

**Attending:** Darcy Hinrichsen – Auburn; Lori Gottfried, Dave Merrill – Central Office; Brittany Ratzlaff – Crete; Amy Burkitt – Fairbury/Hebron; Frank Bonsu – Lincoln 3; Nicole Chermok – Lincoln 5 (LEAP); Mary Jo Heneger – Nebraska City; Rachael Deckard – ServiceLinc; Carey Shanahan – Wahoo; Lisa Turner – York/Seward

**Absent:** Bill Hutchinson – Beatrice; Jenna Urban – David City/Columbus; Kendra Ford – Gretna; Alyssa Mummey – Lincoln 1; Betty Finck – Lincoln 4

## 1.) Minutes

- *Carey moved to approve the minutes from the August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Darcy seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

## 2.) Financial Update

- Dave reported that at the end of June we were \$1,718,521 to the good.
- We are now able to make 5-week payroll without taking out short-term loans.
- We are looking at putting things back into the budget that don't effect the long-term. This will be discussed later on the agenda.
- Among the things added back in will be the Fine Arts Festival and annual picnic.
- We will also begin reimbursing for staff to attend ACP conferences again.
- We will not commit to anything we can't discontinue if the budget can't sustain it once the new funding system comes into place.
- We will look only at one time expenses for the time being.

## 3.) Health Insurance Update

- Dave noted that he has nothing to report other than the wellness program.
- We've had no issues with BCBS.
- Dave encouraged staff to get their flu shot this year. RVS will reimburse up to \$35 for the flu shot.

## 4.) Staff Satisfaction Surveys

- Dave reported that the surveys closed on Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>.
- He will be sharing results with ARVAD on the 18<sup>th</sup>.
- This was Dave's last year to send out satisfaction surveys. We don't know whether or not the next Executive Director will continue the practice.

## 5.) Other Business

- **Employment Retention Award:** Dave reported that we will reinstate the Employment Retention Award of \$50 per month. This can be discontinued if the budget will no longer sustain it.
- **Wellness Program:** Dave reported that we had over 400 that participated in this program. We can sustain this expense at this point but can also discontinue if the budget will no longer allow it.
- **Bed Bugs:** There was a question about whether it's RVS policy or only York/Seward policy to require staff to sign documents stating that they will not expect RVS to pay for treatment should they find bed bugs in their

personal homes. Dave noted that it's a RVS policy and that it's incredibly difficult to pin point where the point of origin is for bed bugs. They are so prevalent now that they could originate anywhere. We will have bed bug training at the joint ARVAD/CSC meeting in November. There will be a bed bug sniffer dog in attendance as well. Nebraska City pioneered the policy as a result of a serious infestation in their agency 2 years ago.

- **Retirement Sick Leave Payout:** Dave reported that we pay out a quarter of sick leave for those retiring. Some staff felt that they should receive half of their sick leave when they retire. Dave commented that most companies don't even payout a quarter of employee sick leave upon retirement. We recently changed our policy to allow those who retire and opt to stay on as a part-time sub to receive their payout even though they're still in sub status.
- **Salary Increase:** There was a request to increase the salary scale. Dave noted that until we have answers with the budget, we can't commit to any permanent expenses. Dave noted that we get paid the same by the State for staff who have been working for RVS for 20 minutes or 20 years. This makes it difficult to hire staff. The biggest reward for long-term staff is the amount of vacation accumulated.
- **Personal Leave Days:** There was a question as to why we can only have 5 personal leave days per year. Dave commented that these days come out of sick leave. We limit the amount of days taken off for personal leave to allow for more accumulation of sick leave for when we are sick. RVS allows staff to use sick leave for family members as well and many companies don't.
- **Paperwork/Computer Work:** There was concern expressed by some staff that the increase in computer/paperwork requirements don't allow enough time with the people we support. Dave noted that once staff get fully familiar with and adept at using the computer, it actually increases the amount of time spent with people in services. The initial learning process and setup always takes more time.
- **Training:** There was a request for more training for new staff. Dave agreed that it's an ongoing problem trying to keep up with training. We do have a requirement that staff not be allowed to work alone with persons supported until their background checks have come back. Hopefully that gives new staff a little time to get used to the job without having to do the job alone.
- **Meaningful Time for People Supported:** Due to the number of required tasks in a day, there often isn't enough time in a day to spend quality time with the people we support. Dave commented that it's true but that it's also true for everyone. He reminded the group that many of the requirements are not arbitrarily made up by RVS but come down to us from the State and Feds. He also commented that it's not the people we support who are paying for the time we spend with them, but the State of Nebraska. We don't get paid if we don't meet the requirements of the State.
- **Chromebooks:** There was a request for more Chromebooks in agencies. Dave commented that we can get more Chromebooks. This is not an ongoing expense. Agencies can get more Chromebooks.
- **Settings:** There was a comment from staff that they shouldn't be required to work in areas they're not assigned to. Dave argued that we're trained to work with individuals who need our assistance and that means we can cross-train with other situations. Day service staff should be able to work in

a residential setting, if necessary. Staff also have the option to decline those hours.

- **Subs:** There was a request for more subs so staff can focus on only their specific individuals and caseloads. Dave commented that if the State does implement a funding system that results in a loss of income for us, all these issues will become even more amplified. He noted that it depends on each agency whether or not they can afford to hire more subs. It was agreed that shortages when someone is off work are prevalent across the region and not restricted to isolated pockets. Dave reminded the group that it all stems from the funding.
- **Employment First:** Auburn's workshop is closed half of the day due to the budget and minimum wage requirement now, which restricts individual's paychecks. Dave reminded the group that our goal is to get people jobs out in the community rather than in workshops. If people can work, we should be helping them find community jobs.

6.) **Meetings:**

- *2019 schedule to be announced*

*Minutes taken by Lori Gottfried*