

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
March 3, 2015**

PRESENT: William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson
Randi Duffie, Vice Chairperson
Deborah Viola, Ph.D., Secretary-Treasurer (Arrived Late)
Tom Toronto, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
Freeholder Tracy Zur, Board Member
Leah Puzzo, 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: County Adjuster
Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on March 3, 2015 at 4:30 p.m. in the 5th Floor Break Room of the Bergen County Board of Social Services, 218 Route 17 North, 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 March 3, 2015 has been provided in the following manner:

1. By a prominent posting of the schedule of meetings for 2015, 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 2, 2015 and to the Herald News, which was published on January 2, 2015.

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 December 30, 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:

Flag Salute

Mayor Barra 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	

COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER		X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER	X	
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER		X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X	
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X	

Oath of Office for New Members

Committee Assignments

No discussion.

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 Freeholder Zur, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Maria Aberasturi – Teaneck, NJ

Ms. Aberasturi thanked Mr. Calocino for extending good wishes to the Service Department as March is Social Worker month. She talked about the need for additional agency vehicles, which she felt would enable the agency to better serve the customers. She explained the agency’s interns are not allowed to use their personal vehicles, based on affiliation agreements with various colleges, to visit or transport customers out in the field.

Freeholder Zur reported that at the request of the BCBSS last month, the County was asked and is trying to comply with the agency’s request for a vehicle for the Fraud Department. She is happy to put forward the additional request; however, going forward, she advised that staff should ask for everything they need at one time.

The Chairman inquired about insurance coverage for interns that are using the agency cars.

Akua Yeboah-Asuamah – Rutherford, NJ

Ms. Yeboah -Asuamah asked the Board if the agency has an inclement weather policy set. She spoke about one occasion in which the agency closed in advance due to a blizzard and another occasion where there was a snow storm and staff had to come to work but the county had a delayed

opening. She inquired about whether the agency follows the county rules for closing or if the agency makes their own decision. Ms. Yeboah also expressed her concern regarding snow removal on the parking decks. Next year, she would like to see this issue taken care of.

The Chairman advised this issue and others are being addressed at the present time. In regard to whether the agency follows the county rules for closing, the Chairman advised it usually comes from the state, to the county, and then to the BCBSS.

Mr. Morales discussed that the agency routinely follows the county's lead. Mr. Morales advised that he already spoke to this employee about the policy. He further advised that the agency routinely follows the county once we are notified by them; however, there was a time when the BCBSS learned late about the county closing and we were unable to contact staff. As a consequence to that, to compensate staff for that, administration allowed for staff that came to work that day to leave early during the week and those who came in late were not penalized. Currently, the BCBSS is on the County's early advisement list. The BCBSS is also exploring a system where the administration can send out mass texts to staff advising them of agency closings. In the past, the BCBSS did not follow the lead of the county because the agency was open at all times.

Since the BCBSS does not have any system similar to a reverse 9-1-1- system, Mayor Barra offered to refer Mr. Morales to the President of Swift Reach to discuss a system and options.

For the record, Dr. Viola arrived at approximately 4:45 p.m.

Eboni Rodgers – Lodi NJ & Vice President of CWA Local #1089

Ms. Rodgers advised that the local and management recently discussed the potential promotions of staff. It is the local's concern that all members are considered for promotions, not just Aides and Specialists, but clerical staff too. Promotions are something the local urges to happen. There is a dire need for an increase in staff, and it is important for morale. In regard to an issue with health and safety, Ms. Rodgers expressed her concern over an increase in ceiling leaks on the 5th floor. Ms. Rodgers expressed her concern over the leakage on some very important documents. Photographs were submitted into the record.

General Counsel advised Ms. Rodgers that the Board is well aware of the ceiling leaks and this item is being pursued and addressed by the landlord.

Ms. Rodgers continued. She inquired about the status of the repairs and the smell. The local wanted to know if this can be tested to be assured it is not mold that they are breathing in or anything else that might be bred in a moist area.

Freeholder Zur addressed Ms. Rodgers and asked for clarification in regard to the union's position regarding the personnel changes. Freeholder Zur asked Ms. Rodgers if she was in favor of the personnel recommendations set forth this afternoon.

Ms. Rodgers responded that the union is in favor of any promotions; however, they want to make sure that all staff is being considered, not just a certain track, because that has been an issue. Ms. Rodgers expressed that she is on Board with tonight's personnel moves.

Mr. Morales discussed that he and the union have an ongoing dialogue. Mr. Morales reported there is a very wide path for clerks and aides to be promoted through the ranks of workers and then there is another track to stay within the clerical track. The union and management are on the same page with most of these issues, but with this particular issue, they are not quite there yet but they are working towards that goal together to get there.

A motion to close the Open Public Comment Period was offered by Freeholder Zur, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

The Chairman advised that he was going to go out of order on the agenda to address personnel since some members had to leave the meeting early. A discussion ensued regarding Resolutions (e) through (k). A motion to discuss and approve Resolutions (e) through (k) was offered by Dr. Viola, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER	X			
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

For the record, Freeholder Zur left the meeting at approximately 4:45 p.m.

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Open Session Minutes of February 3, 2015

A motion to adopt the Open Session Minutes of February 3, 2015 was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Dr. Viola, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER				X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER			X	
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Treasurer's Report:

(a) Bills List:

A discussion ensued. A motion to approve the Bills List was offered by Vice-Chairwoman Duffie, seconded by Dr. Viola, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

(b) Schedule of Vouchers:

A discussion ensued. A motion to approve the Schedule of Vouchers was offered by Vice-Chairwoman Duffie, seconded by Mrs. Puzzo, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Administration Report:

(a) Monthly Reports – Statistical & Financial:

A snapshot of caseload and expenditures was provided to the members for the month of January.

(b) Memoranda to the Board

Mr. Morales reported that the agency hired three former Community Work Experience Program participants who are eligible for on the job training reimbursements. The agency will receive up to approximately \$30,000 in reimbursement for these employees. The agency implemented a new program called SNAPTrac for Food Stamps which was developed by the state to automate and track the application process. The Income Maintenance Department created an automation system for interim reporting forms that is reducing the manpower required for those forms by approximately 66% so that will allow the staff to focus their efforts elsewhere. In regard to the Phone Bank, staff is revamping the way in which calls are handled at the agency and significant changes should be seen within 30-60 days. The N.J. Department of Human Services is undergoing significant changes. State Human Services Commissioner Velez, New Jersey's longest service Human Services Commissioner, has resigned from her position after eight years on the job. In addition, Jeanette Page-Hawkins; DFD Director, is also resigning from her position and will become the new Director of the Essex County Board of Social Services.

Chairman's Report:

Chairman Connelly reported that the Board is well aware of the issues with the building. The Board is pursuing these issues and looking to improve the building every day. The Chairman thanked everyone for their patience.

Committee Reports:

(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee

Vice-Chairwoman Duffie reported from February 1, 2015 through February 28, 2015 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$9,078.51. Two (2) cases were forwarded to the Prosecutor's Office seeking \$188,408.14 in restitution.

(b) Audit & Budget Committee

No report

(c) Building & Grounds Committee

Mayor Barra reported that he is not happy with what is going on but there has been improvement with the heating issues. Radiant floors were installed on the 2nd floor and some staff has advised that it is too hot. A continual effort is being made but it is not yet where it should be. The Board will stay on top of this issue.

OLD BUSINESS:

No discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

(a) Next Board Meeting Date – Tuesday, April 14, 2015 @ 4:30 p.m.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 14, 2015** at 4:30 p.m. at the “218” building.

A motion to discuss and approve Resolutions (a), (b), and (c) 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- (a) 2015.3.03(1) – Resolution Approving Amended Affiliation Agreement with Bergen Regional Medical Center
- (b) 2015.3.03(2) – Resolution Approving Letter of Commitment w/Bergen County Division of Senior Services
- (c) 2015.3.03(3) – Resolution Approving Letter to NJ Dept. of Human Services Regarding Statewide Transition Plan
- (d) 2015.3.03(4) – Resolution Approving Estoppel Agreement
- (e) 2015.3.03(5) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for 1 Full Time Records Support Technician 1
- (f) 2015.3.03(6) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for 6 Full Time Human Service Specialist 3’s
- (g) 2015.3.03(7) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for 3 Full Time Human Service Aides
- (h) 2015.3.03(8) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for 6 Part Time Human Service Aides
- (i) 2015.3.03(9) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for 2 Assistant Administrative Supervisors
- (j) 2015.3.03(10) –Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for 2 Human Service Specialist 4’s
- (k) 2015.3.03(11) –Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for 7 Full Time Human Service Specialist 1’s
- (l) 2015.3.03(12) –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

CLOSED SESSION:

The Board will go into Closed Session to discuss matters involving the lease, matters regarding litigation regarding U.S. Security, as well as, personnel matters involving various positions within the Board, a second-step grievance, and closed session minutes. 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. The Board will be in Closed Session for approximately 30 minutes. The meeting will then resume and reopen the meeting to the public and the Board make take further action on the items that were discussed in Closed Session.

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution 2015.3.03(12) 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 Mr. Toronto, seconded by Dr. Viola, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

The Board went into Closed Session at approximately 5:12 p.m.

OPEN SESSION:

The Board reconvened in Open Session at approximately 5:25 p.m.

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (d), (i), Leonardo Spaccavento, and the Closed Session Minutes was offered by Dr. Viola, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			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 5:28 p.m. was offered by Mr. Toronto, seconded by Dr. Viola, 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			
COUNTY ADJUSTER	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
FREEHOLDER TRACY ZUR	BOARD MEMBER				X
FREEHOLDER THOMAS SULLIVAN	BOARD MEMBER	X			X
LEAH PUZZO	BOARD MEMBER	X			
MAYOR VINCENT BARRA	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Respectfully submitted,



Robert W. Calocino
Acting Director