

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
November 5, 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 (Arrived Late)
Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, Board Member
John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., County Adjuster
Alexandra Harwin, Esq., Board Member
Susan Silverstein, Board Member
John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel
Adina Yacoub, Director
Michele M. Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary

ABSENT: Yris Encarnacion, Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on November 5, 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 November 5, 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 October 21, 2020 and to the Herald News, which was published on October 21, 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 October 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 Randi Duffie, 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			

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 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			

For the record, Freeholder Tracy S. Zur was present.

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Open Session Minutes of October 6, 2020

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of October 6, 2020 was offered by Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, 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			

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 Erin N. Delaney, 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 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			

Chairman’s Report

Chairman William E. Connelly commended Adina Yacoub and her staff on her response to the complaint that she received from the Department of Health regarding the agency’s COVID protocol. The Board discussed their preference in regard to what platform to use for future Board Meetings. The Board agreed to meet next month by way of audio teleconference. In January 2021, the Board will meet by way of Webex.

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 from 252 to 251 and is down by 1 case from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 14 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload increased from 19,433 to 20,049 and is up by 616 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 2,117cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload decreased from 542 to 521 and is down by 21 cases and compared to one year ago it went up by 63 cases, and Medicaid individuals decreased from 39,052 to 38,600 and is down by 452 individuals.

In October, the agency received a total of 1,352 cash and SNAP applications. The agency also received 1,681 Medicaid applications for a total of 3,033. In September, we received 1,464 cash and SNAP applications and 1,326 Medicaid applications for a total of 2,790 applications.

In October, staff processed 2,991 new applications compared to the September count of 3,114. In October, staff processed 9,116 actions compared to September when we processed 9,407 actions. We remain timely with our processing of TANF, General Assistance, SNAP, and Medicaid applications. Our Medicaid redetermination report came in yesterday for last month and we are 98.82% timely.

In the month of October, our Emergency Assistance Unit was busy and assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 43 individuals/families in motels, 23 families at the Passaic Street transitional shelter, and 11 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We received 20 homeless hotline referrals from 211. We have 126 on Temporary Rental Assistance cases, and received 81 Emergency Assistance applications in the month of October. We have reached 245 DDD active cases.

(b) Memoranda to the Board

The following actions were initiated or occurred in October 2020. The Emergency SNAP benefits have been extended for the month of November, which means households receive the maximum allotment for their household size. Adina Yacoub e-mailed the Board, as well as, all staff regarding the Corona Relief Fund (CRF), and that the Department of Human Services allocated \$566,000 for us to use prior to 12/1/2020. In her e-mail there was a list of items we already ordered or in the process of ordering that will further safeguard the health and safety of our employees in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We received some items but are waiting on many others. Recently, we were contacted by the County regarding a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Board and the County regarding case management of the transitional Passaic Street shelter located in Hackensack. The Board was provided with copies of a letter addressed to the Chairman, a budget, and draft MOU. Adina Yacoub explained that we plan to have an intake worker there, as well as, a Social Worker to case manage the residents at the family shelter. In addition, 20% of a Social Work supervisor time will be dedicated to oversee this new project. The salaries in the budget and fringe benefits will be covered by County funds. Elaine K. Meyerson expressed that she does not believe that is sufficient staffing for this kind of program. Maria Aberasturi and Adina Yacoub did a site visit yesterday and identified some issues that need to be addressed and shared it with the County. The BCBSS will not be in charge of the maintenance or security at the shelter. It is a joint effort and the conversation is ongoing. On 11/4/2020, the CEO of Packetalk company came and provided a presentation on his temperature scanning device, which is more enhanced than the one we currently have. We plan to order seven cameras and monitors to cover all three floors and it comes with a five-year maintenance agreement. This item will be paid for by the CRF money. Fourteen supervisors and administrators took a course offered by Bergen Community College on how to manage remote workers. We are purchasing a Management Learning System (MLS), which will be covered by the CRF money. We had several demonstrations, and feel it will be valuable as a remote training system in our current virtual environment. On 11/04/2020, 2,258 inmates were released early as per the Governor's Order. Bergen County received a list of 20 names of inmates who applied with our agency for benefits, and we will follow up with them. The adopt a family project is on its way for those who wish to participate. The contact person for the project is Gina Kennedy, and she can be reached at (201) 368-4258 or by way of e-mail at gkennedy@bcbss.com.

Effective 11/1/20, New Jersey became a State Based Exchange for people to apply to for health insurance. New Jersey now has its own Marketplace. The difference between a federal marketplace and a state marketplace is that we could assess, as well as, determine eligibility as per our New Jersey rules. This is done electronically and people could apply using this website GetCoveredNJ. On 10/27/2020, Adina Yacoub was elected Vice-Chair to the Human Service Advisory Board (HSAC).

John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq. complimented Adina Yacoub on the job she did in regard to the complaint that she received regarding the agency's COVID protocol compliance.

Committee Reports:

(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from October 1 to October 31, 2020 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$19,689.83 and the year to date 2020 is \$249,078.90. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of October.

(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, December 1, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.** by way of remote access.

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- a) 2020.11.05 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2020.11.05 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2020.11.05 (3) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One Full-Time Data Processing Programmer
- (d) 2020.11.05 (4) – Resolution Authorizing to Offer Employment for One Full-Time Social Worker
- (e) 2020.11.05 (5) – Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One Part-Time Clerk 1

- (f) 2020.11.05 (6) – Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Preventative and Protective Supplies through CARES and CRF Funding
- (g) 2020.11.05 (7) – Resolution Approving Memorandum of Understanding with County of Bergen
- (h) 2020.11.05 (8) – 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

The Board had no business to discuss in Closed Session; therefore, no action was taken on Resolution 2020.11.05 (8).

A motion to approve Resolutions (a) – (g) 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			

Adoption of Minutes:

There were no closed session minutes of October 6, 2020.

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 5:20 p.m. was offered by John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., 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			

Respectfully submitted,

Adina Yacoub

Adina Yacoub
Director