

HIGHLIGHTS

State—HCPF/DHS/Alliance.

- Department of Health Care Policy and Financing—The leadership team from HCPF visited this past week. I had the opportunity to meet with them, as did Richard and Matt and the Holly House folks. As you saw from the letter from Community Options in Montrose, one of the most urgent discussions we are having with the Department is around how to ensure that rural service providers are able to survive in the new world of IDD services.
- Alliance—Additionally, Alliance members came from across the state to meet in Durango this past week, which is very exciting for our little corner of the world. We are looking at three major legislative priorities for the 2020 session: eliminating the waiting list for IDD services within the next 6 years, eliminating Subminimum Wage employment in Colorado, and tying annual IDD rate increases to the Consumer Price Index.
- CFCM—We are still working with Rocky Mountain Human Services on a plan to move forward with coming into compliance with Conflict-Free Case Management requirements. However, we've hit a snag with the proposed simultaneous changes in how Targeted Case Management is funded. We plan to provide some real data and financial projections to HCPF so they have further information on the impacts of their proposals.

Local Community

- City of Durango—Several of us attended the study session at City Council where Community Support funding for human services organizations was discussed. As you may recall, last year the City implemented significant cuts to funding as well as enacting unreasonably strict interpretations of some of the eligibility requirements. The discussion was very positive in support of reinstating funding if possible and revising the eligibility criteria in line with what we had proposed.

Fundraising/Development

- Pumpkin Patch—This is an excellent fundraising opportunity in partnership with the Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. For three weekends, we will run the beer tent at their Pumpkin Patch event and keep all the proceeds. This usually nets us several thousand dollars with very minimal costs and labor invested. But it means we do need people to volunteer for shifts. We will have a sign-up sheet at the Board meeting, or contact Laura at laura@cci-colorado.org to get your choice of shifts. It would be ideal to have a board member at each shift, because then you'll also have the option of selling raffle tickets, which we hope to have available by then.

- Festival of Trees—Your calendars should already be marked for December 6-8 (Friday-Sunday) for this year’s Festival of Trees event. If you have an idea for event or tree sponsors, let Ellen or Tara know. And if you have a personal relationship with a sponsor, let them know how much you appreciate their engagement with Festival of Trees (hint, hint, nudge, nudge). We’ll follow up with the “sales” pitch and reel them in.
- Local applications—We have one pending application in with LPEA and are working on another application for a different program they have. Additionally, applications for public funding have been submitted or are in the process of being submitted to the following local governments:
 - City of Cortez
 - Town of Mancos
 - Town of Pagosa Springs
 - Town of Ignacio
 - Town of Bayfield
 - La Plata County

We are waiting on the application process from:

- Montezuma County
- City of Durango

Internal CCI highlights

- Operations/future planning with Exec team—As I have shared, the environment in which we operate at Community Connections is shifting rapidly. Although our ultimate goals and mission remain unchanged, the specific practices we use to meet those goals will need to evolve over the years. A few weeks ago, our staff leadership did some brainstorming around our business model and decided that we’d like to do some exercises with someone who can help us break out of the “way we’ve always done it” thinking and try to spark some new ideas. I believe I’ve found a local consultant who has the skills we’re looking for, so we will be engaging a variety of stakeholder representatives in this process of idea-generation. Once we have some ideas that seem feasible, we’ll be moving that conversation to the Board.

Facilities

- Sawyer—The major stabilization project at Sawyer is almost done, so we should not have to worry about the building shifting or drainage problems for at least 30 years. After it’s completed, we will be looking at addressing some cosmetic fixes to the damages created by the drainage challenges.
- Harrison Office—As I shared, the Harrison Office sustained some property damage and two windows were broken. We are in the process of getting those repaired. The total cost is less than our insurance deductible. We will also be installing some more security systems there. I suspect after we do this we might want to look at doing the same for Holly House. Pine Street already has security cameras installed.
- Holly House—A few final projects are happening at the Holly House and will expend the rest of the First United Methodist Church donation.

Other

- Campaign restrictions on nonprofits—Since campaign season is swinging into gear, it's a good time to remind everyone of the restrictions on campaigning for 501c3 nonprofit organizations. Under IRS rules, we are forbidden from engaging in any endorsement or support of a candidate. Once someone announces a candidacy for office, we need to be very cautious that we do not have interactions that could be construed as implicit or explicit endorsement. We can host sessions with all candidates invited and talk about mission-specific issues. We can support voter registration efforts with our constituents. We can even support issues (for instance, I can tell you that if Proposition CC passes, our funding will be far more sustainable than if it doesn't), as long as lobbying efforts are not a significant part of how we spent our funds. If you have any questions about what we can or can't do, feel free to check in with me or read this great article on the subject: <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/political-campaign-activities-risks-tax-exempt-status>.
- Board Onboarding Process—In your packet on the Google Drive, I will include the materials I have for onboarding a board member. The actual process is not codified anywhere, and though it's better than what we had before (which was essentially not much), it could use some work. I would love to have the Executive Committee draft a new and improved process and will help however you would like me to. Currently, the steps look something like this:
 1. Someone seems halfway interested in joining our Board
 2. We pounce on them
 3. If they are engaged enough to follow through, I set up a meeting with them to give them our Board application packet and go over some high level information about CCI and our Board
 4. The applicant attends a Board meeting (this step and step 3 are sometimes swapped)
 5. The applicant sends in their application
 6. I forward the application materials to the Executive Committee for review
 7. The Board votes on whether to invite the person to join the Board of Directors (sometimes with the person in the room, which can be awkward)
 8. I set a time to go over the New Board member materials with more in depth information about Community Connections
 9. The new Board member is signed on for a three year term starting the date of their approval (which makes it a little more of a challenge to manage people's terms—we could consider a month when all terms are set to end)
 10. I inform the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing of the change in Board membership as required in statute for our CCB transparency.

Acronym Cheat Sheet

- ART (Administrative Review Team) –The Executive Team and Program Directors oversight of Quality Indicators
- The Arc – advocacy organization for people with intellectual disabilities
- ANCOR (American Network of Community Options and Resources (for DD))
- BHO (Behavioral Health Organization)
- CCB (Community Centered Board) we are 1 of 20 in the state
- CCI (Community Connections, Inc.)
- CDLE (Colorado Department of Labor and Employment)
- CES (Children’s Extensive Services)
- CHCBS (Children’s Home and Community Based Services)
- CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) Federal
- CORA (Colorado Open Records Act)
- DHS or CDHS (Colorado Department of Human Services)
- DSP (Direct Support Professional) – field staff working with clients
- DVR (Department of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- EI (Early Intervention) Developmental services for kids Birth to 3
- FOT (Festival of Trees)
- HCPF (Health Care Policy and Financing) State Medicaid office
- I/DD (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities)
- JBC (Joint Budget Committee at the Colorado legislature)
- MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)
- PASAs (Program Approved Service Agencies) Marcy’s department
- PCA (Personal Care Alternative) residential services not in a host home
- RAE (Regional Accountable Entity) Medicaid Care Management organization
- Residential (a.k.a. Comprehensive – our adult 24/7 support)
- ROI (Return on Investment)
- SJBPH (San Juan Basin Public Health)
- SLS (Supported Living Services) – Services for adults living independently or with family
- TCM (Targeted Case Management)