

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
July 9, 2020**

PRESENT: William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson
Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson
Erin N. Delaney, Secretary Treasurer
Elaine K. Meyerson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer
Freeholder Tracy S. Zur, Board Member
Alexandra Harwin, Esq., Board Member
Susan Silverstein, Board Member
John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel
Adina Yacoub, Director
Michele M. Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary

ABSENT: Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, Board Member
John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., County Adjuster
Yris Encarnacion, Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on July 9, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. by way of audio teleconference.

PUBLIC SESSION:

John L. Schettino, Esq. called the meeting to order and 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 9, 2020 has been provided in the following manner:

1. By a prominent posting of the schedule of meetings for 2020, 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 June 16, 2020 and to the Herald News, which was published on June 16, 2020.
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 June 11, 2020.

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

PUBLIC SESSION:

Chairman William E. Connelly chaired the meeting.

Flag Salute

Chairman William E. Connelly led those present in a salute to the flag.

Roll Call

A Roll Call was taken for Open Session:

MEMBERS	TITLE	PRESENT	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X	
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X	
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X	
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X	
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X	
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER		X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER		X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER		X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X	
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X	

Open Public Comment Period

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to open the meeting for public comment. A motion to open the Open Public Comment Period, for a three-minute limit with the option of speaking again, was offered by Randi Duffie, seconded by Elaine K. Meyerson, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Matthew Bonaventure, BCBSS Employee

Mr. Bonaventure commented that he had a list of questions that he gathered from speaking with other employees, which he will submit to the Board, regarding the agency's response to the current health crisis. He questioned what the agency has been doing to make working from home more accessible and mentioned that staff do not feel the sanitizing of the office has been

adequate. He discussed that it seems that the agency does not have a clear and direct process for navigating this pandemic and if we do, it has not been shared with staff. He expressed that the agency's response to this crisis has been inadequate as staff understand that they have to accept a certain amount of risk as the work they do is essential but what is being done to mitigate these risks. He offered to submit these questions, in writing, and get starting working together for a resolution.

John L. Schettino, Esq. suggested that Mr. Bonaventure provide to the Board, both what he said verbally and in writing, and it will be looked into by the Board. He explained that everything that is being done presently is based upon guidance from Bergen County, from the Executive Orders issued by Governor Murphy, as well as, health care professionals. The safety of the employees is of the utmost importance not only to the Board but to everyone's safety, which includes the employees and customers.

Adina Yacoub discussed that we were complimented by the CWA, the National, and the Local. She highlighted some of the measures taken:

- We did level 4 sanitizing, which cost us a lot of money.
- We purchased gloves, masks, and hand sanitizers.
- We requested extra cleaning from the landlord, which she will share with the Board because it is costing thousands of dollars every month.
- Plexiglass was ordered weeks ago and the first phase is going to be installed on July 17, 2020. We also have phase two plexiglass.
- She takes pride in doing a great job in safeguarding the health and safety of our employees. Other agencies have 100% of their employees on the premises within the building. She has not done that because she is worried about the health and safety of our employees. We currently have 40% in the office and 60% people working from home.
- We continue to follow the guidelines of the County, the health department, the CDC, and any other direction we get. She feels that we are doing the best we can to safeguard the health and safety of our employees.
- In March 2020, we closed our doors to the public.
- We have two Seek Scan Thermometers. All employees are required to take their temperature before they start their day. If they don't pass, they must wait five minutes and take their temperature again. If they don't pass a second time, they are sent home and cannot return until we have a doctors' clearance.
- We shared with all staff, from the recent direction from the Governor, anybody who visits states that require self-quarantine they need to stay at home for 14 days and work from home and should get clearance before they return.
- We are doing everything we can to safeguard the health and safety of our employees. The measures that the Director is taking is being communicated to the employees by way of e-mail. There is a lot of communication from personnel, supervisors, and administrators.

- The original policy and revised policy for remote work was shared with all staff.
- Everyone in the office must maintain the six-foot requirement and people are mandated to wear masks.

As there were no members of the public that wished to address the Board, Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to close the Open Public Comment Period of the Open Session. A motion to close the Open Public Comment Period was offered by Susan Silverstein, seconded by Erin N. Delaney, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Open Session Minutes of June 2, 2020

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of June 2, 2020 was offered by Randi Duffie, seconded by Erin N. Delaney, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Treasurer's Report:

(a) Bills List:

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to approve the Bills List. A motion to approve the Bill's List was offered by Randi Duffie, seconded by Freeholder Tracy S. Zur, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			

RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

(b) Schedule of Vouchers:

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to approve the Schedule of Vouchers. A motion to approve the Schedule of Vouchers was offered by Freeholder Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Randi Duffie, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Chairman’s Report

Chairman William E. Connelly reported next month the Board will discuss whether or not future Board Meetings will continue to be held by way of audio teleconference or in person.

Administration Report:

(a) Monthly Reports – Statistical & Financial:

A snapshot of caseload and expenditures was included in each of the Board Member’s packet.

Adina Yacoub reported that the TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) caseload increased by 12 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 57 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload increased by 855 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 1,409 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload increased by 31 cases and compared to one year ago it went down by 10 cases, and Medicaid individuals decreased from last month by 571 individuals. In the month of May, we closed 183 cases due to deaths in nursing homes.

In June, the agency received a total of 1,442 new applications for cash and SNAP applications. The agency also received 1,197 Medicaid applications. In the month of June, we received a total of 2,639 new applications compared to May which was 3,048. The amount of new applications has been decreasing but once the unemployment insurance runs out, we may see an increase again.

In June, staff processed 4,055 new applications compared to the May count of 5,657. In June, staff processed 11,013 total actions compared to the May count of 10,198. We had a backlog but now we are 100% timely in all our programs.

The demand on our Emergency Assistance Unit has increased as we needed to place more homeless people in motels due to COVID-19. Currently, we have 62 individuals in motels, 30 families at the 40 Passaic Street transitional shelter, and 11 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We received 53 homeless hotline referrals from 211. We have 103 Temporary Rental Assistance cases, and we received 87 Emergency Assistance applications in the month of June.

(b) Memoranda to the Board

Adina Yacoub reported that currently we have 90 employees working at the office and 140 working from home. Bergen County is current again with our processing of all the programs and that took a lot of effort from our staff including the administrators. She acknowledged the good work of all those who made it happen. The MOU between our agency and the Division of Medicaid and Health Services (DMAHS) has been signed and now we expect reimbursement funds for Medicaid processing of new cases for the last six months. She continues to attend weekly conference calls with the Division of Family Development and the Division of Medicaid and Health Services. These conference calls are with all the Directors from the 21 counties. We get updated on federal waivers for our programs, as well as, initiatives from the State to help us with processes. We also give DFD our weekly status with our application processing and backlog. In June, we received our second temperature scan device from the County for us to use on the 5th floor to take employees temperature as they come in to work. She thanked Freeholder Sullivan for following up on this request. Our Fiscal Officer sent several invoices to the County for COVID-19 reimbursement, and we are waiting on the outcome. The County received some federal funds for COVID-19 expenses. She received and completed a survey from the Bergen County Division of Community Development regarding COVID-19 needs, prevention plan, and our financial needs to cover these expenses. We will complete an application toward the end of July and see if we qualify for any funds. We continue to remind staff to wear masks and be mindful of the safety of others, as well as, themselves. The installation of phase 1 plexiglass partitions will take place on July 17, 2020. At this afternoon's Board Meeting, she will present our phase 2 plan for partitions for the outside cubicles for all floors. Lastly, she reported that we had one retirement on July 1, 2020 and expect three additional retirements on September 1, 2020.

Committee Reports:

(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from June 1 to June 30, 2020 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$3,350.16. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of June.

(b) Audit & Budget Committee

No report.

(c) Building & Grounds Committee

No report.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

(a) Next Board Meeting Date

The next Board Meeting is scheduled to be held on **Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.** by way of remote access.

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- (a) 2020.7.09 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2020.7.09 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2020.7.09 (3) – Resolution Authorizing Rescinding Resolution 2020.6.02 (4) Authorizing a Change in Employment from One Part-Time Human Services Specialist 1 to One Full-Time Human Services Specialist 1
- (d) 2020.7.09 (4) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Employment from Part-Time to Full Time for One Human Services Aide
- (e) 2020.7.09 (5) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Employment for One Part-Time Clerk 1 to Full-Time Clerk 1
- (f) 2020.7.09 (6) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Employment for One Part-Time Clerk 1 to Part-Time Human Services Aide Bilingual/Korean
- (g) 2020.7.09 (7) – Resolution Approving Thermal Monitoring Protocol
- (h) 2020.7.09 (8) – Resolution Approving Acrylic Panels for Cubicles
- (i) 2020.7.09 (9) – 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. 10:4-12

A motion to discuss and approve Resolutions (a) – (h) was offered by Freeholder Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Elaine K. Meyerson, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (i) 2020.7.09 (9) 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 10:4-12 and to go into Closed Session was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, seconded by Susan Silverstein, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

The Board went into Closed Session at approximately 5:17p.m.

CLOSED SESSION:

The Board went into Closed Session to discuss the Closed Session minutes of June 2, 2020, personnel matters, litigation, and contracts. 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 20 minutes at which time the Board will reopen the meeting and perhaps take further public action in matters dealing with the Bergen County Board of Social Services. The public will be invited back once the meeting reopens in Open Session.

OPEN SESSION:

The Board reconvened in Open Session at approximately 5:41 p.m.

Roll Call

A Roll Call was taken for Open Session:

MEMBERS	TITLE	PRESENT	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X	
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X	
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X	
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X	
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X	
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER		X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER		X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER		X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X	
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X	

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Closed Session Minutes of June 2, 2020

A motion to approve the closed session minutes of June 2, 2020 was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, seconded by Erin N. Delaney, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. With no further business to conclude, a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:45 p.m. was offered by Freeholder Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Susan Silverstein, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	FREEHOLDER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	FREEHOLDER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adina Yacoub". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping underline.

Adina Yacoub
Director