

**DAKOTA COUNTY
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Meeting Minutes

**September 15, 2020
Video Conference**

Call To Order And Roll Call

Commissioner Mike Slavik
Commissioner Kathleen A. Gaylord
Commissioner Thomas A. Egan
Commissioner Joe Atkins
Commissioner Liz Workman
Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg
Commissioner Chris Gerlach

Also in attendance: Matt Smith, County Manager; Tom Donely, Assistant County Attorney; Marti Fischbach, Community Services Division Director; Colleen Collette, Administrative Coordinator.

Due to the local state of emergency and social distancing, Commissioners participated in this meeting via telephone, and the Community Services Committee of the Whole meeting was conducted under Minn. Stat. § 13D.021.

The meeting was called to order at 10:46 a.m. by the Chair, Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg.

The audio of this meeting is available upon request.

Audience

The Chair, Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg, noted that all public comments can be sent to countyadmin@co.dakota.mn.us

As of 8:00 a.m. on September 15, 2020, none were received.

Approval Of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

On a motion by Commissioner Kathleen A. Gaylord, seconded by Commissioner Thomas A. Egan, the agenda was unanimously approved.

Consent Agenda

On a motion by Commissioner Mike Slavik, seconded by Commissioner Joe Atkins, the consent agenda was unanimously approved as follows:

4.1 Approval Of Minutes Of Meeting Held On August 11, 2020

4.2 Ratification Of Grant Application To Temporary Assistance For Needy Families Data Collaborative, And Authorization To Accept Grant Funds, Execute Joint Powers Agreement, And Amend 2020 Community Services Administration Adopted Budget

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2019, the Community Services Administration Department submitted a grant application to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Data Collaborative (TDC) in partnership with

the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and Olmsted County; and

WHEREAS, the TDC is an initiative of the Federal Administration for Children and Families that seeks to support TANF agency efforts to routinely use TANF and other administrative data to inform policy and practice, with the intention to improve employment and well-being outcomes for individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, the TDC Pilot Initiative is intended to be a partnership between the selected TANF Pilot site teams and the TDC project team to support the Pilot agencies in increasing their data analytic capacity through training and professional technical assistance coaching; and

WHEREAS, DHS was notified by TDC on January 17, 2020, that the joint grant application was approved in the amount of \$175,000 for a period of 30 months beginning March 2020 with \$131,166 to be allocated to Dakota County; and

WHEREAS, the DHS serves as fiscal host and, as such, is in the process of executing a grant agreement with the TDC; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends ratification of the grant application submitted to TDC, and authorization to accept the grant funds, execute the joint powers agreement with DHS for the TDC Pilot Initiative in an amount not to exceed \$131,166 to fund staff costs incurred as a result of participation in the TDC Pilot Initiative, and amend the 2020 CSA Adopted Budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby ratifies the grant application submitted by the Community Services Administration Department on September 30, 2019, to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Data Collaborative in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and Olmsted County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to accept the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Data Collaborative grant funds in the amount of the grant awarded, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Community Services Director is hereby authorized to execute a joint powers agreement between the Community Services Administration Department and the Minnesota Department of Human Services to fund program costs incurred as a result of participation in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Data Collaborative Pilot Initiative in an amount not to exceed \$131,166 for the period of March 1, 2020 through September 30, 2022, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That unless the grant program requirements change, the Community Services Director is hereby authorized to amend the joint powers agreement to alter the grant term, accept additional grant funds, consistent with County contracting policies, and inclusion of grant funds in the future yearly Recommended and Approved Budgets, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Community Services Director is hereby authorized to amend the 2020 Community Services Administration Department's Adopted Budget as follows:

Revenue	
TANF Grant Revenue	\$115,333
Fund Balance (Offset for staff costs)	<u>(\$115,333)</u>
Total Revenue	\$ 0

4.3 Rescission Of Resolution No. 20-389 And Authorization To Expand Transportation Assistance, Amend 2020 Non-Departmental Budget, Authorization To Execute Contract With DARTS For Transportation Services And Amend 2020 Social Services Budget

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 20-389 (August 18, 2020), Dakota County Board of Commissioners authorized implementation of the Transportation Assistance Program; and

WHEREAS, Dakota County Community Services is committed to creating transportation options for persons with disabilities, older adults and people who are served through the County's programs; and

WHEREAS, this is evidenced through the GoDakota initiative which includes such projects as the rideshare pilot and DakotaLink; and

WHEREAS, between March 16, 2020 and July 6, 2020, more than 66,000 Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims were filed in Dakota County, representing 27.2 percent of Dakota County's 2019 annual labor force and job layoffs and furloughs due to COVID-19 have created significant economic hardship for many individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, due to unemployment, underemployment and other financial instability impacts of COVID-19, many Dakota County residents who did not have transportation needs previously may be in a position today of requiring assistance; and

WHEREAS, Dakota County Community Services proposes a Transportation Assistance Program using an amount not to exceed \$245,000 in Dakota County CARES funds and the Transportation Assistance Program will include funds for a variety of transportation options, including: funds for rideshare rides through Lyft codes; funds for public transportation rides through Go-To cards; funds for rides with DARTS; and funds for food distribution through DARTS; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends rescinding Resolution No. 20-389 (August 18, 2020) that authorized implementation of the Transportation Assistance Program in an amount not to exceed \$245,000 for the period of August 18, 2020 through December 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends authorization to implement a Transportation Assistance Program in an amount not to exceed \$245,000 for the period of June 1, 2020 through December 1, 2020, amend the 2020 Non-Departmental budget, authorize the Community Services Director to execute a contract with DART for transportation services for \$135,000 for the period of June 1, 2020 to December 1, 2020, and amend the 2020 Social Services budget; and

WHEREAS, there is an immediate and serious need for these services that cannot be met with other procurement methods, and that the services that may be contracted for are limited to those necessary to meet the emergency facing individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, the County Board has determined that the Transportation Assistance Program costs are necessary and a reasonable response to the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore eligible for use of CARES Act funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby rescinds Resolution No. 20-389 (August 18, 2020); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to implement the Transportation Assistance Program in an amount not to exceed \$245,000 for the period of June 1, 2020 through December 1, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to execute a contract with DARTS to provide transportation services in an amount not to exceed \$135,000 from the period of June 1, 2020 to December 1, 2020, subject to approval by the County

Attorney’s Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes an amendment to the 2020 Non-Departmental budget as follows:

Expense	
CARES Act Expenses	<u>(\$245,000)</u>
Total Expense	(\$245,000)
Revenue	
CARES Act	<u>(\$245,000)</u>
Total Revenue	(\$245,000)

; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes an amendment the 2020 Social Services budget as follows:

Expense	
CARES Act Transportation Assistance	<u>\$245,000</u>
Total Expense	\$245,000
Revenue	
CARES Act	<u>\$245,000</u>
Total Revenue	\$245,000

; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this program and funding for the DARTS contract will end immediately in the event that sufficient funds from county, state, or federal sources are no longer available to continue this program.

Regular Agenda

5.1 Authorization To Execute Joint Powers Agreement With Law Enforcement Agencies For Coordinated Response And Law Enforcement Social Services Coordinated Response Pilot Update

Emily Schug, Deputy Director, and Kalyn Basset, Mental Health Coordinator, both from Social Services, along with the following law enforcement members presented on this item and stood for questions: Brian Sturgeon, Chief of Police and Jesse Mettner, Officer, both from the West St. Paul Police Department; Bill Messerich, Chief of Police in the South St. Paul Police Department; Mike Dahlstrom, Chief of Police in the Rosemount Police Department; and Nick Francis, Captain in the Apple Valley Police Department.

The Board confirmed moving forward with hiring a position to work with the Apple Valley and Rosemount Police Departments as approved in the 2020 budget.

On a motion by Commissioner Liz Workman, seconded by Commissioner Kathleen A. Gaylord, the following resolution was unanimously recommended to the County Board:

WHEREAS, Dakota County Community Services and local law enforcement agencies have engaged in conversation and planning to develop improved system response for individuals with mental health needs; and

WHEREAS, Dakota County Social Services (SS) has partnered with law enforcement agencies to develop the Coordinated Response Pilot, hereinafter referred to as “the Pilot”, aimed at providing a more effective, coordinated response to residents whose use of emergency services may indicate a need for a more integrated

service response from law enforcement and SS; and

WHEREAS, the Pilot is being implemented with local law enforcement agencies based on available funding and expressed interest; and

WHEREAS, SS is currently implementing the Pilot activities with police departments in the cities of West St. Paul, South St. Paul, Hastings, Apple Valley and Rosemount; and

WHEREAS, the Dakota County Attorney's Office worked with the Pilot partners, including SS and law enforcement agencies, to develop a scope and framework for services to be provided under a joint powers agreement (JPA) with Dakota County for the purposes of response to individuals whose use of emergency services may indicate need for and benefit of coordinated follow-up from SS and law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the JPA will be offered to any and all Dakota County law enforcement agencies that partner with SS, including those partnerships that develop with resources in addition to the current budget approved positions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to execute a joint powers agreement with each law enforcement agency participating in the Coordinated Response Pilot, including West St. Paul Police Department, South St. Paul Police Department, Apple Valley Police Department, Hastings Police Department and Rosemount Police Department, effective upon the date of execution through December 31, 2021, or until completion by the parties of their respective obligations under the joint powers agreement, whichever occurs first, unless earlier terminated by law or according to the provisions of the joint powers agreement, substantially as presented to the Community Services Committee of the Whole on September 15, 2020, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That if resources are available for additional law enforcement agencies to be added to the Coordinated Response Pilot, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Community Services Director to execute a joint powers agreement with other Dakota County law enforcement agencies effective upon the date of execution through December 31, 2021, or until completion by the parties of their respective obligations under the joint powers agreement, whichever occurs first, unless earlier terminated by law or according to the provisions of the joint powers agreement, substantially as presented to the Community Services Committee of the Whole on September 15, 2020, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the agreements shall contain a provision that allows the County to immediately terminate the agreements in the event sufficient funds from county, state or federal sources are not appropriated at a level sufficient to allow activities of the agreement to commence, and otherwise may be terminated with or without cause, by either party upon thirty (30) days written notice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Community Services Director is hereby authorized to amend said joint powers agreement to alter the number and types of clients serviced, types of services provided, roles and responsibilities, and joint powers agreement term, consistent with County contracting policies, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form.

5.2 Update On Community Services CARES Act Programs

Marti Fischbach, Community Services Division Director, presented on this item and stood for questions.

The Board recommended bringing forth a Request for Board Action to the County Board meeting on September 22, 2020, that requests the use of CARES Act funding to support Chambers of Commerce and Visitors and Convention Bureaus in Dakota County.

5.3 Authorization To Expand Emergency Assistance, Amend 2020 Non-Departmental Budget And 2020 Employment And Economic Assistance Budget

Mark Jacobs, Deputy Director in Employment and Economic Assistance, presented on this item and stood for questions.

On a motion by Commissioner Thomas A. Egan, seconded by Commissioner Joe Atkins, the following resolution was unanimously recommended to the County Board:

WHEREAS, the proposed distribution of gas and grocery cards would focus on COVID-19 impacted households who have applied for public assistance benefits but were denied and are below the 300 percent federal poverty guideline; and

WHEREAS, a minimum of 600 households would benefit from this program; and

WHEREAS, the provision of these cards would benefit low-income families impacted by COVID-19, but are ineligible for other county-provided public assistance programs; and

WHEREAS, staff is seeing an increase in applications for public assistance programs and 50 percent of all food, cash and emergency assistance applicants are denied; and

WHEREAS, approximately, 25 percent of the denials are due to the household being over income or asset limits as established by the existing public assistance eligibility programs, yet not over the 300 percent federal poverty guidelines; and

WHEREAS, providing gas and grocery cards will help offset household expenses, bridging the gap until alternative resources can be found; and

WHEREAS, staff anticipates starting the program on September 22, 2020, with all cards procured by December 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends making an initial purchase of \$40,000 of gas and grocery cards to ensure program design and anticipated needs are on-target; and

WHEREAS, eligible clients could receive a maximum of \$250 combination of gas and grocery cards provided per household based on family size; and

WHEREAS, it is proposed that distribution of the cards would be done using existing County staff following current audit procedures used for procurement of gas cards to ensure fiscal integrity and accounting; and

WHEREAS, any gas or grocery cards purchase by the County from a specific retailer or vendor is not an endorsement or promotion of the gas or grocery entity, but a purchase made for the convenience of Dakota County to provide assistance to the benefit low-income families impacted by COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends authorization to expand emergency assistance to individuals and families in an amount not to exceed \$150,000 for the period of September 22, 2020 through December 1, 2020, amend the 2020 Non-Departmental budget and amend the 2020 Social Services budget; and

WHEREAS, the County Board has determined that emergency assistance costs in the form of gas and grocery cards is a necessary and a reasonable response to the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore eligible for use of CARES Act funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the

Community Services Director to purchase gas and grocery cards for individuals and families who have applied for public assistance benefits and are below the 300 percent federal poverty guideline in an amount not to exceed \$150,000 for the period of September 22, 2020 through December 1, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes an amendment to the 2020 Non-Departmental budget as follows:

Expense	
CARES Act Expenses	<u>(\$150,000)</u>
Total Expense	(\$150,000)

Revenue	
CARES Act	<u>(\$150,000)</u>
Total Revenue	(\$150,000)

; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes an amendment to the 2020 Employment and Economic Assistance budget as follows:

Expense	
CARES Act	<u>\$150,000</u>
Total Revenue	\$150,000

Revenue	
Cares Act	<u>\$150,000</u>
Total Revenue	\$150,000

; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this program will end immediately in the event that sufficient funds from county, state, or federal sources are no longer available to continue this program.

Community Services Directors Report

Marti Fischbach, Division Director, reported on the following items:

- Open Door Pantry:
 - Last one was Aug 31.
 - 25,000 pounds of food served more than 1500 people.
 - Recap of the summer food distribution events held at the Northern Service Center will be in Matt's weekly update to the Board.
- 125 Immunizations, including the flu shot, were given in August.
- SNAP & Cash Recertification is starting again. The waiver was lifted and needed to do all recertifications, so now managing catch-up. Many households did not return the information requested, which results in a lot of closing and reopening. Staff is now starting to double up on workload to process recertifications from April as well as October. Utilizing staff from another area, and they are assisting in answering general questions or making calls to get missing information. On the first day, over 200 calls were made. Everyone is pitching in to help with the increased workload. Also, the Peacetime Emergency Modifications to Economic Assistance was extended to June 21. While it does not help with SNAP, it does allow for continuing to do remote interviews for MFIP rather than in-person, and electronic signatures are still allowed. Some waivers staying in place will help balance the workload.

Adjournment

On a motion by Commissioner Mike Slavik, seconded by Commissioner Kathleen A. Gaylord, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Collette, Administrative Coordinator
Community Services Division