

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
August 4, 2020**

PRESENT: William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson
Erin N. Delaney, Secretary Treasurer
Elaine K. Meyerson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer
Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, Board Member
John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., County Adjuster
Alexandra Harwin, Esq., Board Member
Yris Encarnacion, Board Member
Susan Silverstein, Board Member
John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel
Adina Yacoub, Director
Michele M. Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary

ABSENT: Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson
Freeholder Tracy S. Zur, Board Member

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

PUBLIC SESSION:

John L. Schettino, Esq was present however, due to a technical issue he was unable to read the notice into the record. Therefore, Michele M. Darmochwal 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 August 4, 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 July 22, 2020 and to the Herald News, which was published on July 22, 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 July 16, 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 Erin N. Delaney, 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			

Dolores Phillips, President of CWA Local #1089

Dolores Phillips, President of CWA Local #1089, discussed that she is the only person that can speak for the membership. Individuals can say whatever they like before the Board but as

far as speaking for CWA Local #1089 she is the only voice. She expressed her disappointment regarding complaints that were unbeknownst to her. She remarked on how people could say that there was no communication and/or they were not aware of what was going on when they didn't reach out to the one person who could have told them if they really wanted to know. She mentioned that it is not a secret that Adina Yacoub and she agree to disagree on numerous issues all the time. That is the nature of what they both do. In regard to what has been going on since March 16, 2020, Adina Yacoub has been at the forefront of all social service agencies and making sure that her employees were safe and employed. She went on to say that Adina Yacoub has been in touch with her constantly. Ms. Phillips is working from home, but she does come into the office. A week has not gone by where they haven't talked about something. Not that there were any issues but just to let her know what was going on. It upset Ms. Phillips that her members were saying that there was no communication. Ms. Phillips sent her phone number out to every member because Adina Yacoub allowed her to use the job's email to do so.

Chairman William E. Connelly thanked Dolores Phillips for her comments.

As there were no other 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 Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, 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			

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Open Session Minutes of July 9, 2020

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of July 9, 2020 was offered by Erin N. Delaney, seconded by Yris Encarnacion, 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 Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, seconded by John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., 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 Susan Silverstein, seconded by Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, 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			

For the record, the agency’s Auditor, Matt Wielkotz, was present by way of audio teleconference. He presented the draft 2019 audit report. He explained that the audit is something that he usually does on site. He thanked the staff in Administration, Finance, and IT that helped him get through the audit as smooth as possible. He reported as in the previous years, the agency has another stellar audit report, which has no comments noted in the federal or state single audits or in the general financial statement comments which is very atypical. He mentioned that the Fiscal Officer seems to be running the show very well and has been an absolute pleasure. All the Board

Members received a copy of the draft 2019 audit report. The main highlights were another year, another stellar audit, and he thanked everyone for being so open and receptive to him during these difficult times.

John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., complimented the administration for doing such a wonderful job again.

Chairman's Report

Chairman William E. Connelly thanked Adina Yacoub and Dolores Phillips for the open communication to him, the Board, and staff during the pandemic. In addition, the Chairman talked about having the September 1, 2020 Board Meeting by way of audio teleconference. Going forward, the Board will make a decision on a month-to-month basis as to whether to hold each meeting in person or by way of audio teleconference.

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 decreased by 12 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 60 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload decreased by 200 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 1,277 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload increased by 9 cases and compared to one year ago it went up by 40 cases, and Medicaid individuals decreased from last month by 627 individuals. There is a new program that the State Medicaid office is doing for the elderly and disabled starting in September. They told us that we are going to see a higher population applying with us for the ABD Program.

In July, the agency received a total of 1,476 cash and SNAP applications. The agency also received 1,190 Medicaid applications. In the month of July, we received a total of 2,666 new applications compared to June which was 3,048. The amount of application started to increase as of the last two weeks. If the federal amount of unemployment does not come through, we will see an uptake in our applications too.

In July, staff processed 2,836 new applications compared to the June count of 4,055 and in May we processed 5,657 applications. In July, staff processed 9,495 total actions compared to the June count of 11,013 and the May count was 10,198. We are now timely with our processing of all our programs.

The demand on our Emergency Assistance Unit has increased since the Bergen County Housing, Health and Human Services Center in Hackensack remains closed. Last month, the agency placed 61 individuals in motels, 24 families at the Passaic Street transitional shelter, and 11 families

placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We received 35 homeless hotline referrals from 211. We have 80 families on Temporary Rental Assistance cases, and we received 73 Emergency Assistance applications in the month of July. Our DDD Unit has reached the capacity for the amount of workers they have, which is 240 applications for our Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) population.

Alexandra Harwin, Esq., asked Adina Yacoub about the lapse of the \$600.00 a week benefit as something that is expected to drive an uptick in applications. She asked if there are any other factors at the federal level or state level in terms of lapsing protections that she expects to have a significant effect on our applications moving forward.

Adina Yacoub discussed that she believes this is the biggest factor. We are also waiting on the feds and the state as far as waivers that are given to use in the state of emergency. We are waiting to see what is going to happen with that. It has been extended until the end of August but it could be September. We might see more of a demand to go back to business a little bit more normal than we have it now. We are waiting on direction from the state and the feds. She thinks the \$600.00 is still being negotiated but if it is lowered to what they are talking about which is \$200.00 it would certainly have an effect on eligibility for more clients with us.

Elaine K. Meyerson mentioned that a lot of these individuals will still have their N.J. unemployment.

Adina Yacoub discussed that the state unemployment might be for six (6) months so we are going to have that for a while. In regard to the Medicaid Program, it does not count the \$600.00 as income so it does not affect the Medicaid applications. For the other programs, it is considered as income. Adina Yacoub explained that they do not want people to not have health coverage during a health crisis so they waived that extra income.

(b) Memoranda to the Board

Adina Yacoub thanked the agency's auditor for doing a good job. She also thanked Scott Modery and staff for doing a great job. She reported that the agency is very timely. The agency received our Medicaid report from last month, and we are at 98.98% timely. With the pandemic and staff working remotely it's almost an impossible task. She discussed that staff are doing a great job, and she is very proud of them. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the BCBSS and the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services has been fully executed. The agency received our Medicaid reimbursement funds for the first six months of 2020. Included in everyone's packet was a copy of the COVID-19 Communications Timeline. Adina Yacoub thanked Dolores Phillips for her words. She said it is true that they communicate with all staff on a regular basis. Adina Yacoub surveyed most of the CWA's in the state and the majority of them have their employees back 100% full time. The agency installed the plexiglass dividers back in July and there is more to come in August. We continue to work with the county entities and hospitals. We expect the BCBSS employee who is outstationed at Bergen New Bridge Medical Center to go back soon. In the past, Ms. Yacoub talked a little bit about the Top Review/Tax Offset Program and that the agency failed the review. She reported that we have been chosen as a pilot county for a new

computer program that is being installed by the state, and we are one of the first counties to jump on it. Adina is very excited about this because it will help us with our future review. In regard to the Task Force that is headed by Freeholder Tracy S. Zur, Ms. Yacoub is a part of that. They had their first meeting and another meeting will take place next week.

In response to Susan Silverstein's question regarding how many more people are back in the office, Adina Yacoub stated that 45% of the staff are in the office right now.

Committee Reports:

(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from July 1 to July 31, 2020 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$43,384.96. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of July.

(b) Audit & Budget Committee

The auditor previously reported on the 2019 draft audit 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, September 1, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.** by way of remote access.

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- (a) 2020.8.04 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2020.8.04 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2020.8.04 (3) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours from Part Time to Full Time for One Clerk 1
- (d) 2020.8.04 (4) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Employment from Part-Time Clerk 1 to Part-Time Human Services Aide Bilingual/Korean
- (e) 2020.8.04 (5) – Resolution Approving Renewal of Public Health Shared Services Agreement with Bergen County
- (f) 2020.8.04 (6) – Resolution Approving COVID-19 Revised Policy
- (g) 2020.8.04 (7) – 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 Resolutions (a) – (f) was offered by Erin N. Delaney, seconded by John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., 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			

In regard to (g) Resolution 2020.8.04 (7), action was not taken on this item as the Board had no business to discuss and there was no need to go into Closed Session.

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Closed Session Minutes of July 9, 2020

A motion to approve the closed session minutes of July 9, 2020 was offered by Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, 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 5:15 p.m. 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			

Respectfully submitted,



Adina Yacoub
Director