

Nevada Association of County Human Services Administrators

Minutes

April 22, 2020

Active Members:

Mary Jane Ostrander, Carson City (phone)

Shannon Ernst, Churchill County (phone)

Karen Beckerbauer, Douglas County (phone)

Josie Barron, Elko County (phone)

Nikki Linn, Humboldt County (phone)

Shayla Holmes, Lyon County (phone)

Karyn Smith, Nye County (phone)

Associate Members:

Affiliate Members:

Tracey Bowles, Washoe County Public Guardian (phone)

Guests:

Dagny Stapleton, NACO (phone)

Dena Schmidt, ADSD (phone)

Debbie Lee, CAHS (phone)

Dorothy Edwards, Washoe DPBH (phone)

Item 1: Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05am by Shannon Ernst.

Item 2: Introductions

Shannon Ernst asked those attending the meeting to introduce themselves and introductions were made.

Item 3: Public Comment

Shannon Ernst inquired as to whether there was any public comment. There were none.

Item 4: Verification of the Posting of the Agenda

Karyn Smith verified the agenda had been posted according to NRS.

Item 5: Review and Adoption of Agenda

Shannon Ernst called for a motion to adopt the agenda as submitted. Mary Jane Ostrander made a motion to adopt the agenda as submitted. Nikki Linn seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Item 6: Review and approval of Minutes from the February 11, 2020 Meeting

Shannon Ernst asked if there were any revisions or changes to the minutes from the February 11, 2020 meeting. There were none.

Nikki Linn made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2020 meeting. Mary Jane Ostrander seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Item 7: NV CAN

Shannon stated that everyone was on the presentation by Dena Schmidt on the NV CAN and how they are rolling it out to assist in all communities. Dena stated that she had several conversations with most everyone on the simple tools for people to use to request support to stay home for vulnerable populations. It allows us to give them the ability to quickly request whatever they need to stay home and socially isolate. So far, we are having challenges in promoting it, but AARP has been very helpful in promoting it, along with the Alzheimer's Association, radio stations and podcasts. Anyone can use the tool on behalf of a family member, friend, etc. Dena wanted to reach out to everyone to see what gaps you are seeing and to see how we can support the county agencies.

Shannon stated that she wanted to thank Dena because this is a great project and she is happy they can participate. Churchill County posted the fliers out on Facebook and as of yesterday, the post had over 1250 people share and engage in it. We wanted to see who would access it and track it through that. There are a lot of people in the community who don't have internet, phones, computers, etc. and are very disconnected from us, which is a huge concern. We have access to funding and purchasing them now, so hopefully will have 50 (she didn't say what it was) out in the community by next week. Our Resource Liaison is providing IT with CC Communication. There will be a button they can push to get help and get that access we have been looking for. Shannon wanted to thank Dena and say that it has been wonderful working with her agency on making this happen because that is something she was worried about.

Dena stated she is glad to hear that, and they were very excited to support that effort and make it happen and make sure those people get connected. We are really concerned about social isolation right now, which is already a problem, now more so than ever. Shannon asked if anyone wanted to share any gaps their community is facing right now with everything going on. There were no comments. Shannon stated to Dena that if there is anything we can do as a group to assist the efforts, let us know.

Item 8: CARES ACT

Dagny asked if Shannon was able to share the info she sent out with the summary of the dollars counties may be able to access through the Cares Act. Shannon stated it went out last week. Dagny stated that on their website at the home page is a Covid link where you can find resources and Covid specific grants you can apply for. There is a lot of money coming from the federal level and the grants list has those opportunities on the NACO website. Shannon thanked Dagny and stated these were concerns of ours and its good to know there's a list of resources to make it easier. Shannon asked if anyone had any questions. There were none. Dagny stated that if everyone checks out the resources she sent out and the ones on the website, and if you have questions on any of those specifically, we will try and guide everyone through that to make it easier. Karyn asked if Dagny will send the NACO resource link to her and she will forward it to everyone. Dagny said she will do that.

Shannon stated that she wants to make sure everyone is aware of the waivers that are being offered by the federal government for certain programs we have. HUD has been very lenient and very supportive with affordable housing during these times. On the RCOC call, they were talking about how you can obtain rent reasonableness rather than fair market rent to keep people housed and keep them housed. ESG just sent out the list of waivers they will offer through the state program. Shannon really urges everyone to look at that. She submitted her waiver to HUD on Sunday and by Monday morning at 9am my waiver was approved. HUD has really stepped up to waive some of these things to keep these programs and help those in need.

Shannon stated that the small business one is opening back up and is key for non-profits. A lot of people are disappointed because they submitted for it and they ran out of funds. She heard from non-profits that they don't need a loan, however a lot of those are grants and not just loans. Mary Jane Ostrander stated that for the HUD waivers, pay attention to the length of time with the FMRs and the rent reasonableness is only 6 months from the date of the memo. Shannon stated that some are 6 months and others can be up to a year. She asked if there were any more questions or comments. There were none.

Item 9: County updates on COVID-19

Shannon stated that we will go around with each county to see what everyone is doing to address Covid-19 with their agency county wide. Nikki Linn stated that in Humboldt County, she is working closely with her County Health Officer and County Manager. They reached out to the businesses that are remaining open and implemented a couple different programs to mitigate some precautions they can be taking. Everyone was very receptive in doing what needs to be done. We are now reaching out to take it a step further and have them ask people as they enter the store to wear a mask, practice social distancing, etc. Our town has been very hard hit and we have a lot of people in the community who don't see the severity of it. We will start reaching out to nonessential businesses to come up with a plan for when they are able to open. We are also giving out masks as people are coming into stores.

Shannon stated that in Churchill County, if this had happened five years ago, I don't think the county would have been able to be prepared and handle it. So far Churchill has 3 infected, with one death. The things we have found as being under the state health ward has made us outline what we will be looking at in the future. Churchill County is moving forward with wanting their own Health District and it is been

made very clear that we will have that done within two years. We are working on pod testing and we have found that we have another barrier as being under the state health district. We started our planning very early and I thank our community for stepping up earlier. Everyone came together and we have a contract with a hotel should we need to quarantine more people if it is not safe for them to go home.

Shannon stated that they have medical staff available if we need it as well, but still hope we won't need it but have that framework in place. They started working mobile with our case management three years ago, so everyone was still able to go out to our vulnerable population to make sure they were safe in their homes. With the support of ADSD we will be able to link more people through Telehealth. We are working on all emergency policies for a safety net and we will have a structure in place as this comes to head. We are working out so people don't lose their homes, get utilities shut off, etc. and following when disconnects will start. Our biggest concern is for when those floodgates open and people don't use their unemployment or stimulus checks to pay these bills, it can be a huge problem with limited resources. If you are having a problem getting linked to unemployment, we will come to you to help you get linked to all resources such as food stamps and unemployment. Churchill's office is still open and trying to link more people in the community to cares. Our Life Center is our big concern for the home maker program, is how we get people in their homes to get them clean. We are trying to evaluate that to get that going again.

Josie stated that she is standing in for Amanda Osborne who could not be here today. She is the one who has been sitting in on the meetings with the health board. From what Josie understands, Elko County has been holding steady, however she is unable to report on any of their infected numbers and is here to take notes for Amanda. Shannon stated for Josie to tell Amanda if there is anything they can do to help support Elko County, to reach out and they will do everything they can.

Dorothy Edwards stated that she the Behavioral Health Coordinator for Washoe County and is sitting in for Amber. In terms of Washoe County, a lot of the updates are put on the health district website which she encourages people to look at it. Washoe's cases are over 600 which include the number in recovery as well. Our hospital was at 68% of our beds and ventilators being used, so we have capacity there. We are continuing the meals for the seniors but have limited some of our other programs. The animal shelter showed up for foods for pets. With CPS, everyone is working from home, however they are doing an amazing job. We have limited PPE and ration it for people that go into homes.

Dorothy is the supervisor for the MOST team which is Mobile Outreach and is embedded with law enforcement. They are currently working with radios and are still working with mental health calls. There is a tremendous increase in domestic violence and suicide calls. We are working limited amounts with the homeless population and isolating the ones who are showing symptoms. They have a triage housing system set up, so they are not overwhelmed on places to put these folks. Renown converted one of their floors with beds and we have mobile homes for housing as well. It has been horrific as they have lost 18 people so far as of yesterday. Washoe is trying to partner with all their agencies and some politicians by having a Zoom meeting on efforts to be done. We want to start preparing for behavioral health issues and PTSD, coming out on the other side of all this. She is revising Washoe County's Behavioral Health disaster plan.

Mary Jane Ostrander stated that their health district is a quad county which has Carson City, Lyon, Storey and Douglas. They put the numbers out about 6pm every evening and as of last night, the 4 counties have 39 active cases, with 24 that have recovered. It isn't as bad as it could be, however there was a rally last weekend so we will see what happens to our numbers. Carson City Health & Human Services is open with staff members in office and working remotely. It has been scary slow in their office. Mary Jane is working on budgeting indigent dollars to help with rent and increasing our income guidelines for those indigent dollars. Looking at the Supplemental Community Services Block Grant which might be able to provide one time rental assistance. We are waiting for that to be confirmed. We also got the waiver for the ESG grant to do rent reasonableness which will help. We are preparing to help keep people in their homes once they realize they still owe rent.

Mary Jane stated that one of the things they've noticed is basic needs have changed dramatically through all this. Phone and internet are no longer a luxury, but a necessity with kids having to do schoolwork at home. We are looking at changing some guidelines and just taking it all one day at a time. Shannon stated that they are looking at going up to 200% along with CSBG to keep things consistent. She wanted to know if the stimulus check will be counted as income and has been looking for guidance on that. Mary Jane stated that she hasn't found anything either, but we will be looking at how they did spend that stimulus check. If we are going to help with rent, that is going to free up monies going elsewhere. Clients are not worried about rent right now and by the time they realize they should pay rent, the stimulus check will be long gone.

Karen stated that she saw a statement somewhere to not count the stimulus check as income, however still looking at how the stimulus monies were spent. They are encouraging people that while rent is being forgiven right now, they are still expected to pay the monies at some point and need to talk with their landlords and utility companies and be responsible. Mary Jane stated that they do need to have been affected by Covid-19. If they haven't lost their jobs and income hasn't been affected, we must consider that. Karen stated that with their food program, if someone comes in showing evidence of having worked for a company with mass layoffs or has shut, we use that as a presumptive income eligibility for food, but not for any other funding sources. Mary Jane stated that its hard to put that all in policy. Karen stated that right now they are just including it in notes and backup information and worry about policy later.

Shannon stated that one big thing they have been talking about is their Burial Policy. The mortuary brought it to us because they are concerned because right now it is not easy for them to get the documents necessary for us to approve them for the program in a day. Does anyone have thoughts on how we can do this, since it won't fall under the Indigent Statute for the information required. Shannon was writing a policy that if it is a Covid positive, we go ahead and process it as it is a FEMA cost that we had to incur. Karen stated that she hasn't investigated anything for Covid positives, however they do have a process with the mortuary when someone needs to be processed.

Karyn Smith stated that Nye County is open and serving clients electronically. We have been very slow and the only thing we are doing our food bank program where they come at their appointed time and we wear masks, gloves and bring it out to their vehicles. We are doing everything we can to keep the building closed to the public with no clients allowed in right now. Our WIC and CPAs are still working in

office and are doing everything electronically as well. We are rotating staff working in office and at home and keeping staff in office limited. We are anticipating and preparing for once this all ends, the clients are going to hit the ground running for rent and utilities. Our electric companies have stopped all disconnects for the time being but will want their monies at some point.

Nye County is seeing our peak in Covid positives and there are quite a few county employees who have tested positive. Nye County has 29 positives, with two recovered. We are getting daily updates from our Public Information Officer and have Covid information on our website. We are having weekly BOCC meetings where our Emergency Management Director is giving updates as well. There are a lot of people quarantined right now, but we still have our drive thru meals for the senior center along with Meals on Wheels. Karyn stated that it is very quiet around here and are using this time to get caught up on work.

Karen Beckerbauer stated that they were busy the first few weeks with panic phone calls on food, rent, etc. and anticipate it to pick up in the next few weeks again. Josie stated that Washoe is the same way as Nye County with working electronically for the most part but taking precautions with in-person clients. It is the calm before the storm and is probably going to hit us very hard once its all over and we are open again. Karyn stated that Nye County also installed a drop box in front of the building so clients can drop things off if they don't have access to electronics. Once we can reopen, our plan of action is to open slowly and still limit the number of clients in our building. This has also caused us to look at changing things and setting appointments this point forward for our food program so we don't have ten people waiting in our lobby to get food gift cards and will make things run much smoother.

Karen stated that they are doing everything virtually and haven't done anything face to face really. They are going to have to look at changing things moving forward as well. She is sorry to hear there were staff cases of Covid-19 in Nye County. Marla asked Karyn about the drive thru testing in Nye County, if she has the numbers of people that have been tested thus far. Karyn stated that the Sheriff's office set it up with Serenity Mental Health to do drive thru testing. There was a pre-registration form that had to be completed and you had to either exhibit symptoms or been exposed to someone who tested positive. Last Karyn heard, there were 800 something tests so far. They are having a hard time getting more tests and don't have more scheduled dates for testing. Most of the jail will be tested because one inmate tested positive, with one staff member and deputy that also tested positive.

Tracy Bowles in Washoe County stated that everyone might want to reach out to the Washoe County Health Office, Kevin Dick. He set up drive thru testing and utilized a lab and went right to the drive thru testing. There is a website to go on before you do the test and he might have additional information for anyone interested.

Shayla Holmes stated that Lyon County is in the same boat as everyone else, although their referrals haven't slowed down since the emergency declaration. Majority of those are for senior services and adult services. They have adhered to social distancing protocols and PPE protocols when working with the public. Most of their staff is like Nye County, shifting in and out of the office. Lyon is almost business as usual in the sense of services provided and number of clients they are assisting with. They utilize Zoom and can meet with clients who have the technology and utilizing phones. Their biggest shift

happened within their Senior Services operation and are utilizing Community Health Workers for well checks. They have volunteers through the Healthy Communities Coalition doing pantry box delivery and drive thru meals like other Senior Centers throughout the state. They are also doing grocery pickup and pantry box delivery for people that are quarantined within the county. Since they are a part of the quad counties, Mary Jane already shared the numbers and 14 of those people who tested positive are from Lyon County. They also have the Health and Wellness tests for youth and families and are working on a reopening plan for them with the next school year.

Tracy Bowles stated that she is the Public Guardian and it is very different, but they have seen a huge upshift in Guardianship petitions. They also had staff retire in the middle of this and under a hiring freeze in Washoe County due to the economic issues. They have been busy and are working remotely with one person in the office. Washoe County recently did switch to digital certification which has changed, and we are getting those more quickly. This started in the last couple days. We are seeing referrals from folks who might have been ok with in home support but now can't get that in-home support and are ending up in hospitals and petitioning for guardianship in hospitals. A lot of the individuals who have significant mental health issues and can't socialize electronically due to paranoia. They also have had homeless folks' referrals come in because the hospitals don't feel comfortable discharging them out into the public without guardianship in place. Washoe County is now starting to feel the effects of Covid-19. Just this week we had one of our Protected People pass away last week due to Covid and have had a few more people exposed and infected with Covid-19.

Shannon stated that Guardianship has been interesting through this time and trying to keep everyone linked to their families. Normally people stop in and check on these people, so this is a huge concern for the elderly community. It is very important for us all to stay connected so we can share ideas and connect monthly. Shannon asked if there were any more comments on this. There were none.

Item 10: Approval of Treasurer's Report and approval of bills submitted for payment

Mary Jane Ostrander stated that we haven't had any changes at all and had a few small changes in interest. We don't have any invoices for payment currently. Nikki asked if we are still working on getting the Tax ID number. Mary Jane stated they have that already and will start asking for dues starting on July 1st which will be \$100. They do have support for counties who need help paying that. Mary Jane asked if the Public Guardians will be billed. Shannon stated that they are not voting members and will not be billed right now.

Karyn Smith made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and approval of bills submitted for payment. Nikki Linn seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Item 11: State Updates Not Previously Provided

No updates.

Item 12: NACO Staff Update on Items Not Agendized

Dagny stated that she sent Karyn the link to the Covid related grants on our website and she will get that out to everyone. If you have any questions on those in ways NACO can help, please don't hesitate to reach out. NACO has been working on federal funding in addition to the CARES dollars and some of the

information on grants. There is a lot of money that is healthcare related and she doesn't know if those are things you can use, but please look at the list and see if there are any ways you can access those funds. One of the things they are fighting for will benefit counties overall, is direct funding for counties who lost revenue because of the impact of Covid on the economy. NACO is also continuing to work on the IAF. The board decided to allocate more funds directly to all counties to help pay for Medicaid Long-Term Care Assessment. NACO is working on a study of the long-term costs of that program. Those funds must go to pay the assessment which will free up your Indigent Funds to other programs. The last meeting of the IAF Board came up with a distribution funds will be in proportion to your assessments and broken down by percentage. She has not sent out the numbers but has the letters ready to go out to each county. The IAF Fund must go before the Interim Finance Committee which will change the projected budget. This won't be heard until June at IFC and we don't know why its being held up. Dagny has a call into the Governor's office to find out what is going on.

Item 13: Comments, Updates and Reports Not Agendized

There were none.

Item 14: Scheduling of Next Meeting

Shannon stated that they were scheduled for May 21 in Las Vegas at 2pm. Does everyone want to keep the same meeting date/time as a Zoom meeting? Everyone agreed. When we get it posted, we will include the link on where to join.

Item 15: Future Agenda Items

There were no suggestions on future agenda items, so Shannon stated we will stick to standard agenda items.

Item 16: Public Comment

There was no public comment

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, Shannon Ernst called to adjourn the meeting at 11:17am.

APPROVED:



Shannon Ernst, Chair
Nevada Association of County Human Services
Administrators



Tim Burch, Vice-Chair
Nevada Association of County Human Services
Administrators