

**Minutes of the Meeting  
of the  
Bergen County Board of Social Services  
December 1, 2020**

**PRESENT:** William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson  
Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson  
Erin N. Delaney, Secretary Treasurer  
Elaine K. Meyerson, Assistant Secretary Treasure  
Freeholder Thomas J. Sullivan, Board Member  
John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., County Adjuster  
Yris Encarnacion, 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 Tracy S. Zur, Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on December 1, 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 December 1, 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 November 13, 2020 and to the Herald News, which was published on November 13, 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 November 10, 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 Yris Encarnacion, 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 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			

### **Adoption of Minutes:**

#### **(a) Open Session Minutes of November 5, 2020**

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of November 5, 2020 was offered by Erin N. Delaney, 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 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			

**(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 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 that the Freeholder title changes to **County Commissioner** effective January 1, 2021. He announced that the January 12, 2021 Board Meeting will be held by Webex. He wished everyone a healthy & happy holiday season.

**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 251 to 243 and is down by 8 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 5 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload increased from 20,049 to 20,496 and is up by 447 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 2,585 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload decreased from 521 to 499 and is down by 22 cases and compared to one year ago it went up by 18 cases, and Medicaid individuals decreased from 38,600 to 38,221 and is down by 379 individuals.

In November, the agency received a total of 1,115 cash and SNAP applications. The agency also received 1,401 Medicaid applications for a total of 2,516.

In November, staff processed 2,654 new applications compared to the October count of 2,991. In November, staff processed 7,337 actions compared to October when we processed 9,116 actions. We remain timely with our processing of TANF, General Assistance, SNAP, and Medicaid

applications. Adina Yacoub noted that the reason for lower actions in November is due to four days off for staff due to the holidays.

In the month of November, our Emergency Assistance Unit was busy and assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 43 individuals/families in motels, 20 families at the Passaic Street transitional shelter, and 10 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We received 27 homeless hotline referrals from 211. We have 120 on Temporary Rental Assistance cases, and received 55 Emergency Assistance applications in the month of November. The DDD Caseload increased from last month which was 245 to 250 DDD active cases.

Susan Silverstein requested the numbers on burials. Next month, Adina Yacoub will include and report those figures for the Board.

**(b) Memoranda to the Board**

The following actions were initiated or occurred in November 2020. This month, we are sending out 300 applications, every week, for people who are on ABD (senior, elderly, and disabled population) Medicaid. We want to see if they respond so that we can process SNAP, and we are going to keep track of that. This has only been happening for the last two weeks so there is no report yet, but next month, Adina Yacoub will tell the Board how this is going. Once all the ABD population is addressed, we will then do the same for the Family Care population. Adina Yacoub sits on the Food Security Task Force with Freeholder Zur and they are very aware of the food insecurity and are trying to do as much as they can to reach all the residents in Bergen County that qualify to apply for the SNAP Program. In regard to Corona Relief Fund (CRF) monies, today is the deadline to spend the allocation given to us. We spent \$434,644 on the items previously shared with the Board and our staff. Before that, we had FEMA and CARES monies. All the money that we spent so far from September through the present is \$567,838. The adopt a family project is on its way. Those who wish to participate should contact Gina Kennedy at 201-368-4258 or by way of email at [gkennedy@bcbss.com](mailto:gkennedy@bcbss.com). On November 13, 2020, Adina Yacoub was nominated and elected for the position of Vice-President for the County Welfare Directors' Association (CWDA). Adina Yacoub previously spoke to the Chairman and Board Attorney. When she saw the surge in COVID-19 cases in Bergen County, administration took measures to be proactive. Effective November 23, 2020, we asked 65% of our staff to stay and work remotely from home. The agency reinstated our policy from March 16, 2020 and allowed those individuals who are over 60, underlying conditions, and school age children with remote learning to work at home as long as they are productive. Some jobs cannot be done from home and that is why some employees are in the office. We have done a lot of housekeeping. We installed new carpet on the fifth floor, installed partitions, etc. Once all is safe again, she invited the Board Members to come visit and see all the measures taken to protect our staff. Effective January 1, 2021, the BCBSS is taking over the transitional Passaic Street facility. The Bergen County Commissioners have passed a resolution for the Board to take over the transitional housing case management, and we have been busy with necessary preparations. We ordered and received equipment and COVID-19 related supplies for the three offices, resource room, and interview rooms for that building. We have been quite busy with site visits, as well as, an implementation plan for the family shelter. We have selected the team. Maria Aberasturi has been

writing policies and procedures. We are writing a manual for staff to use at the shelter. Today, Adina Yacoub had a meeting with the Assistant Commissioner of the Dept. of Human Services. She asked her since the Governor considered CWA staff to be essential employees if we could be high on the list as first responders when the vaccine comes to New Jersey. She said the Asst. Commissioner already thought of that and already made this request to the Governor. To date, we don't yet know the outcome.

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. complimented Adina Yacoub on being so proactive in reaching out to clients who receive ABD Medicaid about SNAP benefits. She also expressed that she thinks it is great that she scaled back the number of staff in person at the office.

In regard to taking over the family shelter January 1, 2021, Elaine K. Meyerson mentioned there has been an agency who has been running the shelter for years. She asked Adina Yacoub if she has been able to sit down with them to discuss the pros and cons and issues they faced and whether or not they can share their manual with our agency rather than reinventing the wheel. Adina Yacoub discussed that she reached out to Greater Bergen and had many conversations with them, which was a very friendly smooth transition. Adina Yacoub thanked the point person at Greater Bergen for her professionalism and courtesy. They have been wonderful to us. Our staff have been meeting with their staff, and it is going fine.

Alexandra Harwin asked whether there would be any interest to put together some kind of small graphic identifying the programs and basics about application eligibility for folks who want to post on social media groups. She offered to post a graphic on her group directing people to the BCBSS if that is of any interest.

Adina Yacoub discussed we have all the programs, guidelines, income limits, how to apply, and links on the BCBSS website. If anyone wants to refer someone, please refer them to [bcbss.com](http://bcbss.com) and they will find everything they need and the resources to apply for assistance. As rules and guidelines change, this website gets updated.

Elaine K. Meyerson asked if the BCBSS or any other Boards do any social media. She discussed that she knows it is a process and somebody has to be responsible but it may be something to look into.

Adina Yacoub discussed the Bergen County Board of Social Services is given strict instruction from the Division of Family Development that if we are contacted by anyone from the media or the press, we are not to give any information. Everything has to go through the State Media Director.

The BCBSS has a website; not a Facebook page.

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. suggested a brief one paragraph blurb or picture that says check out our website and it would be easy to post that can simply direct them to the BCBSS website.

John L. Schettino, Esq. advised the Board that you have to be very careful with the Facebook page. As long as you keep it just to public information, you are okay.

John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq. suggested that the Board do a little research, investigate the availability and wisdom of doing this, and have someone report back at our next meeting.

Adina will investigate whether any other Boards in any other counties are doing this. John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq. will check and see if he can get some input from the county on the issue as well.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee**

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from November 1 to November 30, 2020 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$2,766.57 and the year-to-date 2020 is \$251,845.47. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of November.

#### **(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, January 12, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.** by way of Webex.

### **Action Items:**

#### **Resolutions:**

- (a) 2020.12.01 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2020.12.01 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2020.12.01 (3) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Full-Time Data Processing Technician to Full-Time Data Processing Programmer
- (d) 2020.12.01 (4) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Full-Time Human Services Specialist 2 to Full-Time Social Worker
- (e) 2020.12.01 (5) – Authorizing the Hiring of One Part-Time Clerk 1
- (f) 2020.12.01 (6) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours for Two Part-Time Human Services Specialist 1 to Two Full-Time Human Services Specialist 1

- (g) 2020.12.01 (7) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours for One Part-Time Human Services Aide to One Full-Time Human Services Aide
- (h) 2020.12.01 (8) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One Full-Time Purchasing Assistant
- (i) 2020.12.01 (9) – Resolution Adopting a Fair and Open Process for Retention of Professionals and Consultants for the Calendar Year 2021
- (j) 2020.12.01(10) – Resolution Authorizing Continued Sanitizing and Safety Measures
- (k)2020.12.01(11) – Resolution Approving Salary Increase and Contract for Fiscal Officer
- (l) 2020.12.01(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. 10:4-12

A motion to table Resolution 2020.12.01 (11) Approving Salary Increase and Contract for Fiscal Officer so that the Board could discuss in Closed Session 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			

A motion to approve Resolutions (a) – (j) was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, 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			

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (l) 2020.12.01 (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 Randi Duffie, 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			

The Board went into Closed Session at approximately 5:08 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

The Board went into Closed Session to discuss contracts. The Board will be in Closed Session for approximately 15 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 5:20 p.m.

A motion to untable Resolution 2020.12.01 (11) Approving Salary Increase and Contract for Fiscal Officer 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			

A motion to approve Resolution 2020.12.01 (11) Approving Salary Increase and Contract for Fiscal Officer was offered by Susan Silverstein, 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 November 5, 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 5:25 p.m. 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			

Respectfully submitted,



Adina Yacoub  
Director