

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
July 22, 2014**

PRESENT: **Randi Duffie, Vice Chairperson**
Deborah Viola, Ph.D., Secretary-Treasurer (Via-Teleconference)
Tom Toronto, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
Freeholder Joan Voss, Board Member
Mayor Vincent Barra, Board Member
John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel
Robert W. Calocino, Acting Director
Alex Morales, Interim Management Consultant
Michele Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary

ABSENT: **William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson**
John M. Carbone, Esq., County Adjuster
Freeholder Tracy Zur, Board Member
Leah Puzzo, Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on July 22, 2014 at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Bergen County Board of Social Services, 216 Route 17 North, Building A, Rochelle Park, New Jersey.

PUBLIC SESSION:

John L. Schettino, Esq., called the meeting to order. General Counsel read the notice required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows:

"Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of the meeting scheduled for July 22, 2014 has been provided in the following manner:

1. By a prominent posting of the schedule of meetings for 2014, including a notice of the scheduled time, scheduled date, and location of this meeting at the Bergen County Administrative Building, One Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack, New Jersey.

2. The mailing of this notice of the time, date, and location of this meeting to "The Record", which was published on January 13, 2014 and to the Herald News, which was published on January 13, 2014.
3. By filing of the notice of the time, date, and location of this meeting with the Bergen County Clerk, said filing having taken place on January 10, 2014.

The notice required by the "Open Public Meeting Act" was read as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, the Bergen County Board of Social Services shall now exclude members of the public from the meeting for the following reason:

1. The Board shall discuss property matters involving individuals who have received assistance from the Bergen County Board of Social Services. The identification of such individuals or their property may result in a violation of their rights to privacy and may result in the loss of public funds by this agency.
2. The Board shall discuss matters which are covered pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (b)(1,2,3) involving individuals who have received assistance from the Bergen County Board of Social Services or who have applied for assistance. To disclose the names of such individuals would work an unwarranted invasion of their rights to privacy.
3. The Bergen County Board of Social Services shall discuss personnel matters which are specifically exempt from public meetings pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (b)(8).
4. The Board shall discuss matters with Counsel to the Board which matters shall fall within the attorney-client privilege and are therefore excluded from the public meeting.
5. The Board may discuss other matters pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12.

Please be advised that at the conclusion of this session, the Board shall return to a public session and the members of the public are invited to return in order to observe. Thank you.

A quorum being achieved, the Board met in Public Session.

PUBLIC SESSION:

In the absence of Chairman Connelly, Vice-Chairwoman Duffie chaired the meeting.

Flag Salute

Vice-Chairwoman Duffie led those present in a salute to the flag.

Roll Call

A Roll Call was taken for Open Session:

MEMBERS	TITLE	PRESENT	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON		X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X	
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X	
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X	
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER		X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X	
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER		X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER		X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X	

Open Public Comment Period

A motion to open the Open Public Comment Period, for a three-minute limit with the option of speaking again, was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Mayor Barra, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Mark Kaspi

Ms. Kaspi stated that he was accused of not providing information to the BCBSS as requested, which is not true. He was told by a BCBSS worker that he collected benefits from the BCBSS and unemployment benefits at the same time.

General Counsel advised Mr. Kaspi that the Board does not handle the day-to-day decision making or operation of the BCBSS. The Board cannot make decisions regarding eligibility. He explained the manner in which issues such as this should be addressed through the proper chain of command. He also advised that the Board cannot comment on any employee at a Public Meeting.

Mr. Kaspi advised that he followed the appropriate chain of command.

General Counsel advised that this Board is not allowed to comment on any employee or their work performance at a Public Meeting.

Mr. Kaspi discussed that he filed for a Fair Hearing a year ago and then again approximately four months ago. He never heard back from anyone. Comments followed.

Vice-Chairwoman Duffie suggested that Mr. Kaspi follow all the appropriate steps. He was advised to leave his name and phone number with Administration and either Mr. Calocino or Mr. Morales will return his call.

For the record, Freeholder Voss arrived at 4:38 p.m.

Bill Oserin – Englewood, NJ

Mr. Oserin discussed he thinks that the comments made tonight are an example of what is going on at the BCBSS. He discussed a message that was left on his telephone last week from a customer advising she had been calling for three days about her food stamps but could not get a live person on the phone. In her message, she appeared to be very dissatisfied with the agency. Lots of people have said there is a need for more staff at the BCBSS.

Ronda Wilson – Hackensack, NJ

Ms. Wilson discussed she was informed yesterday that the agency is not taking General Assistance applications face-to-face. The state law requires that if you receive assistance you have to have a face-to-face interview. A customer came in to apply for General Assistance and was told to put her application in the box because there was nobody to interview her.

George Lahood

Mr. LaHood asked Mr. Calocino if he received a letter from Mr. Lahood's brother, Gabriel LaHood.

General Counsel advised Mr. LaHood that the purpose of the Open Public Comment Period is not an opportunity to direct questions to an individual. The Open Public Comment Period is to hear the business of the Board and to make any statement you wish but not an opportunity to interrogate a Member of the Board. Public are free to make any comments they want but it is not the time to have a back and forth discussion with a Board Member.

Mr. LaHood expressed his displeasure with the handling of his case with the BCBSS.

Ronda Wilson – Hackensack, NJ

Ms. Wilson thanked Freeholder Voss for attending church on Sunday.

A motion to close the Open Public Comment Period was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Freeholder Voss, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X

RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) None

Treasurer’s Report:

(a) None

Acting Director’s Report:

(a) **Monthly Reports – Statistical & Financial:**

None

Chairman’s Report:

No report.

Committee Reports:

(c) **Building & Grounds Committee**

Mayor Barra reported the work is progressing on time, on schedule, and is moving right along. There have been numerous discussions. The committee has had several discussions with the new landlord. The committee has an amendment that must be discussed later. The committee settled on furniture, phones, etc., which will be voted upon tonight. We are in good shape and will stay on top of the new landlord as best as they can to keep the process moving along. A lot is going on.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

(a) **Next Board Meeting Date – Reschedule from Tuesday, August 5, 2014 to August 12, 2014 @ 4:30 p.m.**

A motion to change the August Board Meeting from Tuesday, August 5, 2014 to **Tuesday, August 12, 2014** at 4:30 p.m. was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Freeholder Voss, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- (a) 2014.07.22 (1) – Resolution Awarding Security Guard Services Firm
- (b) 2014.07.22 (2) – Resolution Approving 64 Month Lease Agreement with Extel Communications, Inc. for Nec SV8100 System
- (c) 2014.07.22 (3) – Resolution Approving Settlement Agreement and Release with I.K.
- (d) 2014.07.22 (4) – Resolution Authorizing Request for Qualifications for Commercial Real Estate Services
- (e) 2014.07.22 (5) – Resolution Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (b) Approving 64 Month Lease Agreement with Extel Communications, Inc. for NEC SV8100 System was offered by Mayor Barra, seconded by Freeholder Voss, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

A motion to discuss and approve Resolutions (d) Authorizing Request for Qualifications for Commercial Real Estate Services was offered by Mayor Barra, seconded by Mr. Toronto, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			

DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

CLOSED SESSION:

The Board will go into Closed Session to discuss items as set forth on the agenda to discuss litigation and a possible settlement, as well as, the award of a contract for security guard services, personnel matters, building issues, and lease issues. The Board will be in Closed Session for approximately 25 minutes. The meeting will then reopen and official further action will be taken by the Board on at least those matters if not other matters as well. The minutes from the Closed Session will be available to the public once the items have been resolved or no longer require the minutes to be held and not distributed to the public.

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (e) Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A and to go into Closed Session was offered by Freeholder Voss, seconded by Mr. Toronto, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

The Board went into Closed Session at approximately 5:10 p.m.

OPEN SESSION:

The Board reconvened in Open Session at approximately 5:30 p.m.

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (a) Awarding Security Guard Services Firm to U.S. Security Associates Inc. at an hourly rate of \$15.27 was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Freeholder Voss, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			

TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (c) Approving Settlement Agreement and Release with I.K. was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Vice-Chairwoman Duffie, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
DEBORAH VIOLA, Ph.D.	SECRETARY/TREASURER	X			
TOM TORONTO	ASST. SEC-TREASURER	X			
JOHN M. CARBONE, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER JOAN VOSS	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER				X
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

With no further business to conclude, a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:35 p.m. was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Freeholder Voss, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert W. Calocino
Acting Director