

MINUTES
ASSET Administrative Team
April 1, 2020, 12:15 p.m.
Conference Call
Dial in: 515-606-5372
Access Code: 739693

The Analysis of Social Services Evaluation Team (ASSET) Administrative Team met at 12:15 p.m. via conference call with the following members present: Keith Hobson, Sandra King, Jean Kresse, Tim Lubinus, Anneke Mundel, Deb Schildroth, and Ashley Thompson.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 4, 2020 MINUTES

Moved by Kresse, seconded by Schildroth, to approve the March 4, 2020 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Equity Training for ASSET agencies – Ms. Kresse said now would be the time to reach out to agencies to determine attendance, but with orders to continue social distancing it seems best to postpone the training. Ms. Schildroth concurred. Ms. Mundel with contact Dr. Scott to notify her ASSET wishes to postpone the training.

NEW BUSINESS

Special Meeting for New(er) Executive Directors – Ms. Schildroth said there are several newer executive directors and it would be prudent to walk through the ASSET process and requirements of the process with them. She said there were some things mentioned in ABF 5(O) reports that indicated it is necessary to communicate the number of agencies and programs being funded and how ASSET prioritizes funding. The roll of ASSET funding would be discussed for clarification. She said this could be a meeting held after the joint funders meeting in May or later in the summer, but before the mandatory ASSET agency training. Ms. Kresse said this could be scheduled for mid-July, and if that doesn't work out it could be scheduled the hour before the mandatory training in August.

Ms. King joined the meeting.

Ms. King wondered if this would be electronic. Ms. Kresse said the date could be set assuming it would be face to face, but if that's not possible ASSET could move forward with an electronic meeting. Noon on July 17th was discussed as a possible meeting time. Someone will reach out to agencies about this soon. Mr. Hobson said he believes August will be very busy for people. Ms. Schildroth said the date can be flexible.

COVID-19 and Agency Allocations for FY 20 – Ms. Kresse said the United Way of Story County (UWSC) board approved all agency payments for April but has not decided on May and June. Ms. Kresse told the group YSS CEO Andrew Allen has reached out to the Admin Team to request ASSET allow YSS and other agencies to appropriately respond to the COVID-19 pandemic allowing agencies to draw down funds without restrictions. She said he sent out the United Way of Central Iowa partners' decision to commit to fund partners with flexibility to reallocate restricted funds during this difficult time. Ms. Kresse said she believes ASSET needs to have more information from agencies. She said knowing what the fixed operating costs are would be helpful and she would like to know if agencies are taking advantage of the Paycheck Protection Program, looking into small business loans, etc. so the burden doesn't fall totally on the agency or ASSET. It was discussed that ASSET could come up with an assessment tool or collectively gather the information so all funders are not asking the same questions.

Ms. Schildroth said five agencies have drawn down all FY 20 City funds before the COVID-19 issue. She said she hopes agencies can operate as best as possible with the allocated funds, but ASSET needs to know the present position of agencies and when they believe they can resume services if services have been reduced or suspended. Ms. King said a simple page of questions to complete could be given to agencies so changes being encountered can be described. Ms. Schildroth concurred, and said a picture of where agencies are at and where they see themselves for the remainder of the fiscal year is needed, and the other funding sources should be known. The group discussed the questions to be asked of agencies. Ms. Kresse said since ASSET funds programs, it is important to know if programming has been altered or stopped. Ms. Kresse said that it will fall to individual funders to decide whether to pay agencies in entirety, but information from agencies is needed by all funders.

Mr. Hobson said funders need to share decisions because programming could be in jeopardy if certain funders decide to stop payment. Ms. Schildroth said Mr. Allen provided some suggestions including allowing unspent funds to be extended or rolled over or allow funding in one service to be transferred to another service where the need has increased. Ms. Kresse said that's a possibility for some agencies but maybe not all agencies such as those with only one program. Other suggestions from Mr. Allen included allowing agencies to bill for prep time for events that ended up being canceled, allowing billing for staff time to plan and respond to COVID-19 related activities, and broadening restrictions on residents served. Ms. King asked if contract amendments will be needed. Ms. Schildroth said some changes may need amendments such as if a new unit rate is determined by ERP for sheltering people outside of the shelter.

Ms. Kresse asked about how the Administrative Team should advise ASSET when agencies are living through times never before experienced. Ms. Thompson said she would agree that this is uncharted territory and would be in favor of greater flexibility for agencies to access allocated dollars with some guardrails to ensure ASSET knows what the dollars are being used for. Ms. Schildroth said some sort of assessment of what is going on is needed because funders may be asking questions on what is being funded. She said if some due diligence is done to receive

responses from agencies there would be more data to provide funders so decisions can be made.

Mr. Hobson asked if funders feel like they still have the funds available to distribute or if there could be a decrease. Ms. Kresse said the UWSC campaign for 2019 funds this fiscal year and part of next, and some pledges were from employee payroll deductions. She said it's unknown if some employees will still be paid as time goes on, so those funds are an unknown for UWSC. Ms. Schildroth said City funds are still available. Ms. King said the County has not raised any concerns about honoring allocations, rather the concern right now is the additional requests that could be received from agencies.

Ms. Ashley Thompson left the meeting.

Mr. Hobson said if the funds are available he is in favor of more flexibility to agencies. He said there could be issues with using the funding for programs not receiving ASSET funding. He said applying funding to COVID-19 is covered under the CARES Act. Ms. King said agencies should strongly be encouraged to determine what funding they are eligible to receive before making any additional requests to ASSET so funders can take that into consideration. Ms. Kresse said funding current ASSET programs could be looked at first, then if services have been modified it will need to be determined what dollars are needed to provide that modified service. She said funding an agency fully through June when the agency is closed is questionable when other avenues are available for expenses like payroll.

It was agreed that questions need to be asked of agencies so the funders can continue to talk about what direction to go, knowing the ASSET Admin Team is in favor of loosening some parameters to support agencies through the next three months. Mr. Hobson asked how long agencies will have to answer these questions. April 10 or April 15 were discussed as deadline options.

Julia Castillo (HIRTA) for Agency Update – HIRTA Executive Director Julia Castillo and Operations Director Brooke Ramsey joined the meeting. Ms. Castillo told the group HIRTA is still open and providing services as necessary. She said the service has been dictated by places that are closed. Two buses are running in Ames and Story County for grocery stores, medical appointments, and dialysis appointments. Ms. Kresse said before COVID-19 there was a shortage of drivers. Ms. Ramsey said they were down about four drivers before the COVID-19 crisis. Ms. Castillo said they had interviewed and were in the process of hiring two drivers, but that did not occur. Ms. Castillo said some drivers are in the higher risk group and have chosen not to work. She said some have been temporarily laid off and are on a call list in case something happens to other drivers. Ms. King asked how many drivers are on staff now. Ms. Ramsey said Story County has six drivers still working and six office staff for all of HIRTA are still working after layoffs. Ms. Ramsey said Story County had 15 drivers and all of HIRTA had 14 office workers before layoffs.

Ms. Castillo said typical services are very limited but the federal government has been in on conversations on meal deliveries and those services can be provided during this time according to the federal government. Ms. Ramsey said she can set up those services if needed. Ms. Castillo said HIRTA is an essential service for medical appointments through the state. Ms. Schildroth asked about the Story County outreach person. Ms. Castillo said she has been temporarily laid off since outreach cannot occur. She said when the end is in sight there will be more staff added back. Ms. Kresse asked if the position is unpaid. Ms. Castillo said yes, the employees are filing for unemployment as it is temporary. Ms. Kresse asked about the Paycheck Protection Program just released. Ms. Castillo said she is aware of it but there is relief funding coming for transit. She said part of that money is to be able to keep staff but she doesn't know what that looks like yet. Mr. Hobson asked if HIRTA is experiencing similar decline in ridership in other counties. Ms. Castillo said Story County is one of the bigger counties because of work trips. She said everyone is seeing a huge drop in rides. They went from about 1,200 trips a day to about 120-160 per day this last week. Ms. Ramsey said many medical appointments are being canceled. Ms. Castillo said rides for dialysis are essential, but so are rides to the grocery store and pharmacy. She said if there are other ways of doing it such as delivering essential items, they want to look into providing that as well.

Ms. Kresse said during the ASSET meeting sequestering funding for the Iowa City service will be discussed. Mr. Hobson said that service has been discontinued.

Agency Contingency Plans – Ms. Schildroth said contingency plans don't warrant a thorough discussion today, but should be expected out of agencies going forward. She said an expectation needs to be placed on agencies so ASSET has an awareness of what would happen in an emergency situation and how service delivery may continue. Ms. Kresse said it will be important to know if agencies have operating reserves. She said they need to start figuring out ways to build up some reserves, and that could be part of the discussion. It was noted this could be discussed as part of the new agency director training and ASSET training in August. Ms. Schildroth said after getting through this challenge, ASSET could start the conversation about a contingency plan. She said agencies may have plans for natural disasters but the plans will need expanded. Ms. Schildroth said many agencies are required to have plans in place in order to comply with their regulatory entities.

ASSET Administrative Assistant position – Ms. Kresse said that Ms. Erin Thompson will be leaving June 30 and the Administrative Team is searching for a new administrative assistant. Ms. Kresse said UWSC holds the contract currently. Ms. Schildroth said the prior person was previously employed at the City of Ames and so some internal conversations took place then about a replacement. She said she does remember putting an ad out in the past and has that information if it's needed. Ms. King said it's very important to get someone that is well organized. Mr. Hobson asked if it's appropriate Jean, Deb, and Sandra look into recruiting and get back to the team. Ms. Kresse said there are many ways to advertise that don't cost anything, so between the ad language and the current contract language something could be posted. Ms. Kresse asked if administrative team volunteers want to be involved in the process.

Mr. Hobson said he prefers staff take the lead. Ms. Kresse said the entire Administrative Team could be invited to be a part of the interview process.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS/ CONCERNS

Ms. Kresse asked about the May 13 meeting. Ms. Schildroth said City facilities are closed until May 15, so she anticipates Council would want to have the meeting virtually. Mr. Hobson said he assumes ASSET meetings will be held this way for the next couple months. Ms. Schildroth concurred. She said the City is working on a Zoom account for Council and Boards/Commission meetings so she is hopeful the joint funders meeting could be via Zoom. Mr. Hobson said Microsoft Teams has also worked well.

Ms. King said the CICS Administrative Team is meeting today to review the memo sent by ASSET. She also said the 20/21 Legal Aid contract will be excluding child custody, divorce, and child support cases.

Ms. Schildroth asked Ms. Kresse if she has a list of agencies that are closed or offering reduced services. Ms. Kresse said yes, and that is being updated and posted on United Way's website under COVID-19.

Ms. Kresse said StoryTime in Maxwell has closed because many families are not bringing children. The MICA dental clinic has closed and the dentist is no longer with them. She said without the dentist and COVID-19, they will not be able to open the dental clinic until at least the middle of August. Ms. Schildroth asked about the services the hygienist could provide. Ms. Kresse said that's a conversation that needs to continue. Ms. Kresse said ACPC is stepping in as a child care center for essential service parents and could take up to 80 kids. They are not receiving many requests. Because of furloughs, McFarland has not sent out that information. ChildServe has rearranged and has three classrooms that could be used for essential services children. UCC closed mid-March. She said she assumes some issues will arise because of the closed child care centers.

Ms. Schildroth said ERP closed the homeless shelter and is sheltering people at Ames Motor Lodge. She said City funds may be moved from service coordination to sheltering. She told the group ERP Executive Director Jodi Stumbo said there are dollars needed above and beyond what ASSET has allocated. If that's something the funders will move ahead with, contracts will need amended. She said Les White with Story County Public Health is going to be in contact with Jodi Stumbo about using the shelter as a place to house homeless individuals showing signs of COVID-19 but not needing hospitalization. She said similarly there's conversation about a larger site for monitoring-level care for those not needing hospitalization to free up beds in the hospital for those that need ventilators and more advanced care. She said according to all signs of how this virus spreads, the peak in Story County will be around April 24. Ms. King asked who is projecting that. Ms. Schildroth said MGMC has shared that information with the Fire and Police departments as they look at all indicators. Ms. King asked about the larger site and if it's equivalent to Des Moines using the fairgrounds. Ms. Schildroth concurred, but said Polk County has even fenced in the fairgrounds and she's unsure who is staffing it. MGMC has made it clear

that any large facility would not be staffed by MGMC but staff members could be involved in advising ways of set-up. It could be staffed by retired nurses, retired CNA's, med management individuals, and volunteers. Ms. King asked if any residents are being monitored right now. Ms. Schildroth said anyone showing signs or symptoms but not tested are to stay at home. She said every Thursday there's a meeting between Story County Public Health, Emergency Management, Ames Community School District, MGMC, ISU, Ames Police, Ames Fire, to be sure everyone is moving in concert with efforts and to begin planning for the next weeks. She said Iowa is one of six states without a shelter in place order.

Mr. Hobson asked about ERP submitting an additional funding request and if those funds would be for the rest of this fiscal year. Ms. Schildroth concurred. Mr. Hobson said it hasn't been discussed what the effect of this will be on next fiscal year. Ms. Schildroth said ASSET agencies will be in monitoring mode or recovery mode, both of which take time. Ms. Kresse said UWSC will be doing partner agreements and looking at options. She said she will keep funders up to date on UWSC funding. Mr. Hobson asked if all funders have approved the recommendations. Ms. Schildroth said FY 20/21 City contracts have been mailed out. Ms. King said County contracts will be mailed out early April. Erin will reach out to Lucy to see who her replacement will be.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS

- A. Next ASSET Administrative Team Meeting – May 6, 2020 at 12:15 p.m. (via conference call)
- B. Next ASSET Meeting– April 9, 2020 (via conference call)

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.