

Minutes: Human Services Performance Council Meeting

February 5, 2021

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

WebEx Call

Attendance

Present

- Council Members: Linda Bixby, Julie Bluhm, Joni Buffalohead, Toni Carter, Ann Gaasch, Debbie Goettel, Stacy Hennen, Noel Jagolino, Rae Ann Keeler-Aus, Shaneen Moore, Michelle Ness, Reed Olson, Rodney Peterson, Eric Ratzmann, Ashley Reisenauer, Pam Selvig, and Aaron Wittnebel
- Performance Management Team Members: Debra Anthony, Charity Mack, Marisa Hinnenkamp, Carrie Krueger, Gary Mortensen, Beryl Palmer and Olufemi Fajolu
- Guests: Catherine Engstrom (AMC), Matt Freeman (MACSSA), Angie Thies (AMC) and Jesse Winsell (Hennepin County)

Absent

- Council Members: Ben Bement, Alexa Dixson, and Charles Johnson

Welcome and Announcements

Debbie Goettel

- Commissioner Goettel called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.
- Carrie Krueger provided an overview of Webex functions.
- Introductions of members present.

Approval of November 20, 2020 Minutes

Debbie Goettel

- Correction request regarding the approval of the August 7, 2020 minutes.
- Provided that correction occurs, Rod Peterson moved to approve the minutes, Linda Bixby seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion and Input from Council

Perf Mgmt Team

Adult Protection Proposed Measures Review and Approval: Gary Mortensen and Beryl Palmer

- Beryl provided a review of the current Adult Protection (AP) measure and its history. She also reviewed the process for operationalizing new measures.
- In Nov. 2020, a group of DHS, county and other stakeholders met to obtain feedback and have discussions about updating the AP measure, as well as introducing a new measure and thresholds.

- Adult Protection Measure Overview:

Status	Measure	Threshold	High Performance Standard
Current Measure (Retiring)	Percent of vulnerable adults who experience maltreatment who do not experience a repeat maltreatment of the same type within six months.	80%	95%
Proposed Measure 1	Percent of vulnerable adults who experience maltreatment who do not experience a repeat maltreatment of the same type within twelve months.	80%	95%
Proposed Measure 2	Percent of initial dispositions made within five working days.	90%	95%
Future Measure	Percent of total staff performing county duties under the Vulnerable Adult Act (VAA) who participated in 8 hours of educational or training per year approved by the commissioner of the human services specific to these duties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threshold First year: Complete all VAA training in first year • Threshold for continuing education: complete duty- specific training 	TBD	TBD

- Lengthy discussion ensued regarding proposed measure one. Most notably, the issue of self-neglect was of concern, the impact of small numbers and the DHS policy regarding the inability to offer services on reports that have been screened out. Council members voted not to approve the update to the measure, but for staff to determine the possibility of removing self-neglect cases or other options before a final vote.
- Commissioner Goettel motioned to approve proposed measure two; Councilor Jagolino seconded and the motioned passed.
- There was no vote on the third and future measure around staff training.

2021 Performance Team work plan: Performance Management Team

- Gary reviewed the 2021 dashboard and work plan.
- Overview of current projects
 - Debra Anthony explained her work with the Strategic Antiracist Leadership Team (StART) team at DHS. The team is working on a strategic plan and equity audit for 2021.
 - Debra Anthony also provided an update on the work of the Equity Partnership, which is now in its third year. Despite COVID-19, the group has continued to meet once or twice a month. Action teams were developed to implement the work. The group completed training with the YMCA, having some tough discussions on white supremacy. Starting in February, they will be receiving

additional training on an authentic equity engagement toolkit to learn how to lead engagement meetings with community. The partnership will be used to develop and pilot a stakeholder engagement process to embed community involvement in the measures development process.

- Charity Mack reviewed the COVID-19 waiver project, which is a collaborative effort to align MACSSA and DHS program area teams to identify, evaluate/research and make recommendations on whether program waivers that were enacted due to COVID-19 should be continued on a permanent basis. There was interest at both the county- and state-level to do this work and it is a unique opportunity to build a process for future evaluation and systemic change efforts. A steering committee comprised of representatives from DHS, MACSSA, and AMC was formed to lead the efforts by selecting waivers to review, developing the criteria for evaluating waivers, and assembling a group to perform the waiver evaluation.

2021 Performance Council Priorities / Strategic Planning: Gary Mortensen

- Structure of Performance Council Meetings
 - Gary asked for input on the Extenuating Circumstance Claims process, as it is taking up more time lately than in the past. Councilors shared a variety of opinions about discussing the claims during the meeting. Some felt they lacked the context needed to make informed decisions and needed more information from both the counties and program staff, while others felt this was an important role in the Council's work that should continue. Suggestions included having a smaller committee review the claims, including an analysis or recommendation from staff for Councilors to consider, and sending an annual mailing to counties that clearly outlines the information needed for claims along with a sample.
- Roles and Responsibilities of the Human Services Performance Council
 - There were individuals that had to step away from the meeting by this point, so discussion was brief. This conversation will be continued and added to future agendas.
 - Councilor Jagolino shared his interest in participating in the development of measures.
 - Commissioner Carter shared that there may need to be an expansion of the Council's role to better understand how to connect our programs to community level outcomes.
 - Commissioner Goettel shared that she thinks the Council would benefit from equity training to view things with a different lens.
 - Councilor Wittnebel asked if there could be some discussion of what the system does and create some flow to the member roles and responsibilities and how projects connect to those roles.

Meeting Adjourned.

Upcoming 2021 Council Meetings Dates

- May 7, 2021
- Aug. 6, 2021
- Nov. 19, 2021

Minutes: Human Services Performance Council Meeting

May 7, 2021

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

WebEx Call

Attendance

Present

- Council Members: Linda Bixby, Toni Carter, Debbie Goettel, Stacy Hennen, Noel Jagolino, Charles Johnson, Rae Ann Keeler-Aus, Shaneen Moore, Michelle Ness, Reed Olson, Rodney Peterson, Ashley Reisenauer, Pam Selvig, and Aaron Wittnebel
- Performance Management Team Members: Debra Anthony, Olufemi Fajolu, Marisa Hinnenkamp, Carrie Krueger (recording), Gary Mortensen, and Beryl Palmer
- Guests: Lori Bona (DHS EAESD), Matt Freeman (MACSSA), Jacob Sprunger (AMC), Melissa Miller (DHS EAESD), and Jesse Winsell (Hennepin County)

Absent

- Council Members: Ben Bement, Julie Bluhm, Joni Buffalohead, Alexa Dixson, Ann Gaasch, and Eric Ratzmann
- Performance Management Team Members: Charity Mack

Welcome and Announcements

Charles Johnson

- Charles Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.
- Carrie Krueger provided an overview of Webex.
- Introductions of members present.

Approval of February 2, 2021 Minutes

Charles Johnson

- Rodney Peterson moved to approve as presented, Linda Bixby seconded
- Minutes were adopted.

Extenuating Circumstances Claims Review

Gary Mortensen

- **Recommended Actions for Expedited SNAP EC Claims: *Gary Mortensen***
- The 2021 Cash and SNAP report was sent in April. Gary provided an overview of the measures included in the report and overall performance. The Percent of SNAP and Cash Assistance Applications Processed Timely measure continued to see solid performance. However, Expedited SNAP measure saw significant decline. Most counties had a decrease in performance on this measure, but the largest decrease came

from the metro region. Ten counties were below the performance threshold for the measure Percent of Expedited SNAP Applications Processed within One Business Day.

- Gary provided overview of the EC Claim process and the historical decisions. Extenuating Circumstances are one-time events that cause a disruption to services that are outside county control.
- Council discussion:
 - One thing that stood out was that these counties were consistently performing well before the pandemic. This is a tricky measure for counties because it is a one-day turnaround and for this measure front desk, in-person staff are relied upon to ensure the fast turn-around. The 24-hour timeframe was very sensitive to not having in-person staffing.
 - Discussed that even though the number of expedited SNAP cases was lower this year, overall SNAP applications increased over last year. So the report seems to indicate a reduction, but it doesn't necessarily reflect the workload for the counties. Additionally, the denominator does not include applications which were denied; those applications also require staff time to review.
 - IT infrastructure and remote working capabilities were a problem. Many counties have historically not invested in their infrastructure to weather what we have experienced. The pandemic forced the issue, which is a silver lining in the pandemic. We are better prepared for disasters in the future and will be able to pivot more easily.
 - In this situation, it is unlikely counties would benefit from creating a PIP. Instead, reviewing lessons learned may be a more helpful way to look at this.
 - If we had the opportunity to really review response during a pandemic, we would need to do improvements system-wide. Not all counties have access to high-speed Internet. Many workers can only do their work by phone and even then many had to use their own phone and the number would come up as "restricted" when they called. It would be helpful to look at improving access. Maybe DHS leadership can present performance issues/hardships as a way to get DEED or the legislature to prioritize Internet services.
 - MOTION: Debbie Goettel moved to approve all the ECs as a whole; Linda Bixby seconded.
 - **Motion prevails.**

Discussion and Input from Council

Perf Mgmt Team

- **2021 Performance Team work plan: Performance Management Team**
 - Deb provided an overview of the Equity Partnership
 - Approved short-term objectives and are developing a "blueprint" to secure resources create a work plan to implement
 - Grow and mature the Equity Partnership towards becoming an established organization, in which staff who are leading or participating in this work can share their wins, challenges and gain support as they do this work.

- Align equity initiatives, tools and trainings across the MN Human Services system and provide leaders and employees with the tools and skills to create a culture of equity
 - Develop resources and a system to require the participation and use of tools and training resources
 - Participating in Human Centered Design training through YMCA and the U of M.
 - Developed and submitted proposal for American Recovery Plan funding to expand Equity Partnership work.
- Deb provided a Community Engagement Project Update:
 - Completed RFP process, selected vendor to develop and train, a stakeholder engagement process
 - Partnered with the Equity Partnership to develop the process for holding engagement sessions with community
 - Working with Stearns (Project related to MFIP) and Dakota (Project related to child out-of-home-placements) counties to co-develop the engagement process and conduct engagement sessions
 - Working to implement a co-creation process.
- Gary provided an update on the COVID-19 program waivers. Looking at the waivers that were implemented and identify key learnings.
 - Project scope:
 - Develop criteria to identify and select program waivers to be researched and evaluated.
 - Establish a standardized process for bringing together DHS business area staff, county staff and people served by programs to evaluate and improve program delivery and service.
 - Create an evaluation planning group that is composed of business areas and county staff to design the evaluation. The design will incorporate an equity lens as well as client engagement.
 - Oversee the evaluation of program area waivers.
 - Develop and present a recommendation to program area leaders on whether program waivers should be incorporated into standard practice.
 - Have established a steering team. Next steps are incorporating an equity lens, reviewing these waivers based on the impacts on BIPOC communities, and identifying COVID-19 program waivers to evaluate.
 - As the end of the peacetime emergency nears, there will be a ramp-off of these waivers. Discussed the timeline for this being long-term and trying to set up a process for evaluation.
- Femi provided an update on a survey that will be going out to the counties. We have been sending reports and administering PIPS, but we have not made any efforts to assess the effectiveness of the system from the perspective of county employees.
 - Goals:

- Determine the effectiveness of the Performance Management System from the perception of county partners.
 - Determine the impacts of the components of the performance management system on the overall effectiveness of the system
 - Advise on how to make the system more effective
- **Adult Protection Proposed Measures Update: Gary Mortensen and Beryl Palmer**
 - Beryl provided an update on the Adult Protection Measures:
 - Percent of initial dispositions made within five business days.
 - Approved by Council at February 5th meeting
 - Fact Sheet Created
 - Current phase: Implementation
 - Collection of baseline data
 - Reports to Counties – October 2021
 - No PIPs until 2022
 - Percent of vulnerable adults who experience maltreatment who do not experience a repeat maltreatment of the same type within twelve months.
 - Performance Management team met with APS about Council’s concerns and we are recommending pausing implementation of this revised measure and forming a workgroup for additional evaluation.
- **2021 Performance Council Priorities / Strategic Planning: Gary Mortensen**
 - Gary provided an overview of the Human Services Performance Management system and the key initiatives:
 - Building meaningful connections – Foster relationships to increase collaboration, improve communication and reduce barriers throughout the human services system.
 - Measuring and reporting performance – Develop measures and reports that provide a holistic view of county service delivery and progress toward improving outcomes for the people we serve.
 - Providing data-informed improvement assistance – Cultivate a culture of continuous improvement through strategic, targeted efforts focused on advancing performance outcomes.
 - Advancing equity to reduce disparities – Promote an equitable and inclusive human services system.
 - Advocating for system change - Collaborate with stakeholders to identify performance barriers, develop solutions, and champion policy and procedural improvements.
 - Gary asked: **“Where should we prioritize our efforts?** A well-functioning performance management system is comprised of many components, where should the Performance Management team focus our efforts and at what level?
 - The Performance Council discussed how intertwined these initiatives are and how difficult it is to select one area of focus without aligning with the other key initiatives.

Next Steps and Action Items

Gary Mortensen

- **Upcoming 2021 Council Meetings Dates**
 - Aug. 6, 2021
 - Nov. 19, 2021
- Ben Bement emailed us that he is resigning from the council. We will have an open seat we will be trying to fill that fits into the tribal and communities of color position.

Meeting adjourned 11:57

Minutes: Human Services Performance Council Meeting

August 6, 2021

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

WebEx

Present

- Council Members: Linda Bixby, Julie Bluhm, Joni Buffalohead, Toni Carter, Debbie Goettel, Noel Jagolino, Rae Ann Keeler-Aus, Shaneen Moore, Michelle Ness, Rodney Peterson, Eric Ratzmann, Pam Selvig, and Aaron Wittnebel
- Performance Management Team Members: Debra Anthony, Marisa Hinnenkamp, Carrie Krueger, Charity Mack (recording), Gary Mortensen, and Beryl Palmer
- Guests: Jonathan Hausman, Benjamin Jaques-Leslie, Pamela McCauley and Kristen Shouman (DHS EAESD); Matt Freeman and Angie Thies (MACSSA); Reanna Jacobs, Rae Ann Keeler-Aus, Marisa Kirby-Stofferahn, and Nikki Kovan, (DHS CSP); and Jesse Winsell (Hennepin County)

Absent

- Council Members: Ann Gaasch, Alexa Griggs-Dixon, Stacy Hennen, Charles Johnson, Reed Olson, and Ashley Reisenauer
- Performance Management Team Members: Olufemi Fajolu

Welcome and Announcements

Debbie Goettel

- Debbie Goettel called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.
- Introductions of members and guests present.

Approval of May 7th Minutes

Debbie Goettel

- Linda Bixby moved to approve as presented, Rodney Peterson seconded
- Minutes were adopted.

Extenuating Circumstances Claims Review

Gary Mortensen

- **Recommended Actions for Child Safety & Permanency (CSP) and Self-Support Index (S-SI) claims: *Gary Mortensen***
- The 2021 Human Services Performance Management Report with Child Safety & Permanency (CSP) and Self-Support Index (S-SI) measures was sent to counties in July. Gary provided an overview of the extenuating circumstance process and the small numbers policy that impacts CSP measures. The small numbers policy exists to address counties with smaller denominators. If a county has fewer than 20 cases and is below the threshold on one CSP measure, we look at the other two measures as well. If they

are below on two of the three measures, then a PIP is required for both measures. If they are above on other the two measures, no PIP is required.

- Gary started with the S-SI claims and suggested bundling them together as there were patterns emerging, similarly to what was done with the Expedited SNAP claims at the last meeting.

- **Council discussion on the Self-Support Index Claims:**
 - With the S-SI, the pandemic has had a big impact: causing service disruptions and a recession in terms of businesses being closed and people losing jobs. Councilors were in favor of bundling the claims as a group rather than discussing them one by one, and having some leniency.
 - It is impressive that only seven counties did not meet the measure. It makes one wonder how much COVID really impacted these counties, given most counties met their range of expected performance. Ben Jacques-Leslie of EAESD noted the threshold or range was working as intended as it does take into account economic and other factors outside of county control. Pamela McCauley (EAESD/MFIP Manager) pointed out that this is a historical look at what has happened as it is a three year measure.
 - Linda Bixby moved to approve them all, seconded by Rae Ann Keeler-Aus. Decision was made to do two votes, one on bundling the claims and the other on whether to approve or deny them.
 - The portion of the motion to bundle the claims prevailed.
 - Discussion about these claims continued due to DHS EAESD staff's opinions that these claims should not excuse counties from PIPs. Members appreciated the staff input on this but felt that counties should be given some grace, as waivers and inability to sanction were an issue. Additionally, we are talking about smaller counties that do not have the same technology and resources available as some of the larger counties. It has been a very difficult and unique time due to the pandemic and we should have some sensitivity to that.
 - The portion of the motion to approve the claims prevailed.

- Gary introduced the CSP permanency measure claims with another suggestion to bundle them.

- **Council discussion on the Permanency claims:**
 - Debbie Goettel moved to bundle all claims except Traverse because it is non-COVID related, seconded by Rod Peterson. Motion carried to bundle and discuss Traverse separately.
 - Discussion that many of these issues have been heard in many of our counties. These are common issues and COVID disruptions had a significant impact.
 - DHS staff from the CSP team noted that these counties are well on their way to meeting their goals for 2021 and agencies did well despite the struggles. Everything presented in the claims and explanations aligns with what we have seen and are circumstances outside of their control. What we are seeing is reflective of what we know has been an issue across the state.
 - Linda Bixby moved to approve the claims, Rae Ann Keeler-Aus seconded. Motion prevailed.
 - Discussion then moved to the Traverse county claim. The county cited data error but it was coded correctly. Members felt there was not enough information to fully understand and make an informed decision and wondered if the decision could be left with the commissioner.
 - Toni Carter motioned to deny the claim, seconded by Aaron Wittnebel. Motion prevailed.

- Request from council to get information from staff ahead of the meeting regarding any follow up that has occurred with counties regarding their claims. Gary said the team can provide that and moved on to the relative placement claims, which he recommended be looked at individually.
- ***Council discussion on the Relative Placement claims:***
 - Grant County's claim was due to COVID impact on placement. Grant has not had a PIP for this measure in the past, but typically falls under the small numbers exemption. Council members felt this county did everything they could and were in favor of granting the claim for the sake of consistency with COVID impacts. Aaron Wittnebel motioned to approve the claim, seconded by Linda Bixby. Motion prevailed.
 - Pope County's claim described a law enforcement hold on children with mental health issues. Councilors noted that these are issues that all counties face and DHS staff echoed that sentiment. Gaps in the claim left some thinking there may not have been enough information included. Debbie Goettel motioned to deny the claim, Toni Carter seconded. Motion prevailed.
- ***Council discussion on Maltreatment claims:***
 - Norman County had small numbers and COVID-19 impacted their ability to respond to some unique and large families. Councilors discussed the responsibility of counties to ensure children's safety and questioned the extent to which COVID-19 prevented the county from meeting the threshold. DHS staff noted their dramatic jump in caseload and that COVID did impact the service array available to the family of 14. Rae Ann Keeler-Aus motioned to approve the claim, Linda Bixby seconded. Motion prevailed.
 - Polk County cited COVID-19 as limiting their ability to do their work and provide the services needed, namely around internet access and telemedicine. The county only missed the threshold by .2 percentage points and provided thorough documentation in their claim. Councilors appreciated the thorough explanation and documentation. Julie Bluhm moved to approve and Aaron Wittnebel seconded. Motion prevailed.
 - Renville County missed the threshold by six percentage points and cited COVID-19 as adversely impacting families, leading to maltreatment. They had a spike in cases. Aaron Wittnebel motioned to approve the claim, Julie Bluhm seconded. More discussion ensued around COVID impact versus the spike in their caseload. Julie Bluhm withdrew her second and Noel Jagolino seconded the motion, which did not pass a vote and the claim was ultimately denied.
 - The Renville claim led to more conversation around the EC claim process, not always having the background or historical information to make a consistent decision, and how exhausting it is to talk through them for the entire meeting. Examples of past decisions would be helpful in the process. Gary mentioned that we do want to talk about council governance and talk through some of those equity pieces and the power dynamics at play.
 - Saint Louis County is in their second year of a PIP and there is a precedent of not ending a PIP due to an EC claim. The county cited COVID-19 as having an impact on their ability to provide services, in addition to staff turnover. The Council has not typically approved claims for staff turnover and felt the claim lacked detail and contained no actual extenuating circumstances. Toni Carter motioned to deny the claim, seconded by Rodney Peterson. Motion prevailed.

Concerns regarding training availability:

Matt Freeman brought up a concern regarding training availability and Shaneen Moore looked into it to provide the following information to the Council:

Since May of 2020, CSP has been providing the state mandated new worker training in an exclusively virtual format. They have never had a waiting list for training during that entire time. Staff at the state office are in regular contact with St Louis County supervisor Matt Johnson on anticipated new hires and scheduling staff for their training. Reports can be run for St. Louis county demonstrating the number of workers trained since going virtual if needed.

CSP has not had a significant waiting list for new worker training for a couple of years now. At the most it would be a 6-8 week wait and they were running 2-4 training cohorts in St. Louis County every year.

One of the reasons CSP sought (and awarded in the 2019 legislative session) additional training funds was because overall child protection turnover across the state had increased significantly and we were regularly running waiting lists of 6 months to get into new worker training. CSP has been implementing their new state-university training partnership for the past three years. Due to the state hiring freeze during the pandemic, the training unit wasn't able to increase their capacity as quickly as we had hoped but are working on that now.

Regarding the comment that a county supervisor was waiting 16 months for training: Due to capacity and constraints over the last two years to offer or update supervisor training, this is not a training that is required by statute and therefore came secondary to mandated training needs for the program. During this summer CSP began offering some training for supervisors again and are working on developing a whole new training series for new supervisors.

Next Steps and Action Items

Gary Mortensen

- **Upcoming 2021 Council Meetings Dates**

- Nov. 19, 2021
- Gary asked that members read through the PowerPoint presentation that was attached to the meeting invite for team project updates. We will plan for our next meeting on November 19 to be virtual.

Minutes: Human Services Performance Council Meeting

November 19, 2021

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

WebEx

Present

- Council Members: Ann Gaasch, Linda Bixby, Julie Bluhm, Joni Buffalohead, Toni Carter, Ann Gaasch, Noel Jagolino, Charles Johnson, Shaneen Moore, Michelle Ness, Reed Olson, Rodney Peterson, Eric Ratzmann, Ashley Reisenauer, and Aaron Wittnebel
- Performance Management Team Members: Marisa Hinnenkamp, Carrie Krueger, Charity Mack (recording), Gary Mortensen, and Beryl Palmer
- Guests: Matt Freeman (MACSSA); Jesse Winsell (Hennepin County)

Absent

- Council Members, Debbie Goettel, Rae Ann Keeler-Aus, Alexa Griggs-Dixson, and Pam Selvig
- Performance Management Team Members: Debra Anthony and Olufemi Fajolu

Welcome and Announcements

Charles Johnson

- Charles Johnson called the meeting to order.
- Introductions of members and guests present.

Approval of August 6th Minutes

Charles Johnson

- Rod Peterson moved to approve as presented, Reed Olson seconded.
- Minutes were adopted.

Extenuating Circumstances Claims Review

Gary Mortensen

Recommended Actions for Adult Protection and Child Support claims: *Gary Mortensen*

- The 2021 Performance Management report with the Adult Protection and Child Support measures was sent to counties in October. Gary provided an overview of statewide performance on these measures and the extenuating circumstance process. He also noted that Commissioner Harpstead followed the recommendations of the Council on the last round of extenuating circumstance claims, which is typical.
- Overall, the state is doing very well on these measures. One of the Adult Protection measures is new, so baseline data was provided but counties were not held accountable to the threshold.

- **Council discussion on the Adult Protection claims:**
 - POPE & TRAVERSE COUNTIES: Councilors discussed these claims together due to their similarity. In these cases, the extremely small number of cases and the individuals' right to self-determination was a factor outside of the counties' control. Julie Bluhm motioned to approve both claims and Linda Bixby seconded. Michelle Ness moved to bundle them for one vote. The motions to bundle and approve the claims prevailed.
- **Council discussion on the Child Support claims:**
 - BIG STONE COUNTY: Big Stone was one of several counties that submitted two claims on one form. One claim was for orders established and the other for child support paid. Big Stone is in multi-year PIP situation with the child support paid measure, so that claim was disregarded. Councilors discussed the challenges smaller counties face with staffing issues and filling positions, especially during the pandemic. It was noted that all counties and even the state is experiencing staffing issues. Aaron Wittnebel motioned to deny the orders established claim and Joni Buffalohead seconded. Despite lengthy discussion and split opinions, ultimately the claim was denied.
 - Stacy Hennen urged the Council to think about the staffing issue because hiring and preparing for turnover is easier said than done in highly technical positions that require 18-36 months to learn in addition to positions being posted for several months. Although the Council has not typically approved these types of claims, this is an issue that will reach crisis proportions for everyone.
 - LAKE OF THE WOODS COUNTY also submitted two claims for paternity established and orders established. They were very close to the threshold and had some staffing issues. Aaron Wittnebel motioned to deny the claims and Joni Buffalohead seconded. Motion to deny prevailed.
 - STEARNS COUNTY submitted two claims for orders established and child support paid. Stearns typically has strong performance in this area. Councilors discussed enforcement remedies being taught to workers as well as the fact that they often do not work as intended and cause racial disparities. The claim contained good analysis that could be further utilized and expanded upon in a PIP. Stacy Hennen motioned to approve the claims. Michelle Ness seconded. Ultimately, a split vote resulted in the motion being denied.
 - TRAVERSE COUNTY submitted a claim for child support paid due to the impact of interstate cases. Councilors felt this was a well-reasoned claim and the math was done to show that without these cases, they would have met the measure. Additionally, it is fair to say that communication with other states has been lacking during the pandemic. Linda Bixby motioned to approve the claim. Ann Gaasch seconded. Motion to approve prevailed.
 - WASHINGTON COUNTY also submitted a claim for child support paid. Councilors felt that this claim was not as strong as the Traverse claim because there was no analysis or data to support it. Washington County's claim focused on the lack of cell phones for staff during the stay at home order. Their trajectory of performance was already on the decline. Julie Bluhm motioned to deny the claim. Michelle Ness seconded. Motion to deny prevailed.

2021 Legislative Report Review: Gary Mortensen and Carrie Krueger

- A draft copy of the report was emailed right before our meeting began. Each year we are tasked with providing a report to the legislature. Carrie provided a high level overview of the report and the elements we are required to include. Gary explained that the report does need to be approved by the Council, submitted to the commissioner, and then submitted for legislative approval.
- Gary then went over some of the projects and work highlighted in the report, and mentioned that the priorities for 2022 are similar to past reports because the team is maintaining the system and many of the projects are ongoing work. In 2022, we will look at how we can improve our work and to use the Council's time to figure out what we should focus on and if we're going to grow.
- Councilors requested some specific direction as to their role and what the team may need from them. Gary indicated that is an area in which we could use their assistance and guidance as to how they would like to be involved.
- Gary also asked Councilors for input on the barriers counties are facing. We used many of the same barriers from the previous year, but want input on what might be missing. The impact of staff turnover and mental health issues in both clients and staff were brought forward to be added. Gary asked for emails with any additional ideas.

Next Steps and Action Items

Gary Mortensen

- **February 2022 Strategic Planning Session**
 - There was no time to discuss the Small Numbers Policy, so that will be brought to the February meeting. We will also do some strategic planning, discuss roles and discuss meeting frequency.
- **Upcoming 2022 Council Meetings Dates**
 - Feb. 4, 2022
 - May 6, 2022
 - Aug. 5, 2022
 - Nov. 18, 2022