



Official Proceedings of the Buffalo Bridges Human Service Zone Board – December 4, 2023

At 11:05 a.m., Zone Director, Mandi Freije called the regular meeting (In person and via Teams Meeting) of the Buffalo Bridges Human Service Zone Board to order. Zone Board Members, Allison Swenson, Tom Overn, Tracy Johnk, Levi Taylor, were present. Absent were Gayle Nelson and Shawn Olauson. Also, present were Jessica Alonge, Shannon Davis, and Wanda Larson.

Overn made a motion, seconded by Swenson, to approve the presented minutes. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried.

Johnk made a motion to approve the presented vouchers, seconded by Overn. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried.

Freije gave the board an update on staff. Freije told the board we have had three resignations within the eligibility unit. One eligibility worker in the Valley City office went to the Long-Term unit at the state. This worker's FTE has been transferred out of our region, so we will not be filling this position. Another worker in the Jamestown office went to Cass County as a Parent Aide. We will be filling this position to be housed in either Stutsman County or Barnes County. Another worker in the Jamestown office resigned due to flexibility but is interested in staying on as a part-time worker. It was agreed to keep her as a part-time worker. She would work 20 hours/per week. Freije will look into filling her remaining FTE with another part-time employee. Freije also told the board that we have major backlog statewide.

Freije explained to the board that we have a "Remote Workers" workgroup that is working on a plan to implement remote working which would become effective in January. In the Barnes office all eligibility workers except two and the child welfare workers there are four that want to work remotely. In the Stutsman office one eligibility worker and three child welfare workers want to work remotely. The workgroup is developing a rotation schedule to be sure we have people in the office to see walk in clients. The century code change for the weather policy was discussed. If staff has preapproved leave on a storm closure day they must use their leave time and will not get excused time. The new century code also states that if staff are able to work remotely they would be required to work remotely and would not get excused time. This century code is recommended but not required to be followed by Human Services Zones. The board shared their input and thoughts on this new policy and a motion was made by Johnk to keep the policy as is, not requiring staff to work remotely on a storm closure. Motion was seconded by Overn. Roll taken. Motion carried.

Freije talked about the annual general assistance funds the Stutsman office provides to the Salvation Army who distributes these funds to clients in need. Each year Stutsman budgets \$10,500.00 to be given to the Salvation Army. The Barnes office distributes general assistance at their office. A motion was made by Taylor to continue with this procedure, seconded by Swenson. Roll taken. Motion carried.

The January 2, 2024, Zone Board meeting will be held both in person and virtually through Teams.

At 12:06 p.m., Overn made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Johnk. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Mandi Freije, Zone Director

Gayle Nelson, Secretary