across the sites, and that we had our first successful one last week. She also reported that staff still have concerns related to safety when working in the evening and notes that there have been other activities that occur on some Tuesday evenings so there are more people around. A discussion resulted with an inquiry on whether or not MNPrairie plans to continue their evening hours. Ms. Floen stated we will continue our Tuesday evening hours and our numbers are better than expected. | Tuesday evening update                  |
| XI. Jane Hardwick provided the board with a copy of the current meeting schedule and recommended that the board consider what the meeting schedule should be for the remainder of 2015 --noting she believes there is value in meeting twice a month at this time-- and whether or not county administrators and MNPrairie management continues to sit at the table. A brief discussion ensued about the county administrator’s attendance after union negotiations are settled.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Meeting schedule and participation      |
| XII. Charity Floen provided the board with background information regarding MNPrairie’s need to add a chemical dependency (CD) assessor position at the Waseca site as she would like the board to consider taking action on this at the next meeting. Ms. Floen reported that in Waseca, CD assessments had                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Chemical dependency assessment staffing |

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previously been completed by probation and with a shift of job duties from Waseca Corrections department, it is now the responsibility of MNPrairie to complete them, there has been an increase in job demand with implementation of Steele-Waseca Drug Court, and there have been resignations from certified assessors. Ms. Floen stated that training is required to become a certified CD assessor and there are four parts to the job; rule 25 assessments, pre-petition screening, drug court, and the community assessment and referral (CARE) program.

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| XIII. Jane Hardwick informed the board that communication materials have not been sent out in May and that Heather Oconnor, MNPrairie Executive Assistant, has accepted a MNPrairie Child Support Enforcement Aide position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Communication     |
| XIV. Employees at the meeting expressed their gratitude for recognizing the hardship the eligibility unit is facing, their feeling of discouragement of all of the work that has to be picked up by others as staff are exiting employment, and the need for having a compensation plan that retains staff and attracts new individuals. Waseca staff also shared their enthusiasm to get a telecommuting policy in place so they may have the opportunity to telecommute. Commissioner Glynn extended a thank you to staff for expressing their perspective to the joint powers board. | Employee comments |
| XV. Commissioner Huntington announced the next meeting will be held on June 9, 2015, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm, Room 40, Steele County Administration Center, 630 Florence Avenue, Owatonna, MN.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Next meeting      |
| XVI. Motion by Commissioner Glynn seconded by Commissioner R. Peterson to adjourn the meeting at 1:55 pm. CDT. <i>Motion adopted unanimously.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Adjournment       |