



## **Official Proceedings of the Buffalo Bridges Human Service Zone Board – April 2, 2024**

At 11:02 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, Tracy Johnk, Jerry Bergquist, Cole Conley, Gayle Nelson, and Shawn Olauson were present. Absent was Allison Swenson. Also, present was Wanda Larson, and Jessica Alonge.

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

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

Freije told the board about the March Madness Townhall given by HHS Commissioner Wayne Salter regarding the backlog within the Economic Assistance unit. He asked the zones to approve overtime for eligibility workers to be able to catch up with the backlog and complete the remaining work items. Salter outlined his plan to catch up and ensure timeliness for economic assistance.

Freije talked to the board about the Cass Surge Plan. Due to significant turnover in Cass County resulting in backlog HSS worked with Cass and came up with a plan. Staff from other zones were asked to work assessments and supervisors were asked to help onboard new staff. Two workers went to Cass to assist with working cases. One supervisor is currently helping Cass with onboarding and training new staff.

Freije updated the board on the last director's meeting. Freije told the board that a redesign will be started for the Foster Care unit. This is expected to be an 18-month redesign. There will be a team forming to be on the Foster Care redesign group.

In other business, Bergquist updated the board on a discussion he had with Stutsman County's State's Attorney. Monthly meetings were established with the State's Attorney and the Child Welfare staff.

The June 4, 2024, Zone Board meeting will be held both in person and virtually through Teams.

At 11:56 p.m., Overn made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Olauson. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

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Mandi Freije, Zone Director

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Gayle Nelson, Secretary