

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
February 2, 2021**

PRESENT: William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson
Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson
Erin N. Delaney, Secretary Treasurer
Elaine K. Meyerson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer
Tracy S. Zur, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member
Thomas J. Sullivan, Bergen County Commissioner, 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: 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 February 2, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. by way of Webex video/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 February 2, 2021 has been provided in the following manner:

1. By a prominent posting of the schedule of meetings for 2021, 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 29, 2021 and to the Herald News, which was published on January 29, 2021.

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 January 26, 2021.
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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X	
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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 Elaine K. Meyerson, seconded by Commissioner 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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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 Commissioner 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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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 January 12, 2021

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of January 12, 2021 was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, seconded by Commissioner 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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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 Bill’s List. A motion to approve the Bill’s List was offered by Susan Silverstein, seconded by Commissioner 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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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 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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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			

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 242 to 241 and is down by 1 case from last month and compared to one year ago it went down by 7 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload increased from 20,563 to 20,852 and is up by 289 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 3,103 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload decreased from 486 to 483 and is down by 3 cases and compared to one year ago it went up by 39 cases, and Medicaid individuals decreased from 37,684 to 37,080 and is down by 604 individuals.

In January, the agency received a total of 1,675 cash and SNAP applications. The agency also received 1,258 Medicaid applications for a total of 2,933. In December, we received 1,506 cash and SNAP applications, as well as, 1,556 Medicaid applications totaling 3,062.

In January, staff processed 3,555 new applications compared to the December count of 3,272. In January, staff processed 9,491 actions compared to December when we processed 9,427 actions. We continue to remain timely with our processing of TANF, General Assistance, SNAP, and Medicaid applications.

In the month of January, our Emergency Assistance Unit assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 43 individuals/families in motels, 18 families in bridge housing and two families in Emergency Shelter at the HEARTS Program. We have 7 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We received 81 homeless hotline referrals from 211. We have 115 Temporary Rental Assistance cases, and received 57 Emergency Assistance applications. We have 250 active DDD cases.

(b) Memoranda to the Board

The following actions were initiated or occurred in January 2021. We did a match between all our clients who receive ABD Medicaid and whoever is not currently on NJ SNAP was mailed an application for SNAP. We mailed 3,712 SNAP applications and 456 were returned; about 12%. Out of 456 returned: 131 were approved, 77 were denied, and 248 are pending. We started to mail SNAP applications to those who are on Family Care with us and not currently on SNAP. Our Burial Assistance Program offers burial assistance to individuals who are active on Medicaid and don't have the funds for a proper burial. In January 2021 we had 20 inquiries, 40 approved cases, and 3 denied cases. We paid out \$75,162 in assistance and recovered \$4,353 from those who had personal needs allowance accounts. The HEARTS program is on its way. The official opening was on February 1, 2021 but the snow got in the way. Our staff have been there from January 2, 2021 and are doing a great job in spite of obstacles and challenges with renovations and clients refusing to follow the rules. We have been conferencing with the County on a weekly basis, and we are on the same page. We gave a HEARTS presentation to all the stakeholders in the County to introduce them to the programs and shared a referral form to refer homeless clients to the shelter. There were 60 participants on that Webex call. Adina Yacoub and Scott Modery met with the Audit & Budget Committee and presented our 2021 budget and both members from the committee approved it. Administration heard from CWA #1031 and CWA #1089 regarding contract negotiations, and we are in conversation with our labor attorney and preparing input to be shared with the Personnel Committee shortly.

Susan Silverstein asked if Bergen HEARTS is what used to be called Emergency Assistance.

Adina Yacoub explained that it used to be called transitional but now 20 units is bridge housing and 10 units are reserved for emergencies such as families that come from the street and need to be placed.

Elaine K. Meyerson asked if additional apartments were added to the building.

Adina Yacoub explained that no additional apartments have been added. The building has 30 apartments. Currently, 20 apartments are being occupied. There are two (2) emergency apartments filled. When we open to the public, we will be able to fill eight (8) more. Single adults are being placed in motels in conjunction with the Bergen County Housing, Health, & Human Services Center.

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. talked about during the previous administration there were contemplated regulatory changes that would have reduced eligibility for certain benefits. Under the early days of the new administration, she asked have there been impact on regulations or deployment

of benefits to the benefit of Bergen County residents who are applying for benefits.

Adina Yacoub discussed that there are no changes in the regulations as of now.

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. asked if there are any changes contemplated.

Adina Yacoub discussed none that she is aware of, but wouldn't be surprised if that happens. Last month, she discussed that the SNAP benefits went up by 15% from January through June. The maximum allotment is being extended each month as long as there is a State of Health Emergency.

Chairman's Report

Chairman William E. Connelly discussed that the Honorable County Executive James J. Tedesco III appointed the following Board Members to the Bergen County Board of Social Services:

- Erin N. Delaney (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021)
- Yris Encarnacion (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2022)
- Randi Duffie (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2023)
- Susan Silverstein (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2024)
- William E. Connelly (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2025)

Commissioner Tracy S. Zur thanked everybody for stepping up and continuing to want to serve the community this way. She expressed that it is always their pleasure to have them and work together but on these Board's where the members are giving their time generously and freely to really dive in and tackle such an important agency and those in the most need in our community. She is so grateful for the many incredibly caring, compassionate, amazing leaders on this Board who are willing to step in and fill the gap. Commissioner Thomas J. Sullivan echoed her comments.

Adina Yacoub echoed Chairman William E. Connelly and Commissioner Tracy S. Zur's comments. She discussed that it makes life easy for her too if we have the same wonderful group of people staying with us. She expressed that the Board is a group of very supportive people, and she too is very grateful.

Committee Reports:

(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from January 1 to January 31, 2021 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$24,545,37 and the year-to-date 2021 is \$24,545.37. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of January.

(b) Audit & Budget Committee

Adina Yacoub reiterated that she and the Fiscal Officer had a meeting with the Audit & Budget Committee to discuss the budget.

Erin. N. Delaney reported that she and Randi Duffie attended a Budget Meeting last week with Administration. Due to scheduling conflicts, she and Randi Duffie met and reviewed the 2021 Budget with Administration separately. She thanked everyone for producing a sound budget and for all the work they did. Both Erin N. Delaney and Randi Duffie reported that they were very pleased and the 2021 Budget has their full support.

Randi Duffie reported that she too was just as pleased with what the agency presented to the County. She too thanked Adina Yacoub and Scott Modery.

(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, March 2, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.** by way of Webex.

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- (a) 2021.2.02 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2021.2.02 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2021.2.02 (3) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Full-Time Senior Account Clerk to Full-Time Purchasing Expeditor
- (d) 2021.2.02 (4) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Employment from Part-Time Clerk 1 to Part-Time Human Services Aide (Internal)
- (e) 2021.2.02 (5) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (f) 2021.2.02 (6) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (g) 2021.2.02 (7) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Part-Time Clerk 1 to Full Time Keyboarding Clerk 1
- (h) 2021.2.02 (8) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Full-Time Human Services Specialist 3 to Full-Time Human Services Specialist 4
- (i) 2021.2.02 (9) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (j) 2021.2.02 (10) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One Internal/External Full-Time Technician, Management Information Systems
- (k) 2021.2.02 (11) – Resolution Authorizing ESG-CV Grant
- (l) 2021.2.02 (12) – Resolution Authorizing CDBG-CV Grant

(m)2021.2.02 (13)– 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 approve Resolutions (a) – (l) was offered by Commissioner Thomas J. Sullivan, seconded by Commissioner 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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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 did not take action on Resolution (m) to go into Closed Session since it was determined that there was no need to go into Closed Session.

The Board continued in Open Session.

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 5:06 p.m. was offered by Susan Silverstein, seconded by Commissioner 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	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	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