

**Three Rivers Human Service Zone Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Three Rivers Human Services Board Room  
Mandan  
210 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave NW  
January 15, 2026**

**Meeting Call to Order:**

- Dennis called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM

**Roll Call:**

**Mandan:** Dennis Meier, Jackie Buckley, Lori Flaten, Rose Mary Lawson, Heidi Peltz, Karen Rohr

**Absent:** Dawson Holle,

**Carson:** Marty Meyer (Phone)

**Absent:** Gerard Kraft

**Fort Yates:**

**Absent:** Ken Snider, John Pretty Bear

**Others present:** Jodie Leier (online), Mandy Garrett, Jenny Wetsch, Tracy Mertz

**Approval of Agenda**

- Jackie Buckley requested to amend the agenda to include an update to Mission Vision and Values with Jason Matthews.
- Moved by Karen Rohr to approve the agenda as amended seconded by Heidi Peltz. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes of December 18, 2025**

- Moved by Jackie Buckley to approve the minutes from December 18, 2025, seconded by Lori Flaten. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Review and Approval of December 2025 Bills:**

- Lori Flaten and Jackie Buckley came early to review the bills.
- Discussed Remarkable contract payment, the windshield repair and the future purchase this year of another vehicle.
- Moved by Lori Flaten, seconded by Rosemary Lawson to approve the bills as presented. With a unanimous roll call vote the bills were approved.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Roll Call</b>	<b>Bills Approved</b>
Jackie Buckley	P	Y
Lori Flaten	P	Y
Rosemary Lawson	P	Y
Heidi Peltz	P	Y
Marty Meyer	P (Phone)	Y
Gerard Kraft	A	A
Ken Snider	A	A
John Pretty Bear	A	A

Dennis Meier	P	Y
Karen Rohr	P	Y
Dawson Holle	A	A

**Budget Review**

- Dennis was unable to go over the December financials as we are under yearend review and budget closing. We do know we came in under budget, but those numbers will be available later.

**Vince Gillette- Three Rivers Human Service Zone Tribal Liaison Report (Given by Dennis in Vince’s absence)**

- There are approximately 50-60 SRST foster children placed in ND foster homes that Vince helps to facilitate visits.
- The Tribe has approximately 125+ kids in foster care, but he doesn’t know where they are all placed as they will not share that information. 25 of these placements are SD IV-E placements in paid ND Foster Care, 39 ND Tribal IV-E children and 16 IV-E placements with relatives.
- Vince dedicates time in dealing with Medicaid payment issues for both ND and SD Foster children.
- ND Tribes FMAP for new fiscal year 2026 rates have been released, and new contracts being sent out to be signed and returned.
- Keeping the Culture Alive class will have the next class at the Mandan Library on January 22, 2026, from 6-8 pm. John Eagle, Sr from the Native American Graves Protection Repatriation Act Specialist for the ND State Historical Society will be presenting.
- Vince continues to track the Indirect Expenses for Fort Yates for Jodie Leier to report to the state.
- Vince did 7 Foster Care visits for SRST.
- Vince continues to work on the project of updating the TCM (Targeted Case Management Billing). He is still working on getting the TCM for Turtle Mountain started.
- We have been shorthanded in the foster care side, so he is helping with visits and transportation.
- Vince will be going to Spirit Lake and Turtle Mountain to help with F-Map and IV-E training.

-Karen attended the Government meeting at Standing Rock. She has been invited by Scott Davis to discuss the Resilient Pathways Workgroup in Belcourt. Karen also shared that the legislation is having a special session Wednesday through Friday regarding Expansion of Pharmacists to rural areas, Presidential Fitness (which would have money attached to it) and Rural Health Transformation.

**Mandy Garrett – Income Maintenance/Eligibility Supervisor**

**Three Rivers Zone Office Information**

- Current Openings: None
- Medicaid
  - Total Households: December 2025 – 4161
  - Total Individuals: December 2025 – 6971
  - Total Benefits: N/A
- SNAP
  - Total Households: December 2025 - 1516
  - Total Individuals: December 2025 - 3334
  - Total Benefits Paid: \$581.9K

- **LIHEAP**
  - Total Households: December 2025 – 799
  - Total Individuals: December 2025 – 2033
  - Total Benefits: \$85.2K
- **TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)**
  - Total Households: December 2025 – 85
  - Total Individuals: December 2025 – 351
  - Total Benefits: \$51.4K
- **Childcare Assistance Program**
  - Total Households: December 2025 - 228
  - Total Individuals: December 2025 – 859
  - Total Benefits: \$205.4K
- **Call Center Stats**
  - Total Calls Received: December 2025 – 27,120
  - Answered Calls: December 2025 – 16,314
  - Abandoned Calls: December 2025 – 9,292
  - Average Wait Time: December 2025 – 13 minutes
  - Average Talk Time: December 2025 – 9 minutes
- **Swim Lanes**
  - Currently 30 days behind. (December 16 is where they are all at currently)
- **Support Specialists (Statewide)**
  - As of 1/7/26 was a week behind
- **Call Center Information**
  - Starting to get a lot of calls about work not being processed timely-highest wait time noted in December was 1 hour and 28 minutes.
- **Foot traffic in the three offices has been monitored since May 2024.**
  - Sioux County 168 in December.
  - Grant County 39 in December.
  - Morton County 324 in December.

**Jenny Wetsch – Child Protection**

**See the attached Statistical information which was presented during the meeting.**

- **81 total reports in December: 2 Reports in Grant County and 1 Report for Sioux County.**
  - **47 assigned as Full.**
  - **1 ATP Assessments.**
  - **34 Administratively Assessed or Administrative Referrals.**
  - **0 Alt Response.**
  - **2 Substance Exposed Infant (SEI).**
  - **5 Child Sex Cases**
  - **0 Prenatal Drug/Alcohol Cases**
  - **0 Courtesy Interview Requests from other zones/1 Law Enforcement**
  - **0 Conflict cases for another Zone**
- **Dakota Central/South Country took 10 cases in December. These cases are not reflected in our numbers.**
- **Dakota Central is helping through January as we are now fully staffed.**

- One worker will be going on maternity leave in April and Dakota Central may be able to help us again.
- We are looking at bringing Holly Hammarsten back as a temp for the summer again if approved to help cover for the maternity leave. She has stated she would be willing to come back to assist.

#### Tracy Mertz-Foster Care/In Home

- See the attached statistical information which was presented during the meeting.
- Currently we have 73 cases.
  - 60 Foster Care (counted by child)
  - 13 In-Home Cases, ICPC, Courtesy Case Management & Home Study's
  - 38 Foster Homes/PATH
  - 6 QRTP/PRTF (1 DD GH)
  - 8 Relative Care
  - 8-18+
  - 0-YCC

#### Child Welfare Unit Updates

- Alicia Grimm had transitioned over to the CPS unit to fill the open position. Her cases are being divided among the remaining staff.
- Our newest worker, Monique Gladue, is doing well.
- Alicia's open position closes on Monday and we have 5 applicants so far.
- We now have 2 paid interns from MSU with one starting in the CPS area and the other in Foster Care, they will switch later. They are doing well so far and could be potential staff for us down the road. They will be with us until the end of April. One of the interns has been doing the 31:8 program for human trafficking.
- We have kicked off the Case Management Redesign. This is a pilot project with the state. We will be doing regular staffing with children removed from the home. Ward, Cass, Grand Forks and we are doing this pilot. The goal is to make sure that the removals are appropriate. We haven't had our first meeting on the pilot, so there will be more to come.

#### Eligibility Updates

- SNAP Error Rates are high.
  - If we stay on the rate we are, the state will need to pay a high percentage of the cost starting in 2028. If we get this addressed and get our error rates lowered, we will have to pay a lower percentage.
  - We can see the error rate on the "Insider" Dashboard. Mandy will provide this data on the Error rate and Timeliness for the next meeting.
  - Discussion was held as to the barriers to timeliness.
  - SNAP errors are anytime a worker does not follow policy.
  - Mandy explained the differences in work queues. For example, we get X amount dumped in the queues each day, whereas AZ has one out, one in policy to fill the removed item's spot.
  - 5% increments in errors.
  - Too many staff are touching the same case instead of one person from start to finish.
  - The Governor has put a stop to all processes across the state as in no more staff.
  - We have been working the eligibility redesign for 3 years.
- State has approved 10 FTE's for Error Proofing for Zone Employees.

- All eligibility workers will be getting the Genesis call center program.

#### Zone Director Updates

- Zones are required to request employment open records on the applicant through state HR if they had worked for a state agency or zone in the past or present.
- Discussions are being held at the Director's meetings to increase the On Call pay for SW from \$75/day to \$100/day beginning April 1. It has been recommended we compensate Supervisors across the state as well. OMB approval is needed. They had discussed various entities and their on-call positions. This would increase the on-call budget by roughly \$9,000. They are looking at providing Supervisor's with \$50/day. This hadn't gone through a motion but was being discussed at the Director's meeting today.
- Zone Plan updates for 2026 are due by February 1.

#### Other:

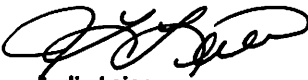
- Mission Vision and Values Update.
  - On January 5 the leadership team met with Jason Matthews and the Alignment Team where they shared the recommendations.
  - Jodie shared the meeting information on the screen online. The meeting was recorded. Jodie sent Jason's Documents to the supervisors and to Jackie who is also a part of the team.
    - Closed session was held as board members shared their thoughts on some of the recommendations.
  - The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 26 with Jason and the team and we will be measuring the progress.
  - February 10, we will be holding the all-staff meeting with Jason as our guest to go over the findings and plans. Board members would like to attend.
  - Dennis will send the final information before the next board meeting.
  - Ward County has contacted us regarding our experience with Jason.

#### Adjourn:

- Moved by Heidi Peltz, seconded by Rose Mary Lawson to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 AM. All in favor. Motion carried.

Next Meeting February 19, 2026 – 10 AM, Mandan

Respectfully Submitted,



Jodie Leier

Fiscal Services

Three Rivers Human Service Zone